

House of Representatives, April 6, 1998. The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through REP. BYSIEWICZ, 100th DIST., Chairman of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION PROCEDURES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-35 of the general
2 statutes, as amended by section 24 of public act
3 97-154, is repealed and the following is
4 substituted in lieu thereof:

5 The registrars, on the Tuesday of the fifth
6 week before each regular election, shall be in
7 session for the purpose of completing a correct
8 list of all electors who will be entitled to vote
9 at such election. Such registry list shall consist
10 of an active registry list and an inactive
11 registry list. Such session shall be held during
12 such hours between nine o'clock a.m. and five
13 o'clock p.m. as the registrars find necessary to
14 complete the list. Notice of such session shall be
15 given at least five days before the session by
16 publication in a newspaper having a circulation in
17 such municipality, if any, and by posting on the
18 signpost therein, if any, or at some other
19 exterior place near the office of the town clerk.
20 At such session and on any day except on the day
21 of an election or primary, the registrars shall
22 remove from the list the name of each elector who
23 has died, who has been disfranchised or who has

24 confirmed in writing that he has moved out of the
25 municipality, except electors entitled to remain
26 on such list under the provisions of this chapter.
27 An elector shall be deemed to have confirmed in
28 writing that he has moved out of the municipality
29 if (1) the elector has submitted a change of
30 address form for purposes of a state motor vehicle
31 operator's license, unless the elector states on
32 the form that the change of address is not for
33 voter registration purposes, (2) the elector has
34 submitted a change of address form to a voter
35 registration agency described in section 9-23n and
36 such agency has provided such change of address to
37 the registrars of voters or (3) the registrars of
38 voters have received a cancellation of previous
39 registration from any other election official
40 indicating that such elector has registered as an
41 elector outside such municipality. Whenever the
42 registrars of voters of a town remove from the
43 registry list the name of an elector who has
44 submitted a change of address to the Commissioner
45 of Motor Vehicles or a voter registration agency
46 under subdivision (1) or (2) of this section,
47 indicating that he has moved out of such town, the
48 registrars shall send the elector, by forwardable
49 mail to [his] THE ELECTOR'S former address from
50 such list OR CURRENT ADDRESS IN THE NEW TOWN, (A)
51 a notice of removal, (B) information explaining
52 how to have his name restored to such list, which
53 shall be in a form prescribed by the Secretary of
54 the State, and (C) a mail-in voter registration
55 application which can be used by the elector to
56 apply for admission as an elector in the new town.
57 If such notice, information and application are
58 SENT TO THE ELECTOR'S FORMER ADDRESS AND ARE
59 returned undeliverable, the registrars shall mail
60 such documents to the elector's address in the new
61 town. The registrars shall enter the names on such
62 list by street and number of the house, when the
63 houses are numbered, so that there shall be
64 entered on the list first, the street, avenue or
65 road; second, the number of the house or residence
66 in numerical order or, if the registrars of any
67 town find it more convenient, by odd and even
68 numbers in numerical order; and third, the names
69 of the electors in such house in alphabetical
70 order. The names of any electors who cannot be so
71 listed shall be listed alphabetically in the

72 voting district wherein any such elector is a bona
73 fide resident. The registrars of voters may
74 consecutively number the names on the registry
75 list, provided such list shall comply in all
76 respects with the requirements of law other than
77 for the addition of such numbers. In any case in
78 which the registrars have obtained reliable
79 information of an elector's change of address
80 within the municipality, they shall enter the name
81 of such elector on the registry list at the place
82 where he then resides, provided, if such reliable
83 information is the National Change of Address
84 System of the United States Postal Service, the
85 registrar shall change the registry list and send
86 the elector a notice of the change by forwardable
87 mail and a postage prepaid preaddressed return
88 form by which the elector may verify or correct
89 the address information. If during the canvass the
90 registrars determine that an elector has moved out
91 of town and such elector has not confirmed in
92 writing that he has moved out of the town, the
93 registrars shall, not later than May first, send
94 to the elector, by forwardable mail, a notice
95 required by the National Voter Registration Act of
96 1993, P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time,
97 together with a postage prepaid preaddressed
98 return card on which the elector may state his
99 current address. In the year of a presidential
100 preference primary, the registrars shall send such
101 notice not earlier than the date of such primary.
102 If the registrar does not receive the return card
103 within thirty days after it is sent, the elector's
104 name shall be placed on the inactive registry list
105 for four years. At the expiration of such period
106 of time on the inactive registry list, such name
107 shall be removed from the registry list. If such
108 elector applies to restore his name to the active
109 registry list or votes during such period, his
110 name shall be restored to the active registry
111 list. Such registrars shall retain a duplicate
112 copy or record of each such notice in their office
113 or, if they do not have a permanent office, in the
114 office space provided under section 9-5a, and
115 shall note on such duplicate copy or record the
116 date on which such notice was mailed. In each
117 municipality, any elector, upon change of
118 residence within the municipality, may cause his
119 registration to be transferred to his new address

120 by presenting to the registrars a signed request
121 therefor, stating his present address, the date he
122 moved to such address and the address at which he
123 was last registered. The registrars shall
124 thereupon enter his name on the list at his new
125 residence; provided no transfer of registration
126 shall be made on the registry list on election day
127 without the consent of both registrars.

128 Sec. 2. Subsection (f) of section 9-265 of
129 the general statutes is repealed and the following
130 is substituted in lieu thereof:

131 (f) A write-in ballot shall be cast in its
132 appropriate place on the voting machine. A
133 write-in ballot for Governor and Lieutenant
134 Governor, or for President and Vice-President, as
135 the case may be, shall be written in a single
136 space, provided that if only one name is written
137 in the space it shall be deemed to be a vote for
138 Governor, or for President, as the case may be,
139 unless otherwise indicated. A write-in ballot
140 shall be written upon the paper contained in the
141 receptacle or device provided in the voting
142 machine for such purpose. The registrars of voters
143 shall cause an adhesive label, provided by the
144 Secretary of the State, upon which shall be
145 imprinted the words "write-in slides", to be
146 affixed to the upper left-hand corner of each
147 voting machine, directly opposite the write-in
148 slides. THE REGISTRARS SHALL (1) LOCK ALL WRITE-IN
149 SLIDES IF THERE ARE NO REGISTERED WRITE-IN
150 CANDIDATES FOR ANY OFFICE OR (2) LOCK THE WRITE-IN
151 SLIDES FOR MULTIPLE-OPENING OFFICES IF THERE ARE
152 REGISTERED WRITE-IN CANDIDATES ONLY FOR SINGLE
153 OPENING OFFICES.

154 Sec. 3. Subsection (e) of section 9-436 of
155 the general statutes, as amended by section 53 of
156 public act 97-47, is repealed and the following is
157 substituted in lieu thereof:

158 (e) The registrar shall designate one of the
159 moderators so appointed by him to be head
160 moderator or shall appoint as head moderator an
161 elector who is not also moderator of a polling
162 place and who shall be deemed a primary official.
163 The registrar may also appoint a deputy head
164 moderator to assist the head moderator in the
165 performance of his duties. A deputy head moderator
166 shall also be deemed to be a primary official.
167 Each registrar's appointments of primary polling

168 place officials, EXCEPT MODERATORS OF POLLING
169 PLACES, and of designees to conduct supervised
170 voting of absentee ballots pursuant to sections
171 9-159q and 9-159r shall be divided equally, as
172 nearly as may be, between designees of the
173 party-endorsed candidates and designees of one or
174 more of the contestants, provided, if a
175 party-endorsed candidate is a member of a party
176 other than the one holding the primary, such
177 primary officials, except voting machine
178 mechanics, shall be enrolled party members of the
179 party holding the primary. Names of designees and
180 alternate designees for such positions shall be
181 submitted in writing by party-endorsed candidates
182 and contestants to the registrar not later than
183 ten days before the primary, except that names of
184 designees and alternate designees for the position
185 of moderator shall be so submitted not later than
186 twenty-one days before the primary and, if such
187 lists are not so presented, all such appointments
188 shall be made by the registrar but in the
189 above-mentioned proportion. The registrar shall
190 notify all such candidates and contestants of
191 their right to submit a list of designees under
192 this section. Notwithstanding any other provision
193 of this section, the registrar shall appoint as
194 moderators only persons who are certified to serve
195 as moderators or alternate moderators pursuant to
196 section 9-229, unless there is an insufficient
197 number of such persons who are enrolled members of
198 the registrar's party in the municipality or
199 political subdivision holding the primary, in
200 which case the registrar may appoint a new
201 moderator in accordance with section 9-229, but
202 only to the extent of such insufficiency. Primary
203 central counting moderators and absentee ballot
204 counters shall also be deemed primary officials.
205 No primary official shall perform services for any
206 candidate at the primary on primary day.

207 Sec. 4. Subsection (a) of section 9-17 of the
208 general statutes, as amended by section 6 of
209 public act 97-67, is repealed and the following is
210 substituted in lieu thereof:

211 (a) For the purposes of this section,
212 "primary day" means the day [scheduled for] THAT A
213 primary for state, district and municipal offices
214 IS BEING HELD in accordance with section 9-423,
215 [regardless of whether the municipality will hold

216 a primary] and "election day" means the day of
 217 each regular election. (1) The registrars of
 218 voters of each town shall hold sessions to examine
 219 the qualifications of electors and admit those
 220 found qualified on the dates and at the times set
 221 forth in this section. Such sessions shall be held
 222 on the following days during the hours indicated,
 223 except as provided in subdivision (2) of this
 224 subsection:

225	Day	Hours
226	Fourteenth day before	
227	primary day.....	any two hours between
228		5:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.
229	Saturday of third week	
230	before election	
231	day.....	10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
232	Fourteenth day before	
233	election day.....	9:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

234 The session of the registrars of voters on the
 235 fourteenth day before election day shall be the
 236 last regular session for the admission of electors
 237 prior to an election, as defined in subsection (y)
 238 of section 9-1. (2) No town having a population of
 239 less than twenty-five thousand persons shall be
 240 required to hold sessions for admission of
 241 electors on the fourteenth day before primary day.

242 Sec. 5. Section 9-259 of the general statutes
 243 is repealed and the following is substituted in
 244 lieu thereof:

245 The moderator of the election in each
 246 municipality, voting district or ward shall appear
 247 at the office of the municipal clerk not later
 248 than eight o'clock p.m. of the day before the
 249 election and there receive from the municipal
 250 clerk the sample ballot labels, three complete
 251 sets of ballot labels and all checklists and other
 252 supplies necessary to conduct the election and
 253 make return thereof. He shall receive a sealed
 254 envelope, and a receipt therefor, containing only
 255 the number two and number three election official
 256 keys for each voting machine. Each such envelope
 257 shall bear the number of the machine to which the
 258 keys belong. THE NUMBER FOUR ELECTION OFFICIAL KEY

259 FOR EACH VOTING MACHINE SHALL BE AVAILABLE TO THE
260 REGISTRARS FOR THE USE OF THE MECHANICS BEGINNING
261 AT 5:15 A.M. ON THE DAY OF THE ELECTION. On the
262 morning of the election, the election officials
263 shall meet at the room where the election is to be
264 held at least forty-five minutes before the time
265 for opening the polls. The moderator shall then
266 cause the three sample ballot labels and
267 instruction cards to be posted and everything put
268 in readiness for the commencement of voting at the
269 hour of opening the polls. The envelope containing
270 the keys shall not be opened until at least one
271 election official from each of two political
272 parties is present at the polling place and has
273 examined the envelope to see that it has not been
274 opened. Before opening the envelope, all election
275 officials present shall examine the number of the
276 seal of the machine and the number registered on
277 the protective counter, if one is provided, and
278 shall see if they are the same as the numbers
279 written on the envelope containing the keys. If
280 the numbers are found not to agree, the envelope
281 shall not be opened until the mechanic in charge
282 of the machine, or the registrars or one of the
283 registrars under whose direction the machine was
284 prepared under section 9-243, has been notified
285 and has presented himself at the polling place for
286 the purpose of reexamining such machine and has
287 certified that it is properly arranged. If the
288 numbers on the seal and the protective counter, if
289 one is provided, are found to agree with the
290 numbers on the envelope, the election officials
291 shall proceed to open the doors concealing the
292 counters. The election officials, in the presence
293 of the party watchers, shall compare the ballot
294 labels on the machine with the sample ballot
295 labels to see that they are correct, and, if the
296 machine is not so labeled, set and adjusted and in
297 order, they shall immediately label, set and
298 adjust the same and place it in order, or cause it
299 to be done, examine and see that all the counters
300 in the machine are set at zero (000) and that the
301 machine is otherwise in perfect order and make
302 written report thereof as hereinbefore directed
303 and they shall not thereafter permit the counters
304 to be operated or moved except by electors in
305 voting. If the machine is equipped with a device
306 for printing totals of candidate and question

307 counters, the doors concealing the counters shall
308 not be opened. The election officials shall
309 examine the printed record produced by the machine
310 to see that each counter registers zero and shall
311 allow watchers to examine the printed record. They
312 shall also see that all necessary arrangements and
313 adjustments are made for voting write-in ballots
314 on the machine and that the machine and its
315 attachments are properly set or adjusted so that
316 the elector will be concealed while in the act of
317 voting. There shall be printed directions for the
318 guidance of the election officials before the
319 polls are opened and when the polls are closed.
320 The moderator's return which the moderator
321 receives from the municipal clerk for state
322 elections shall be in a form prescribed by the
323 Secretary of the State. There shall be printed on
324 the moderators' returns a certificate, which shall
325 be signed by the election officials before the
326 polls are opened, showing the delivery of the keys
327 in a sealed envelope; the number on the seal; the
328 number registered on the protective counter, if
329 one is provided; whether all of the counters are
330 set at zero (000); whether the public counter is
331 set at zero (000); whether the ballot labels are
332 properly placed in the machine; also a
333 certificate, which shall be filled out after the
334 polls have been closed, that the machine has been
335 locked against voting and sealed; the number of
336 electors as shown on the public counter; the
337 number on the seal; the number registered on the
338 protective counter, if one is provided, and that
339 the voting machine is closed and locked. The
340 moderators' returns shall show the total number of
341 votes cast for each office, the number of votes
342 cast for each candidate, as shown on his counter,
343 and the number of votes for persons not nominated,
344 which shall be certified by the moderator,
345 checkers and registrars, or assistant registrars,
346 as the case may be. If any of the counters are not
347 set at zero and the election officials are not
348 able to set them at zero, the actual number
349 registered or indicated on such counters shall be
350 entered on such tally sheet, and, at the end of
351 the election, that number shall be deducted from
352 the number then shown on the counter to ascertain
353 the true vote cast for the candidate to whom such
354 counter belongs. The mechanic's seal on the

355 machine shall not be broken until the officials
356 have assembled on the morning of the election. The
357 officials shall examine the seal before breaking
358 it.

359 Sec. 6. (NEW) (a) There is created a
360 committee for the purpose of establishing programs
361 and procedures for training, examining and
362 certifying registrars of voters, deputy registrars
363 of voters and permanent assistants, as described
364 in section 9-192 of the general statutes. The
365 committee shall consist of six members, one of
366 whom shall be from the Office of the Secretary of
367 the State, one of whom shall be from the State
368 Elections Enforcement Commission, and four of whom
369 shall be registrars of voters. The Secretary of
370 the State shall appoint the registrars of voters,
371 in consultation with the Registrars of Voters
372 Association of Connecticut, or its successor
373 organization. The committee members shall serve
374 without pay. The Secretary of the State shall
375 determine the length of the terms of the initial
376 members, in accordance with the following: Two of
377 such members shall serve for a one-year term; two
378 of such members shall serve for a two-year term;
379 and two of such members shall serve for a
380 four-year term. Thereafter, all members shall
381 serve for four-year terms. The committee shall
382 select a chairperson, who shall be one of the
383 appointed registrars. The committee shall adopt
384 regulations in accordance with the provisions of
385 chapter 54 of the general statutes, establishing
386 the training, examination and certification
387 requirements of registrars, deputies and permanent
388 assistants. In the adoption of said regulations,
389 the committee (1) shall consider whether the
390 prescribed training leading to certification may,
391 in part, be satisfied through participation in the
392 required two conferences a year called by the
393 Secretary of the State, pursuant to section 9-6 of
394 the general statutes, for purposes of discussing
395 the election laws, procedures or matters related
396 to election laws and procedures and (2) may
397 recommend programs at one or more institutions of
398 higher education that satisfy criteria established
399 by the committee.

400 (b) Any registrar of voters, deputy or
401 permanent assistant may participate in the course
402 of training prescribed by the committee and, upon

403 completing such training and successfully
404 completing any examination or examinations
405 prescribed by the committee, shall be recommended
406 by the committee, to the Secretary of the State as
407 a candidate for certification as a certified
408 Connecticut registrar of voters. The Secretary of
409 the State shall certify any such qualified,
410 recommended candidate as a certified Connecticut
411 registrar of voters. The Secretary of the State
412 may rescind any such certificate only upon a
413 finding, by a majority of the committee, of
414 sufficient cause as defined by the regulations
415 adopted pursuant to subsection (a) of this
416 section.

417 (c) No provision of this section shall
418 require any registrar of voters, deputy or
419 permanent assistant to be a certified registrar of
420 voters.

421 Sec. 7. Section 9-244 of the general statutes
422 is repealed and the following is substituted in
423 lieu thereof:

424 (a) Such registrars of voters shall give
425 written notice to the chairmen of the town
426 committees of the political parties of the day and
427 place a mechanic or mechanics will begin the
428 preparation, TEST VOTING AND SEALING of the
429 machines for the election, including any
430 additional machines required under section 9-238.
431 SUCH NOTICE SHALL BE GIVEN AT LEAST ONE DAY BEFORE
432 THE WORK ON THE PREPARATION OF SUCH MACHINES
433 BEGINS.

434 (b) Each such chairman and any candidate for
435 an office appearing on the ballot may be present,
436 or may designate a watcher who may be present,
437 during the preparation of such machines, but such
438 chairmen, candidates and watchers shall not
439 interfere with, OR ASSIST IN, the preparation of
440 the machines. [or assist in their preparation.
441 Such notice shall be given at least one day before
442 the work on the preparation of such machines
443 begins. Any such chairmen and candidates]

444 (c) AFTER THE MECHANIC OR MECHANICS HAVE
445 PREPARED THE MACHINES, (1) THE REGISTRARS OF
446 VOTERS, OR THEIR DESIGNEES, WHO SHALL NOT INCLUDE
447 ANY SUCH MECHANICS, AND (2) ALL MECHANICS WHO
448 PREPARED SUCH MACHINES SHALL BE PRESENT TOGETHER
449 WHEN THE MACHINES ARE TESTED AND SEALED FOR USE IN
450 THE ELECTION. THE CHAIRMEN OF THE TOWN COMMITTEES

451 OF THE POLITICAL PARTIES AND ANY CANDIDATE FOR AN
452 OFFICE APPEARING ON THE BALLOT MAY ALSO BE
453 PRESENT, OR MAY DESIGNATE A WATCHER WHO MAY BE
454 PRESENT, DURING THE TESTING AND SEALING, BUT SUCH
455 CHAIRMEN, CANDIDATES AND WATCHERS SHALL NOT
456 INTERFERE WITH THE TESTING OR SEALING. ALL SUCH
457 PERSONS who are present [and the watchers] FOR THE
458 TESTING AND SEALING OF THE MACHINES, EXCEPT THE
459 MECHANICS, shall file a written report, as
460 provided in section 9-245, AS AMENDED BY THIS ACT,
461 certifying (A) to the [number] NUMBERS of the
462 [machine] MACHINES, (B) as to whether all the
463 candidate and question counters are set at zero
464 (000), (C) as to the [number] NUMBERS registered
465 on the protective [counter] COUNTERS, if [one is]
466 provided, and the [number] NUMBERS on the [seal]
467 SEALS, (D) THAT THE BALLOT LABELS ARE PROPERLY
468 PLACED ON THE MACHINES, AND (E) THAT THE MACHINES
469 HAVE BEEN TEST-VOTED AND FOUND TO BE WORKING
470 PROPERLY.

471 Sec. 8. Section 9-245 of the general statutes
472 is repealed and the following is substituted in
473 lieu thereof:

474 The reports of the mechanics, provided for
475 under section 9-246, and the [reports of the party
476 watchers, party chairmen and candidates,] REPORT
477 provided for under SUBSECTION (c) OF section
478 9-244, AS AMENDED BY THIS ACT, shall be filed with
479 the municipal clerk and shall be kept by him for
480 at least sixty days after the election for which
481 the machines were so prepared.

482 Sec. 9. This act shall take effect July 1,
483 1998.

484 STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS: In
485 subdivision (2) of section 2, "WRITE-IN SLIDES"
486 was changed to "WRITE-IN CANDIDATES" for accuracy
487 and statutory consistency and in section 5
488 "BEGINNING" was inserted for clarity.

489 GAE COMMITTEE VOTE: YEA 17 NAY 0 JFS

* * * * *

"THE FOLLOWING FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND BILL ANALYSIS ARE PREPARED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SOLELY FOR PURPOSES OF INFORMATION, SUMMARIZATION AND EXPLANATION AND DO NOT REPRESENT THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OR EITHER HOUSE THEREOF FOR ANY PURPOSE."

* * * * *

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT - BILL NUMBER SHB 5688

STATE IMPACT	See Explanation Below
MUNICIPAL IMPACT	Potential Cost, see explanation below
STATE AGENCY(S)	Secretary of the State

EXPLANATION OF ESTIMATES:

STATE IMPACT: The bill does not specify, however, since the committee must recommend registrars for certification, it is assumed that the committee would be an on-going one. To the extent that the Secretary of the State provides administrative support to the committee, minimal additional costs and workload increase could occur.

In addition, it is not anticipated that academic institutions in the state would develop a new curriculum to satisfy the requirements of the bill. Instead, it is assumed that an outside provider would be used, thus no additional costs would be incurred by the state institutions of higher education. The cost of the contract with the provider is expected to be covered by the fee charged to participants.

MUNICIPAL IMPACT: To the extent that municipalities elect to have their registrar of voters, deputies, and permanent assistants participate in the training process required for certification, additional costs could result. The extent of the additional costs are not known as it is contingent upon the number of individuals that each town enrolls in the training program and the cost of the program.

Simplifying the procedures registrars use to send a notice of removal is expected to result in a minimal savings and workload decrease.

In addition, deleting the mandatory voter registration before a primary would result in a savings to municipalities that do not have a primary scheduled.

* * * * *

OLR BILL ANALYSIS

sHB 5688

AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION PROCEDURES

SUMMARY: This bill:

1. establishes a program for training, examining, and certifying registrars of voters, deputy registrars, and permanent assistant registrars of voters;
2. adds test voting and sealing to the preparation procedures that registrars and voting machine mechanics conduct before an election;
3. requires that the "number four election machine key" be available to registrars of voters early on election day;
4. permits a registrar to appoint polling place moderators in a primary who are not equally divided among the candidates' designees;
5. requires registrars to lock write-in slides on voting machines when there is no registered write-in candidate for any office;
6. simplifies procedures registrars use to send a notice of removal; and
7. deletes the mandatory voter registration session before a primary date when the town has no primary scheduled.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 1998

FURTHER EXPLANATION**Certification for Registrars of Voters**

The bill creates a six-member committee that must establish optional programs and procedures for training, examining, and certifying registrars of voters, their deputies, and permanent assistants. Under the bill, such officials are not required to hold certification. The committee's members are (1) a representative of the Office of the Secretary of the State, (2) a representative of the State Elections Enforcement Commission, and (3) four registrars appointed by the secretary, in consultation with the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut. Committee members must designate one of the registrars to serve as chairman.

The members serve for staggered four-year terms; the secretary designates members' initial terms, which may be for one, two, or four years. Committee members serve without pay.

The bill requires the committee to adopt regulations establishing the training, examination, and certification requirements. The bill directs the committee to consider permitting the secretary's biannual conferences for registrars as partially satisfying the training requirement and to recommend programs at academic institutions that meet its criteria.

The committee must recommend for certification to the secretary registrars who have completed the training and successfully taken any examinations it prescribes. The secretary must certify the candidates the committee recommends but can rescind certification only if a majority of the members find cause to do so. The committee must define in its regulations the circumstances that constitute sufficient cause for certification rescission.

Voting Machines

Test Voting. The bill adds test voting to the procedures that mechanics and registrars must follow before an election. Current law requires the registrars to notify the political parties' town

committee chairmen when the mechanics are scheduled to prepare the machines and permits them, along with candidates and others, to observe. Under the bill, the registrars and the mechanics must together test and seal the machines that will be used in the election. The bill permits the party chairmen, candidates, or their designees to observe the testing and sealing, in addition to the preparation itself. But they cannot interfere with the testing, and the bill bans them from assisting in the earlier preparation process.

Current law requires any chairmen and candidates who observe the preparation process to file a written report with the town clerk certifying that the machines were properly prepared. The bill adds anyone else present to the reporting requirement and adds the proper placement of the ballot labels and whether the machines were test-voted and found to be working to the contents of the report.

Keys. The bill requires that the number four election machine key be available to the registrars beginning at 5:15 a.m. on election day (the time when the election officials must meet at the polling place, 45 minutes before the polls open). Under current law, the election moderator gets custody of the other keys the night before the election. The bill gives registrars access to the key only for the machine mechanics' use.

Write-In Slides. By law, the only votes for write-in candidates that can be counted are those for candidates who have properly registered with the secretary of the state between 14 and 90 days before the election. The bill requires registrars to disable or lock the write-in slide voters use to vote for a write-in candidate if there are no registered write-in candidates for any office on the ballot. In that case, no write-in votes could be tabulated, even if voters put them down. The bill also requires registrars to lock slides for multiple-opening offices if the only registered candidates are running for single opening offices.

Moderator at a Primary

The bill exempts polling place moderators at a primary from the requirement that a registrar appoint an equal number from the designees of the party-endorsed

candidates and those of the challenge candidates. A registrar still must appoint people certified as moderators from among the party members in the town or political subdivision. (The bill leaves a reference to the proportionate distribution that it eliminates.)

Notice of Removal

The bill allows registrars to send the notice of removal from the registry list to the person's new address when they know a voter has moved. Under current law, registrars find out that a voter has moved when the voter sends a change of address notice to the Department of Motor Vehicles or other state offices designated as voter registration agencies. Those offices forward the information to the registrars in the town where the voter used to live. Along with the notice of removal, registrars send information the voter can use to have his name restored to the list and a mail-in application that the voter can use to register in the new town.

BACKGROUND

Number Four Key

Key four unlocks the compartment in the back of the voting machine that mechanics use to set the machine's operation to correspond to the ballot, such as the mechanisms that allow voters to vote for multiple opening offices. It also contains the latch they set that detects tampering.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute
Yea 17 Nay 0