

FINAL BILL REPORT

SSB 6688

C 207 L 10
Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Concerning filling vacancies in nonpartisan elective office.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections (originally sponsored by Senators Fairley and Shin).

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections
House Committee on State Government & Tribal Affairs

Background: Current law provides that if a partisan county office is vacated, the county legislative body must appoint a qualified person to serve until the successor is elected at the next general election. If the office is vacated after the general election in the year that the position appears on the ballot and before the start of the next term, the successor may take office immediately after the election results are certified.

A number of counties have recently reclassified certain countywide elective offices as nonpartisan. No mechanism presently exists, however, in the State Constitution, or in statutes to fill a vacancy that may occur in a nonpartisan office.

Summary: New requirements are established for filling a vacancy in a nonpartisan county board of commissioners elective office and nonpartisan county council elective office. A nonpartisan executive or nonpartisan chair of the board of commissioners for the county must nominate three candidates to fill a vacancy in a nonpartisan county elective office. The candidate appointed to fill such vacancy must be from the same legislative district, county, or county commissioner or council district as the county elective officer whose office was vacated. A majority of the county legislative authority members must agree upon the appointment of the candidate within 60 days from the date the vacancy occurred. If an agreement has not been reached within the 30-day limit, the Governor must appoint a candidate to fill the vacancy within 30 days, selecting from the provided list of nominees.

If a vacancy occurs in a nonpartisan county board of commissioner elective office or nonpartisan county council elective office after the general election, but before the new term begins, the successor's term will commence once the successor has statutorily qualified. The duration of office will be the term in which the successor was elected.

Votes on Final Passage:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Senate 37 12
House 56 40 (House amended)
Senate 36 11 (Senate concurred)

Effective: June 10, 2010