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Overview

This bill modifies a number of provisions related to election procedure and administration, including standardizing certain election timelines, notices, and ballot formatting requirements, and elimination of obsolete language related to ballot colors.

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- 1** **Referendum.** Modifies administrative standards and procedures related to a referendum proposing discontinuance of a Soil and Water Conservation district.

- 2, 18, 22, 26, 29, 31-34, 36-43, 45, 65, 70, 71** **Ballots.** Eliminates obsolete references in law that assigns ballots a particular color, based on the offices or questions to be presented on the ballot. New titles for each form of ballot are provided, in addition to other technical changes.

- 3** **Instructions.** Eliminates a requirement that voter instructions be available by cassette tape requiring instead that the instructions be available in “audio format.”

- 4** **Registration places.** Eliminates a population-based requirement for determining how many public buildings must be available for voter registration prior to election day, and eliminates a specified number of telecommunications devices for the deaf that must be available in each county and city.

- 5** **Moved out of state.** Prohibits the county auditor from mailing a voter registration status notice to a voter who appears to have moved out-of-state if the voter’s record is listed as

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challenged due to ineligibility to vote.

- 6 **Social security administration; other reports of deceased residents.** Permits the secretary of state to review the social security death index and the vital records department of any other state to determine if any registered voter has died. Currently, law mandates this check with the social security administration.
- 7 **Court administration of district court; change of names.** Prohibits the county auditor from mailing a voter registration status notice to a voter who appears to have a changed name if the voter's record is listed as challenged due to ineligibility to vote.
- 8 **Time and manner of holding; postponement.** Requires the secretary of state to announce the official state precinct caucus date within two business days after the two largest major political parties have agreed on a date, following procedures provided in current law.
- 9 **Generally.** Requires that the designation or notice that a municipal clerk will administer absentee ballots also specify whether the clerk will also be responsible for administering the absentee ballot board. Special standards are provided where the municipality is located in more than one county.
- 10 **Procedures on receipt of ballots.** Requires absentee ballots received after the deadlines in law for receipt to be marked as late. These ballots may not be delivered to the ballot board.
- 11 **Locations for absentee balloting in person.** Streamlines existing language related to the absentee voting period. Absentee voting for all elections, except town elections held in March, must provide a 46-day absentee period. March town elections are required to provide a 30-day absentee period.
- 12 **Duties of absentee ballot board.** Exempts staff of the county auditor, municipal clerk, and school district clerk from party affiliation requirements that otherwise apply to election judges serving on an absentee ballot board.
- 13 **Storage and counting of absentee ballots.** Establishes standards related to summary statements used by an absentee ballot board, and recodifies language related to the public counting and release of vote totals.
- 14 **Write-in absentee ballot.** Eliminates an obsolete reference to the state write-in absentee ballot.
- 15 **Postelection report to legislature.** Provides a technical update to a section requiring a report to the legislature by the secretary of state.
- 16 **Prohibition on multiple candidacy.** Prohibits a candidate who files an affidavit of candidacy for one office to subsequently file another affidavit of candidacy for a different office to be elected at the same general election.
- 17 **Boundary change procedures.** Eliminates a requirement that new precinct boundaries be published in certain newspapers, replaced with a requirement that a notice be published

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directing voters to the website where new precinct maps can be found.

- 19** **Minimum number required.** Reduces the minimum number of election judges required in a precinct from four to three for elections other than the state general election.
- 20** **Exception.** Provides that a minimum of three election judges must be appointed in precincts with fewer than 500 registered voters as of 14 weeks prior to the state primary.
- 21** **Meeting with election officials.** Modifies standards for a meeting between the county auditor and local election officials to discuss procedures for an election.
- 22** **Notice of filing.** Modifies the timeline for certain notices related to the offices to be elected at an election, and the candidate filing period for those offices.
- 24** **Posting requirements.** Permits the appropriate election official to comply with any election-related notice requirements by posting the notice on the jurisdiction’s website.
- 25** **Absentee ballots; preparation; delivery.** Streamlines standards related to the mailing of absentee ballots.
- 27** **Procedure.** Modifies standards related to mail balloting procedures.
- 28** **Mail elections; questions.** Modifies standards related to mail balloting procedures.
- 30** **Physical assistance in marking ballots.** Eliminates an allowance for election judges to select two individuals of different major political parties to assist a voter in marking the voter’s ballot. An allowance for the voter to select a person to assist remains as in current law.
- 35** **Sample ballot.** Modifies standards related to preparation of a sample ballot, including elimination of a requirement that the sample ballot be published in certain newspapers. A requirement that a notice of the website address where a sample ballot can be found, which must be published in at least one newspaper, is added. Sample ballots must be transmitted electronically to the secretary of state.
- 43** **Sample ballot; constitutional amendments.** Eliminates a reference to the “color” of the state constitutional amendment ballot, and provides that the secretary of state shall “transmit” rather than “mail” sample ballots to each county auditor.
- 44** **Sample general election ballots; posting; publication.** Modifies timing, posting, and publication requirements for sample state general election ballots. A requirement that a notice of the Web site address where a sample ballot can be found, which must be published in at least one newspaper, is added. Sample ballots must be transmitted electronically to the secretary of state.
- 46** **Special election when legislature will be in session.** Prohibits a special election conducted to fill a vacant legislative seat, when the legislature will be in session for the elected person to be seated, from occurring during the four days before or after a state holiday.

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- 47 City elections.** Updates a cross reference to reflect changes made elsewhere in the bill.
- 48 Prohibition.** Prohibits a municipal special election on a ballot question from being held within 56 days after the state general election.
- 49 Filing period.** Requires the municipal clerk's office to accept candidate filings from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. on the last day of the filing period for municipal offices.
- 50 Write-in candidates for city offices.** Permits a city to require write-in candidates to file a written request for write-in votes to be counted for that candidate.
- 51 Publication and posting.** Modifies notice and posting requirements related to municipal elections.
- 52 Notice to auditor.** Modifies standards requiring the county auditor to receive notice of a municipal election.
- 53 Notice to secretary of state.** Modifies standards requiring the secretary of state to receive notice of a municipal election.
- 54 Municipal offices; questions; ballot format.** Standardizes ballot formatting requirements across all cities and towns.
- 55 Primary ballots.** Standardizes ballot formatting requirements for municipal primary elections.
- 56 Change in year of general election.** Permits a school board to change the year in which the school district general election is held by resolution. Transition standards are provided.
- 57 Questions.** Expands the period before and after a regularly-schedule election during which a school district special election on a ballot question may not be held.
- 58 Vacancies in school district offices.** Adds ballot instructions if more than one vacancy exists for an office elected at-large in a school district special election.
- 59 Write-in candidates.** Permits a school district to require write-in candidates to file a written request for write-in votes to be counted for that candidate.
- 60 Publication and posting.** Modifies notice and posting requirements related to school district elections.
- 61 Notice to auditor.** Modifies standards requiring the county auditor to receive notice of a school district election.
- 62 Notice to commissioner of education.** Modifies standards requiring the commissioner of education to receive notice of a school district election.
- 63 Notice to secretary of state.** Modifies standards requiring the secretary of state to receive notice of a school district election.

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- 64** **General election ballot.** Requires all candidates and ballot questions to be voted on at a school district general election to be placed on a single ballot.
- 66** **Selection for review; notice.** Eliminates language providing that, for postelection review purposes, absentee ballots counted centrally by a ballot board constitute a single precinct for purposes of conducting the postelection review.
- 67** **Scope and conduct of review.** Eliminates a requirement that the postelection review include a review of votes cast for U.S. Senator and U.S. Representative.
- 68** **Secretary of state monitor.** Reduces the number of precincts required to be monitored by the secretary of state during the postelection review. Current law requires monitoring of four precincts in each congressional district; the bill would require the secretary to monitor one precinct in each congressional district.
- 69** **Ballots.** Modifies standards for titling ballots in precincts using an optical scan voting system.
- 72** **Noncommercial signs exemption.** Provides technical clarifications to the law governing the posting of noncommercial (campaign) signs during an election year.
- 73** **Costs assessed.** Eliminates a requirement that the county pay the cost of any fair campaign practices act complaint that relates to an office or ballot question that is not voted on statewide. The cost of these complaints is instead required to be paid from appropriations to the Office of Administrative Hearings for this purpose.
- 74** **Ballot question.** Standardizes the form of a referendum ballot question related to issuance of intoxicating liquor licenses by a city.
- 75** **Effect of election.** Provides a conforming change to reflect the modified ballot question contained in section 74.
- 76** **Continuation.** Standardizes the form of a referendum ballot question related to operation of a municipal liquor store.
- 77** **Ballot question.** Modifies the formatting of ballot questions related to actions of a county board to conform more closely to the laws governing general elections, and modifies the timing for conducting a special county election for the purpose of voting on a question.
- 78** **Elections.** Modifies standards related to the timing and conduct of a hospital district election.
- 79** **Election notices.** Modifies certain notice requirements related to the conduct of a hospital district election.
- 80** **Candidates; ballots; certifying election.** Modifies the filing period for candidates in a hospital district election, and permits the governing body of a hospital district to require a write-in candidate to request that write-in votes be counted for that candidate.

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81 **Laws 1963.** Replaces existing session law standards governing hospital district board member terms and election procedures with new standards, including a requirement that the hospital board adopt an orderly transition plan for the new election schedule.

82 **Repealer.** Repeals the following provisions of statute:

Sections 204B.42; 204D.11, subdivisions 2 and 3; 205.17, subdivisions 2 and 4; and 205A.08, subdivision 4: Obsolete provisions related to ballot color; and

Section 205.16, subdivision 2: Providing newspaper publication requirements for sample ballots in certain municipal elections.