

Election Laws
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In keeping with past practices this Election Laws Issues Briefing Report is in two parts. The first part covers election laws legislative activities in the 98th Illinois General Assembly from January 2013 through December 2013. The second part provides information about the administration of elections in Illinois.

LEGISLATIVE ACTIVITY More than 100 bills dealing with elections were introduced. By the time of adjournment in the fall four had been passed and signed by the governor. One bill was given an amendatory veto by the governor. That bill died when no positive action was taken by the legislature.

The only League action taken was to send a letter to the House Executive Committee concerning the proposal to permit 17 year olds to vote in the primary. The letter suggested that the committee amend the legislation to include elections held in odd-numbered years. This addition would have brought some uniformity in the election code. The committee did not amend the bill. A brief description of the adopted legislation is given here.

PA 98-0594 – Provides that the county officers' electoral board shall hear and pass upon objections to nominations for municipal offices, for township offices, if the township is wholly located in one county, and for community college district offices. Provides that if a municipality, school district, or community college district is located in 2 or more counties, the county officers' electoral boards of the county in which the principal offices of the municipality, school district, community college district are located shall hear and pass on the objections. Deletes provisions concerning the municipal officers' electoral board, the township officers' electoral board, and the education officers' electoral board.

PA 98-0051 – Provides that a person who is 17 years old on the date of the primary may vote at the primary if that person is otherwise qualified and will be 18 years old on the date of the following election.

PA98-0127 – Amends the Township Code providing for the dissolution of a township by referendum. The original proposal was amended so its application is limited to townships having particular characteristics.

PA 98-0115 – This is the Omnibus Elections legislation for the 2013 session. It took effect on October 1, 2013. It was a 194 page bill that makes changes in the Election Code, the Illinois Municipal Code, the Fox Waterway Agency Act, the School Code and others. It also deals with early voting, directs the State Board of Elections to develop rules relating to processing provisional ballots. Significantly, it also provides for the creation of an on-line voter registration system.

ELECTION ADMINISTRATION ACTIVITY

The State Board of Elections is moving to implement the Paperless Online Voter Application (POVA). They expect to meet the statutory implementation date of July 1, 2014.

Working cooperatively the local election authorities and the State Board of Elections are reducing the number of duplicate voter registrations in the Illinois Voter Registration Database.

A recent report prepared by the Brennan Center for Justice offers seven recommendations relating to early voting practices. The members of the Illinois Board of Elections were very pleased to find that Illinois already has many of these in place.

It is expected that the SBE will continue to seek legislation to clean up the Election Code.