OLR Bill Analysis

HB 6055

AN ACT CONCERNING CERTAIN UPDATES TO ELECTION ADMINISTRATION LAWS.

SUMMARY

This bill makes various changes in election administration laws. Principally, the bill:

1. permits registrars of voters to provide notice of voter registration sessions on their municipality’s website instead of in a newspaper (§ 1);

2. repeals obsolete provisions concerning municipal boards for admission of electors (§§ 2-5 & 14);

3. eliminates a requirement that registrars meet on the Tuesday of the fifth week before a regular election to finalize eligible voter lists, and instead requires them to finalize the lists before the election (§§ 6 & 7); and

4. eliminates requirements that (a) the advisory committee tasked with establishing training programs for registrars develop an election law and procedures training program and guide for registrars and their assistants and deputies and (b) registrars or their assistants or deputies annually receive at least 10 hours of training through that program (§§ 10-12 & 14).

The bill also allows registrars to appoint electors from any Connecticut municipality to serve as voting tabulator tenders (§ 13). Under current law, registrars may appoint electors from their municipality only (§ 13).

Lastly, the bill makes minor, technical, and conforming changes (§§ 8 & 9)
EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 1 — NOTICE OF VOTER REGISTRATION SESSION

The bill expands the methods by which the registrars of voters in each town may give notice of the time and place of each voter registration session. It allows them to publish notice on the town’s public website between five and 15 days before the session. Under current law, they may notice the session only by publication, within the above timeframe, in a newspaper published or circulated in the town. The notice does not need to be in the form of a legal advertisement.

§§ 2-5 & 14 — BOARDS FOR ADMISSION OF ELECTORS

The bill repeals obsolete references to municipal boards for admission of electors. Current law requires these boards to, among other things, adjudicate appeals made by a person who is denied admission as an elector by a registrar of voters. However, in practice municipalities no longer use these boards, and an individual aggrieved by a registrar’s admission decision may file a complaint with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC).

§§ 6 & 7 — PRELIMINARY VOTER REGISTRY LIST

The bill eliminates the requirement that registrars of voters meet on the Tuesday of the fifth week before a regular election to complete a correct list of electors entitled to vote in the election. It instead requires them to complete the list before the election and makes conforming changes (e.g., repealing the requirement that the registrars notice the session at least five days in advance). In practice, registrars maintain this list through the statewide centralized voter registration system (CVRS) on a continual basis.

§§ 10-12 & 14 — REGISTRAR TRAINING

The bill eliminates a requirement that registrars of voters take, or designate their deputies or assistants to take, at least 10 instruction hours annually under an election law and procedures training program developed by a six-member advisory committee. It similarly eliminates a requirement for the committee to develop the program
and a related guide and submit them to the secretary of the state (SOTS) for approval.

Under existing law, registrars of voters must (1) be certified through a program developed by SOTS in consultation with the advisory committee and (2) annually complete at least eight hours of training that are separate from the 10-hour training program the bill eliminates. The advisory committee consists of representatives of SOTS and SEEC, and four registrars of voters whom the secretary appoints in consultation with the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

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