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Senate Bill 752 (Substitute S-1 as reported by the Committee of the Whole)
Sponsor: Senator Goeff Hansen
Committee: Local Government and Elections

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Michigan Election Law to do the following:

- Revise procedures applicable to an absent voter counting board.
- Delete certain provisions related to a board of canvassers conducting a recount in a precinct that uses paper ballots or voting machines.
- Require a political party, other than a major political party, to notify the Secretary of State and the Bureau of Elections at least 10 days before holding its county caucus or State convention.

The bill would delete current provisions authorizing the use of absent voter counting boards, and requiring them under certain circumstances. Instead, if a city, township, or village decided to use absent voter counting boards, the applicable board of election commissioners would have to establish an absent voter counting board for each election day precinct, and the board's ballot form would have to correspond to the ballot form of that precinct.

In all primary elections, where absent voter counting boards are used, each ballot form that contains identical offices and names must be considered a separate precinct for purposes of the appearance of names on the ballot, if there are more names than candidates to be nominated for an office, and the same office appears in more than one precinct. Under the bill, instead, if a municipality had 250 or more precincts and absent voter counting boards were used, each ballot form that contained identical offices and names *could* be considered a separate precinct for these purposes. For the purposes of the entire Law, except as otherwise provided, an absent voter counting board would be a separate precinct. (The provisions apply to nonpartisan general elections and to municipal elections.)

The bill also would delete references to a school district or other jurisdiction in provisions requiring the Secretary of State to develop instructions for the conduct of absent voter counting boards, and specifying the entities upon which the instructions are binding. Under the bill, the instruction provisions would be binding upon the operation of a counting board used in an election conducted only by a county, city, township, or village.

The bill would take effect June 1, 2012.

MCL 168.569a et al.

Legislative Analyst: Julie Cassidy

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Date Completed: 2-8-12

Fiscal Analyst: Joe Carrasco