

Legislative Analysis



POLLING PLACE LOCATIONS

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House Bill 4492 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Ann M. Bollin
Committee: Elections and Ethics
Complete to 3-16-21

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4492 would amend the Michigan Election Law to expand the types of locations that may be used as polling places.

Currently, school buildings, fire stations, police stations, and other publicly owned or controlled buildings must be used as polling places. Other buildings owned by tax-exempt organizations may be designated if public buildings are not available or convenient. A building owned by a person that is a sponsor of a political committee or independent committee cannot be designated as a polling place.

The bill would require that, before designating a building that is not publicly owned or controlled as a polling place, the city or township clerk must obtain a signed affidavit from the building's owner or manager, certifying that the building owner is not a sponsor of a political committee or independent committee.

Additionally, senior housing facilities or complexes and apartment buildings or complexes in which 150 or more people reside may currently be designated as polling places. The bill would allow this only if a suitable polling place as described above were not reasonably available or convenient, and as long as the facility was not owned by a person that is a sponsor of a political committee or independent committee and the facility's owner or manager complied with the non-sponsorship affidavit requirement. The bill would also expand the allowed polling place locations, subject to the same restrictions, to include a privately owned clubhouse or conference center located in an apartment or condominium complex, a hotel or motel conference center, or a recreation clubhouse such as a golf course clubhouse or park complex clubhouse.

Finally, the bill would provide that the entrance to a privately owned facility to be used as a polling place as described above must be at least 100 yards away from the entrance to any building that is owned by a person that is a sponsor of a political committee or independent committee.

MCL 168.662

BACKGROUND:

The bill is similar to House Bill 5031 of the 2019-20 legislative session. That bill would have expanded the allowable locations to include privately owned clubhouses or conference centers and the other locations, but would not have included the affidavit of non-sponsorship requirement. HB 5031 was referred from the House Elections and Ethics committee and considered by the House Ways and Means committee.

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 4492 would have no fiscal impact on the Department of State but may provide minimal cost savings to local units of government by allowing buildings other than publicly owned buildings to be designated as polling locations.

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