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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **sSB 333 (File 387, as amended by Senate "A")\***

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING LOCAL CHARTER REVISIONS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

Current law prohibits municipalities from amending their charters when doing so would change four specified aspects governed by titles 7 or 8 (i.e., state statutes on municipal powers and planning and zoning matters, among others). This bill creates exceptions to certain of these prohibitions.

Specifically, under current law, municipalities may not modify by charter amendment:

1. voting requirements to start or complete an eminent domain process, including any public notice or hearing requirements;
2. voting requirements to dispose of municipal property, including any public notice or hearing requirements;
3. regulations on the planning commission, zoning commission, or combined planning and zoning commission (each referred to below as "commission"); and
4. requirements for filing petitions with the local legislative body or zoning board of appeals to challenge a commission decision (e.g., how signatures are collected, the number of signatures required, or residency requirements for signors).

Under the bill, a municipality that, before July 1, 2023, adopted a voting threshold for eminent domain processes or municipal property disposal (as described in 1 & 2 above) that is greater than a simple majority may (1) continue to enforce that threshold and (2) reduce it, but not below a simple majority. However, the municipality may not increase the threshold if doing so would violate the law's prohibition on certain charter amendments.

The bill additionally allows municipalities to amend regulations on commissions (as described in 3 above) to establish (1) their composition, so long as doing so complies with existing laws on planning commissions and zoning commissions, and (2) separate planning and zoning commissions or combine separate ones into one commission. It also makes minor changes.

Under the bill, “municipalities” include towns, cities, boroughs, school districts, and special taxing districts, as well as other municipal corporations and organizations.

\*Senate Amendment “A” (1) retains the existing law’s prohibition on amendments to change voting requirements, which the underlying bill eliminated, and (2) adds the exceptions for amendments changing these voting requirements and commission-related regulations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2024

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Planning and Development Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 21    Nay 0    (03/22/2024)