

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Authors: McFarlane and others

Subject: Election Judge Party Affiliation

Analyst: Matt Gehring, 651-296-5052

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Overview

This bill specifies that election judges appointed to fill vacant positions need not be affiliated with a major political party, and removes the requirement that the major-party lists be exhausted before other individuals may be appointed.

Section

- 1 Appointment of Election Judges.** Under current law, designated county or legislative district chairs of each major political party must prepare a list of eligible voters to act as election judges in each precinct in the county or legislative district.

Actual election judge appointments are made by the appropriate local governing body, and must come from the lists provided by each major political party. If no list is provided, or all names on the list have been exhausted, the appointing authority may appoint any other individual to serve as an election judge, provided they meet the necessary requirements and qualifications. (Among the requirements, election judges must be able to read, write, and speak English, may not be a spouse, parent, child, or sibling of another election judge in the precinct or any candidate in the election, or an actual candidate in the election).

This bill modifies these requirements: using the lists submitted by each major party is permitted, but not required, and other individuals not affiliated with a major political party may be appointed as election judges at any time, regardless of whether the names on the submitted lists are "exhausted." This bill also specifies that at least two election judges in each precinct must be affiliated with different major political parties.

Section

- 2** **Township Elections.** Exempts townships from various requirements related to party balance in the appointment and duties of election judges in township elections not held alongside a statewide election. Township elections are nonpartisan.
- 3** **School District Elections.** Incorporates section 204B.21, subdivision 2, into the exemption for school district elections relating to party balance of election judges. This modification is included because 204B.21, subdivision 2, as amended by this bill, includes new requirements for party balance.

The reference to section 206.64, subdivision 2, is removed because that provision was repealed in 1997.