

---

---

**OLR Bill Analysis**

**SB 353**

***AN ACT CONCERNING MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS.***

**SUMMARY**

Effective January 1, 2022, this bill requires each municipality to hold its biennial municipal election on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November of odd-numbered years unless its legislative body votes by a two-thirds majority to hold the election on the first Monday in May of odd-numbered years. After January 1, 2022, the bill authorizes any municipality holding its biennial municipal election in May to instead hold the election in November through a majority vote of its legislative body. It eliminates provisions in current law that (1) allow municipalities to change the date of their biennial municipal election by vote of their legislative body approved at a referendum or by charter and (2) prohibit municipalities from changing an upcoming election's date within six months before its occurrence.

The bill extends, to municipalities that change their election date, existing law's provisions on transitioning and deferring terms of office. It also makes several technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2022, except that most provisions on transitioning and deferring terms of office are effective upon passage.

**TRANSITIONING AND DEFERRING TERMS OF OFFICE**

Table 1 below summarizes existing law's transition provisions and their application under the bill (it appears some of these provisions may overlap).

**Table 1: Transitioning and Deferring Terms of Office**

<b>§</b>	<b><i>Municipalities to Which Provision Applies</i></b>	<b><i>Requirement or Authorization</i></b>
----------	---	--

1	Any municipality that changes its election date	The terms of any elected officials that are set to expire before the next regular election because of an election date change must be extended to the date of that election.
2	Any municipality that changes its election date	For municipal elected officials whose terms will not have expired by the first municipal election after an election date change, the legislative body must provide for a reasonable transition method by January 1, 2022, such as term extensions or interim terms. (Presumably, this requirement applies to municipalities whose election date is changed from May to November.)
3	Any municipality that changes its election date	For boards or commissions with a rotating membership and some members elected before the date change to terms beginning approximately one year after that election, the legislative body may defer the terms in order to continue the rotation. (For certain bodies, such as zoning boards of appeals, this may be done by ordinance.)
4	A municipality that changes its election date from November to May on or after January 1, 2022	The terms of incumbent municipal elected officials must be reduced to conform to the change, but by no more than nine months.
4	A municipality that changes its election date from May to November on or after January 1, 2022	The terms of incumbent municipal elected officials must be extended to conform to the change, but by no more than nine months.

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Related Bill***

sSB 5, favorably reported by the Government Administration and Elections Committee, requires each municipality to hold its biennial municipal election in November and has similar and additional provisions on transitioning terms of office.

### ***Municipalities and Boroughs Holding May Municipal Elections***

According to the Office of the Secretary of the State, the following five municipalities hold biennial municipal elections on the first Monday in May in odd-numbered years: Andover, Bethany, Union,

Woodbridge, and the City of Groton. The remaining municipalities (including the Town of Groton) hold their elections in November.

In addition, the following eight boroughs hold biennial municipal elections on the first Monday in May:

1. Bantam (Litchfield)
2. Danielson (Killingly)
3. Fenwick (Old Saybrook)
4. Jewett City (Griswold)
5. Litchfield
6. Newtown
7. Stonington
8. Woodmont (Milford)

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13      Nay 5      (03/29/2021)