

ELECTION INSPECTOR REQUIREMENTS

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 4876 (H-1) as reported from committee

Sponsor: Rep. Julie Alexander

Committee: Elections and Ethics

Complete to 10-11-21

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

SUMMARY:

House Bill 4876 would amend the Michigan Election Law to modify the application requirements for a person seeking to serve as an election inspector.

Currently, an applicant must submit an application with the city or township clerk, indicating personal information, including political party affiliation. The bill would require that the affiliation be recognized by the secretary of state. In addition, under the bill, the application would have to include an attestation signed by the applicant under penalty of perjury that the information provided is true, complete, and accurate.

Additionally, clerks would have to do all of the following:

- As is currently required, maintain a file of applications and make them available for public inspection at the clerk's office during normal business hours.
- Provide to the chairperson of each precinct and absent voter (AV) counting board in the city or township a list of the individuals assigned to the precinct or AV counting board as precinct election inspectors that certifies that the individuals have a complete application on file, including the required political party affiliation.
- Make the list of assignments and affiliations available for public inspection.
- Provide to the chairperson of each political party committee in the county where the city or township is located a certified list containing the political party affiliation of each individual acting as a precinct election inspector in each precinct and AV counting board in the city or township.

MCL 168.677

BRIEF DISCUSSION:

Opponents charged that the bill represented an unfunded mandate that would place additional burdens on local clerks, including the addition of an attestation on existing forms, distributing lists of party affiliations and precinct assignments to various parties, and responding to inquiries about inspectors' political affiliations instead of doing the important work of administering elections. Because party affiliations are already gathered and made available to the public during normal business hours, they argued that the requirements in the bill are duplicative and unnecessary. However, proponents argued that the requirements of the bill can easily be absorbed into the work that clerks already do, so there would be no additional cost. They pointed to the importance of including inspectors from both major parties and argued that the party affiliations of inspectors should be more readily available to the public in the interest of transparency.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on the state or local units of government.

POSITIONS:

A representative of Pure Integrity for Michigan Elections testified in support of the bill. (9-15-21)

A representative of the Secretary of State testified in opposition to the bill. (9-15-21)

The following entities indicated opposition to the bill (9-14-21):

- Promote the Vote
- ACLU of Michigan
- Voters Not Politicians
- Michigan Democratic Party
- Michigan League of Conservation Voters

Legislative Analyst: Jenny McInerney
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