



SENATE AMENDMENT

Elections/ City Vacancies HF 2366

Status of Bill: Senate Amendment
Committee: State Government (passed House 99-0; passed Senate 47-0)
Lead Democrats: Reps. Prichard and Winckler
Floor Manager: Rep. Costello
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Background

HF 2366 was amended and passed the House by a vote of 99-0 on March 4, 2014. The Senate amended and passed the bill by a vote of 47-0 on March 31, 2014.

Summary of HF 2366

The bill does the following two things:

1. **Voter Registration Forms Stored Electronically.** Current Iowa law requires county auditors to retain active voter registration forms; they can only destroy non-active. This is causing storage problems for some of the larger counties with having to keep all the paper forms. Under Chapter 331.606 county recorders can file a document in its original format, as an electronic document, or in another format to preserve the information. A person may view and copy an original or unaltered document in the recorder's office. This bill provides similar language for the county auditor's office so they can store voter registration forms electronically and not have to have storage room for paper copies.
2. **City Election Vacancies.** Requires appointments to city councils be made within 60 days after the vacancy occurs, and it will be for the period until the next regular city election, unless there is an intervening special election for that city, in which event the election for the office will be placed on the special election ballot. Current law says the appointment must be made within 40 days after the vacancy occurs and must be on the next pending election ballot.

Summary of H-8199 – Senate Amendment to HF 2366

The Senate amendment adds the following four things:

1. **Filing City Election Papers.** The amendment requires nomination papers for city elections are filed with the county auditor's office and not the city clerks' office, which is current law.
2. **Pre-Voter Registration for Primary Elections.** Closes pre-voter registration for primary elections 11 days prior to the election (therefore county auditors do not have to be open on that Saturday). The county auditor's noted that during the 2012 primary election, statewide, only 43 people registered on that Saturday. Under current law, voter registration closes 10 days prior to a general and primary election and 11 days prior to all other elections. Under the amendment, pre-voter registration will still close 10 days prior to general elections. This provision is effective upon enactment.
3. **Absentee Ballot Envelopes.** Reduces the number of envelopes for absentee ballots by allowing the affidavit to be marked on the return envelope. The amendment allows either sending the absentee ballot the current way or using this new way. This provision is effective upon enactment.
4. **Primary Election Affidavits.** Repeals the requirement that the printed affidavit on the absentee ballot designate the voter's party affiliation if the ballot enclosed is a primary election ballot. The county audi-

tor knows if the ballot is Republican or Democrat and do not want to reject ballots because the affidavit is not filled out properly. This provision is effective upon enactment.

The Senate amendment is similar to SF 2301, which died in the House. However, this Senate amendment does not address the postmark issue on absentee ballots mailed into the county auditor's office.

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