

POLITICAL PARTY COUNTY COMMITTEES

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House Bill 5794

Sponsor: Rep. Pete Lund

Committee: Redistricting and Elections

Complete to 9-10-12

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5794 AS INTRODUCED 8-15-12

House Bill 5794 would amend nine sections of the Michigan Election Law (MCL 168.592 et al.) to eliminate the provision that requires political party executive committees to establish "county committees," and instead transfers the duties of county committees to county executive committees by changing the references in each section of the law from "county committee" to "county executive committee."

Now under the law, a political party's state-level business is overseen by a *state central committee*, while all local business is carried out by *county executive committees*, and also *county committees*. Both the state- and county-level committees have officers (including a chairperson and secretary) elected from among the members. Generally, the Election Law describes the protocol followed by both the state central committee and county committees when they convene state and county conventions to, among other things, select candidates for court and education posts, and elect delegates to state and national nominating conventions. Overall, House Bill 5794 would retain the provisions of law that describe the committees' duties and protocols.

Further, current law at Section 168.599(4) requires that after the officers of the county committee have taken office, and within 45 days after January 1 of each odd-numbered year, *the executive committee select a county committee for the party. That committee must consist of not less than two members from each township, and two members from each ward of each city in the county, or it must consist of at least two members from each election precinct in the county (as determined by the executive committee)*. Under the law, the committee has the right to appoint officers to carry out its purposes, and also the power to fill a vacancy, which may occur in its membership or its offices. Further, the law specifies that between meetings of the county committee, the executive committee has all of the powers and performs all of the duties of the county committee, including the filling of vacancies in nominations, as prescribed by law. Finally, the law specifies that the term of service of a county committee continues for two years until the selection of its successor. House Bill 5794 would eliminate this subsection of the law.

Under the bill, the duties of the "county committees" would become the responsibility of "county executive committees." Under current law [at 168.599(1)], "county executive committees" comprise the elected officials and nominees for partisan political office, as well as delegate-appointed members. Specifically, since 1967, the law requires that the delegates to a political party's fall county convention (in every county having fewer than

1.5 million people), convene, at the call of the chair and within 20 days of the November election, select a number of people equal to the number of county offices and state legislative offices for which candidates were nominated at the two preceding fall primary elections, and these people together with the people most recently nominated by the party for each of these offices constitutes the county executive committee. The law also describes, among other things, how new nominees replace former nominees, and requires that the secretary of each county executive committee certify the names and addresses of the people chosen to the county clerk. House Bill 5794 would retain these provisions.

FISCAL IMPACT:

As written, the bill would have no state or local revenue impact.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.