

Legislative Analysis



ELIMINATE COUNTY COMMISSION SPECIAL ELECTIONS TO FILL VACANCIES

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Senate Bill 204

Sponsor: Sen. Mike Kowall

House Committee: Redistricting and Elections

Senate Committee: Local Government and Elections

Complete to 12-3-12

A SUMMARY OF SENATE BILL 204 AS PASSED BY THE SENATE 1-25-12

Senate Bill 204 would amend Public Act 261 of 1966, which governs the apportionment of county boards of commissioners (MCL 46.412), to eliminate a requirement that a special election be held when a county commission vacancy occurs in an odd-numbered year. [County commissioners serve two-year terms concurrent with the terms of state representatives.]

Now under the law, a county board of commissioners must fill a vacancy in the office of commissioner by appointment within 30 days after the vacancy occurs. In an odd-numbered year, the appointed person serves until the vacancy is filled in a special election called by the board. In an election year, the appointed person serves for the remainder of the unexpired term.

Under Senate Bill 204, a person appointed to fill a vacancy would serve for the remainder of the unexpired term, whether the vacancy occurred in an odd-numbered year or an election year.

The bill would retain a requirement that a vacancy be filled by a special election if the county board of commissioners did not appoint someone within 30 days.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Senate Bill 204 would reduce local expenditures by an indeterminate amount. There would be no impact on the State. Any annual fiscal impact would depend on the number of county commissioner vacancies that would require a special election under current law. There is currently no data available on the cost of county commissioner special elections. As a point of reference, a general statewide election costs approximately \$2,000 per precinct.

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