

# House Research Act Summary

**CHAPTER:** 467

**SESSION:** 2000 Regular Session

**TOPIC:** Secretary of State Elections Housekeeping Act

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- 1 **Qualification of political parties.** Amends the campaign finance statute dealing with how parties qualify for the tax check off. Requires the secretary of state (secretary) to notify each minor political party by the beginning of January in each odd numbered year of what is necessary in order for the party to participate in the income tax and property tax refund programs.
- 2 **Vacancy.** Amends a provision of law on soil and water conservation district supervisors to make their terms begin the first Monday in January. Currently terms begin January 1. Provides that an individual serves until a successor is elected and qualified.
- 3 **Terms.** Amends another provision of law on soil and water conservation district supervisors to make their terms begin the first Monday in January.
- 4 **School board membership.** Provides for school board terms to begin the first Monday in January.
- 5 **Registration of election judges; procedures.** Current law provides that the form containing the oath of someone who vouches for an election day registrant is retained until the registrant's address is verified. The act strikes the time limit on retention.
- 6 **Application procedures.** Technical language change.
- 7 **Requests from abroad.** Provides for absentee ballots sent outside the United States to contain whatever text or symbol the postal service prescribes for sending election mail abroad.
- 8 **County auditor's office to remain open.** Amends current law on the minimum hours the county auditor's office must be open on primary and general election day. Makes this requirement apply to special elections.
- 9 **Absent candidates.** Amends current law that allows filing a candidate's affidavit early if a candidate will be out of state during the filing period. Currently, the option is available to county, state, and federal candidates. The act also makes the absent candidate provision available to special district candidates.
- 10 Amends a section on affidavits of candidacy to reference the new exception for special district

candidates.

- 11 **Write-in candidates.** Requires a state or federal candidate who wants to have write-in votes counted to file a written request with the filing officer for the office by the day before the election. Requires the filing officer to have forms candidates can use.
- 12 **Before primary.** Amends the law on withdrawing from the primary ballot. Shortens the deadline from three days to two days after filings for the office close.
- 13 **Separate precincts; combined polling place.** Allows a single polling place for four contiguous municipalities located in one county. Currently this option is available to municipalities located in the same congressional, legislative, and county commissioner district.
- 14 **Precinct boundaries; description; map.** Eliminates a provision under which the secretary automatically gives a municipal clerk a base map to use in noting precinct boundary changes. Instead, the secretary will provide a map upon request.
- 15 **Precinct boundaries to follow physical features.** Provides that an election precinct boundary must follow a census block line for the first two years after each census unless a precinct is entirely in unorganized territory or more than one precinct is entirely included within one census block.
- 16 **Authority; location.** Corrects a cross reference.
- 17 **Booths.** Amends current law that requires voting booths in polling places. Adds a reference to "voting stations."
- 18 **High school students.** Amends current law that allows high school students to be nonpartisan trainee election judges in the municipality where they reside. Expands this to allow a student to serve in the county of residence.
- 19 **Ballots; election records and other materials.** Changes the ballot and election materials retention period from one year to 22 months from the date of an election. Requires the school district clerk rather than the county auditor to retain school election records.
- 20 **County canvass.** After the primary, the auditor will mail notices of nomination to each nominee for county office. The secretary will mail notices to nominees for state and federal office, even if those offices are voted on only within one county.
- 21 Cross-reference to the write-in vote provision in section 11.
- 22 **County canvass; return.** Directs that the copy of the canvassing board report not sent by express mail and the precinct summary statements are to be mailed to the secretary.
- 23 **Order of offices.** Clarifies the order of offices on the white ballot.
- 24 **Form.** Directs that at a special primary or special election the voter instructions may use the singular when referring to a candidate and office if only one office is to be filled at the special election.
- 25 **Certificate of congressional election.** Strikes reference to the county auditor issuing certificates of election to Congress. Makes this consistent with recent law changes that provide for the secretary to issue election certificates for legislative and statewide offices.
- 26 **Absent candidates.** Let a municipal office candidate who will be out of the state during the filing period submit the affidavit of candidacy during the seven days immediately preceding the candidate's departure. Lets nominating petitions (when applicable under pre-existing law) be signed during the 14 days immediately preceding the date such a candidate's affidavit is signed.
- 27 **Withdrawal.** Lets municipal candidates withdraw from the ballot by 5:00 p.m. two days after filings for the office close. Prior law required withdrawal by noon the day after filings close.
- 28 **Second, third, and fourth class cities; towns.** Allows ballots for these jurisdictions to be printed in quantities of 25, 50, or 100. Prior law specified blocks of 50.
- 29 **Absent candidates.** Lets a school district candidate who will be absent during the filing period file

the affidavit of candidacy early.

- 30 **Withdrawal.** Lets school district candidates withdraw from the ballot by 5:00 p.m. two days after filings for the office close. Current law requires withdrawal by noon the day after filings close.
- 31 **Ballots.** Provides voter instructions for optical scan ballots that contain both partisan and nonpartisan primary nominations. Directs voters that on the partisan offices, they can vote only for the candidates of one party. If a primary ballot has parties on both sides, there must be an instruction saying so. At the bottom of the political party column there must be an instruction to continue voting on the nonpartisan ballot. States that current law on the instructions on primary ballots does not apply to optical scan ballots, which are to be governed by this section.
- 32 **Officers; November elections.** Specifies that town officers elected in November start their terms the first Monday in January.
- 33 **Terms of office.** Provides for hospital district terms of office to start the first Monday in January.
- 34 **Candidates; ballots; certifying election.** Lets hospital district candidates withdraw from the ballot by 5:00 p.m. two days after filings for the office close. Prior law required withdrawal by noon the day after filings close.
- 35 **Repealer.** Repeals obsolete mail ballot pilot program language.