OLR Bill Analysis  
sHB 7321  

AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTIONS AND SECURITY.

SUMMARY  
This bill makes various changes concerning election security, including the confidentiality of certain voter registration information. Principally, the bill does the following:

1. limits disclosure of a voter’s date of birth, to year of birth, unless provided for a governmental purpose as determined by the secretary of the state;  
2. generally prohibits disclosing from the official voter registry list the name and address of a voter who certifies that nondisclosure is necessary for safety reasons;  
3. conforms law to current practice by making unique identifiers, such as driver’s license or Social Security numbers, used for voter registration purposes confidential and prohibiting their disclosure; and  
4. requires that municipalities (a) provide two programmed memory cards for each voting tabulator and (b) submit one to UConn for security analysis before each election and, in the case of a tabulator subject to post-election audit, the other after the audit.

The bill requires the secretary of the state to appoint an individual to serve in a cyber security role within her office. The appointee must perform or assist in any technical review, testing, or research associated with (a) using voting systems and (b) developing any other standards necessary to protect the integrity of the voting process (§ 1).

The bill also requires that primary petition forms include a
statement indicating that party members signing the petition need not complete the line for date of birth (§§ 6 & 7).

Lastly, the bill makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 2 — VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION

The bill limits disclosure of a voter’s date of birth maintained under state election law to year of birth, unless the information is requested and used for a governmental purpose, as determined by the secretary of the state. In that case, the complete birth date must be provided. The bill specifies that “governmental purpose” includes jury administration. (The bill does not specify a process for making this determination.)

The bill makes a voter’s name and address confidential and prohibits their disclosure from the voter registry list if the voter submits a signed statement to the secretary of the state indicating that nondisclosure is necessary for the safety of the voter or his or her family. Under the bill, primary, election, or referendum officials may view the voter’s information on the official registry list at the polling place during any primary, election, or referendum. (The bill does not establish procedures for submitting the signed statements or protecting the voter’s information. It is also unclear whether such a voter’s information could be provided for a governmental purpose.)

The bill conforms law to current practice by making unique identifiers that generate voter registration records, or are added to these records pursuant to the federal Help America Vote Act, confidential and prohibiting their disclosure (see BACKGROUND). Under the bill, “unique identifiers” include motor vehicles license numbers, identity card numbers, and Social Security numbers.

§§ 3-5 — VOTING TABULATOR MEMORY CARDS

The bill requires municipalities to purchase, lease, or otherwise provide two programmed memory cards for each voting tabulator. By law, registrars of voters must use at least one tabulator for each voting
district. The bill also expands the definition of “voting tabulator” under state election laws to include accompanying instruments, such as memory cards.

Under the bill, registrars of voters must submit one of the two memory cards for security analysis before each election to the entity with which the secretary of state has contracted to review, test, and certify voting equipment, (currently, the University of Connecticut). They must do so after testing the voting tabulators. (The bill does not specify procedures or deadlines for the entity to follow when performing the analysis.)

Following the election, for any voting tabulator subject to a post-election audit, the bill requires registrars to submit the second memory card for security analysis. They must do so after the audit and period during which tabulators remain locked and sealed (14 days, or longer pursuant to an order by a court or the State Elections Enforcement Commission).

BACKGROUND

Unique Identifiers

The Freedom of Information Commission has consistently declined to order disclosure of social security numbers, employee identification numbers, and drivers' license numbers (see for example Docket #FIC 2014-032 and Docket #FIC 2014-438).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 10 Nay 4 (03/29/2019)