



Senate

General Assembly

File No. 603

January Session, 2013

Substitute Senate Bill No. 778

Senate, April 24, 2013

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through SEN. MUSTO of the 22nd 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 Section 9-438 of the general statutes is repealed and the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 as or different from the location
15 of polling places required under subsection (a) of this section. Not
16 earlier than sixty days prior to such primary, but not later than forty-
17 five days prior to such primary, the registrars of voters shall notify the
18 Secretary of the State and the candidates seeking nomination to an
19 office in such primary of the change in the polling place or places. If a
20 candidate petitions for nomination to an office after the registrars of
21 voters have notified candidates of such change, the registrars shall
22 immediately notify the petitioning candidate of such change. If any
23 candidate objects to a change in the polling place or places, the
24 candidate shall notify the Secretary of such objection not later than
25 four o'clock p.m. on the thirtieth day prior to the primary. Such
26 notification from the candidate shall be in the form of a written letter,
27 signed by the candidate, and shall be held confidential by the
28 Secretary. The Secretary shall promptly notify such registrars of voters
29 and any candidate seeking nomination to an office in such primary
30 that the Secretary has received a letter of objection, which notification
31 shall not identify the candidate who objected. If such a candidate so
32 objects, or if a municipality's registrars of voters cannot agree upon a
33 polling place or places for a primary, the polling place or places shall
34 be the same as those used for the election to be held. Not later than
35 twenty-five days prior to a primary, the registrars of voters shall send
36 notification of the polling place for the primary, by mail, to each elector
37 whose polling place for the primary will be different than the elector's
38 polling place for the election, except that no registrar of voters shall be
39 required to so notify an elector for any subsequent primary, provided
40 the primary polling place for such elector remains the same as that
41 which was provided for in the initial notification. If any polling place
42 that would otherwise be open pursuant to subsection (a) of this section
43 is closed pursuant to this subsection, the registrars of voters shall
44 ensure that a sign is posted at such polling place providing electors
45 with information to redirect the electors to the open polling place or
46 places for the primary. When unaffiliated electors are authorized
47 under section 9-431 to vote in the primary of either of two parties, both
48 parties shall hold their primaries in the same room of each such polling

49 place. Notwithstanding any provision of title 7 or this title, any special
 50 act, charter or ordinance, if the number of polling places is reduced
 51 pursuant to the provisions of this subsection, the number of
 52 moderators required for such primary may be reduced, if the registrars
 53 of voters so agree, provided at least one certified moderator serves
 54 each polling place.

55 (c) On the day of the primary, the polls shall remain open for voting
 56 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 14 \$	FY 15 \$
Various Municipalities	Potential Savings	Less than 25,000	Less than 25,000

Explanation

The bill, which allows municipal registrars of voters to reduce the number of polling places during a primary, may potentially result in a savings for certain municipalities. To the extent that municipalities are able to reduce the number of polling places during a primary, they will realize a savings. Municipal savings from such closures are anticipated to be less than \$25,000. However, the amount of savings realized by municipalities will be dependent upon the number of polling places closed and municipal costs to operate polling places.

The savings realized by municipalities would be partially offset by requirements that registrars of voters provide notification to voters affected by polling place closures.

The Out Years

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

OLR Bill Analysis**sSB 778*****AN ACT CONCERNING POLLING PLACES FOR PRIMARIES.*****SUMMARY:**

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 corresponding general election. Current law requires that towns use the same polling place or places for a primary as they use for the election. 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.

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 certified moderator per polling place. They must also make sure that a sign is posted in a closed primary polling place that would otherwise be open. The sign must provide electors with information redirecting them to the open polling place or places.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

PROCEDURES FOR PRIMARY POLLING PLACE REDUCTION

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 any change;
3. the registrars must immediately notify any petitioning candidate of the change if he or she becomes eligible for ballot access after other candidates have received the notification;
4. by 4:00 p.m. on the 30th 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);
5. the secretary must promptly notify the registrars and all other candidates in the primary of the objection, in which case the polling places remain the same as for the election; and
6. if there is no objection, the registrars must notify by mail, no later than 25 days before the primary, each elector whose polling place has changed for the upcoming primary.

If a polling place changes and the affected electors receive notification, the registrars of voters do not have to notify the electors for any subsequent primary as long as the polling location remains the same.

Finally, the bill specifies that if the rules of either major party authorize unaffiliated electors to vote in the party primary, the primaries must be held in the same room of the polling place. Current Republican and Democratic state party rules do not allow unaffiliated electors to participate in their primary elections.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 14 Nay 0 (04/05/2013)