



# Senate

General Assembly

**File No. 109**

February Session, 2012

Substitute Senate Bill No. 218

*Senate, March 26, 2012*

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through SEN. SLOSSBERG of the 14th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING POLLING PLACES FOR PRIMARIES.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-438 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 [In] (a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) of this  
4 section, in each municipality or voting district, the polling place or  
5 places for [primaries] a primary held under sections 9-382 to 9-450,  
6 inclusive, shall be the same as those used for the election to be held.  
7 When unaffiliated electors are authorized under section 9-431 to vote  
8 in the primary of either of two parties, both parties shall hold their  
9 primaries in the same room of each such polling place.

10 (b) The registrars of voters of a municipality may reduce the  
11 number of polling places required under subsection (a) of this section  
12 and shall designate such polling place or places not later than sixty  
13 days prior to a primary held under sections 9-382 to 9-450, inclusive,

14 the location of which may be the same or different than of those  
 15 polling places required under subsection (a) of this section. Not earlier  
 16 than sixty days prior to such primary, but not later than forty-five days  
 17 prior to such primary, the registrars of voters shall notify the Secretary  
 18 of the State and the candidates seeking nomination to an office in such  
 19 primary of the change in the polling place or places. If such a  
 20 candidate objects to a change in the polling place or places, the  
 21 candidate shall notify the Secretary of such objection not later than  
 22 four o'clock p.m. on the thirtieth day prior to the primary. Such  
 23 notification from the candidate shall be in the form of a written letter,  
 24 signed by the candidate, and shall be held confidential by the  
 25 Secretary. The Secretary shall promptly notify such registrars of voters  
 26 of such objection, which notification shall not identify the candidate  
 27 who objected. If a municipality's registrars of voters cannot agree upon  
 28 a polling place or places for a primary, or if such a candidate objects,  
 29 the polling place or places shall be the same as those used for the  
 30 election to be held. Not later than twenty-one days prior to a primary,  
 31 the registrars of voters shall send notification of the polling place for  
 32 the primary, by mail, to each elector whose polling place for the  
 33 primary will be different than the elector's polling place for the  
 34 election. When unaffiliated electors are authorized under section 9-431  
 35 to vote in the primary of either of two parties, both parties shall hold  
 36 their primaries in the same room of each such polling place.  
 37 Notwithstanding any provision of title 7 or 9, any special act, charter  
 38 or ordinance, if the number of polling places are reduced pursuant to  
 39 the provisions of this subsection, the number of moderators required  
 40 for such primary may be reduced, if the registrars of voters so agree,  
 41 provided at least one certified moderator serves each polling place.

42 (c) On the day of the primary, the polls shall remain open for voting  
 43 from six o'clock a.m. until eight o'clock p.m.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-438

**GAE**      *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:** None

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 13 \$	FY 14 \$
All Municipalities	Potential Savings	See Below	See Below

**Explanation**

The bill results in a potential savings, as it allows municipalities to operate fewer polling places during primaries. These potential savings vary based on the town's per polling place cost, and the number of polling places it intends to close.

Two towns, Vernon and Tolland, are presented for illustrative purposes. It costs the Town of Vernon approximately \$3,300 to operate one polling place. Vernon has six polling places and could close up to five, depending on the election. In Tolland, it costs approximately \$1,350 per polling place and the town could close one of its two polling locations.

The potential savings in the bill would be minimally offset by the cost to municipalities of mailing notifications to residents whose polling place has changed.

**The Out Years**

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact identified above would continue into the future subject to inflation.

Sources: Town of Tolland  
Town of Vernon



**OLR BILL ANALYSIS****sSB 218*****AN ACT CONCERNING POLLING PLACES FOR PRIMARIES.*****SUMMARY:**

Current law requires towns to use the same polling place or places for a primary that they use for the corresponding election. This bill authorizes registrars of voters to reduce the number of polling places for a primary, the location of which may be the same or different than the polling places for the election.

If the registrars reduce the number of polling places, they may similarly agree to reduce the number of moderators, provided there is at least one moderator per polling place. The bill requires the polling places for a primary to remain the same as for the corresponding election if the registrars cannot agree to the changes or if any candidate objects.

The bill also makes conforming and technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

**PROCEDURES FOR REDUCING PRIMARY POLLING PLACES**

The bill establishes procedures and a timeframe for reducing the number of primary polling places. Specifically:

1. at least 60 days before every primary, the registrars must designate the polling place(s), which may be fewer in number than were used at the last election or will be used at the upcoming election;
2. between 45 and 60 days before the primary, the registrars must notify the secretary of the state and candidates of the change or changes;

3. by 4:00 p.m. on the 30<sup>th</sup> day before the primary, a candidate who objects to the change must notify the secretary of the state in writing of his or her objection (the secretary must keep the objection confidential);
4. the secretary must promptly notify the registrars of any candidate's objection; and
5. no later than 21 days before the primary, registrars must notify, by mail, each elector whose polling place has changed.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 15    Nay 0    (03/12/2012)