
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5420

AN ACT REQUIRING ADDITIONAL POLLING PLACES AT INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION DURING STATE ELECTIONS.

SUMMARY

This bill requires the legislative body of any municipality in which certain public or private nonprofit higher education institutions are located to establish a separate voting district containing the institution for state election years. (It is unclear whether or to what extent the voting district may also contain surrounding areas).

The requirement applies to institutions with more than 3,000 full-time equivalent students at any campus, based on data the institution reported to the U.S. Department of Education in the year before the state election. The bill does not require that the students reside on the campus (see BACKGROUND). Under the bill, the municipality's registrars of voters must provide a suitable polling place within 500 feet of the institution provided the institution notifies the registrar of voters by January 1 in a state election year.

If the registrars fail to agree on a location, existing law, unchanged by the bill, requires that the municipality's legislative body do so. Under the bill, all of the other existing requirements and procedures applicable to voting districts and polling places apply. Among other things, this means that the registrars must (1) designate the polling place at least 31 days before the election, (2) keep a separate registry list of electors residing in the district, and (3) appoint a district moderator and other required election officials.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Reporting Enrollment

Federal law generally requires higher education institutions, as a condition of receiving federal funding for certain student assistance programs, to annually report enrollment data through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System survey (20 U.S.C. § 1094(a)(17)). The 12-month enrollment is the unduplicated headcount of any student used to estimate full time equivalent enrollment during a July 1 through June 30 reporting period.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 9 Nay 8 (03/23/2018)