

HOUSE BILL REPORT

EHB 1507

As Passed House:
February 28, 2017

Title: An act relating to enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Brief Description: Enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Sponsors: Representatives Holy and Hudgins.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government, Elections & Information Technology: 2/7/17, 2/8/17 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/17, 98-0.

Brief Summary of Engrossed Bill

- Directs the Secretary of State to prepare a statewide election reconciliation report for each state primary and general election that combines and compares data from each county election reconciliation report.
- Requires county reconciliation reports to include information on ballots transmitted electronically.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, ELECTIONS & INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hudgins, Chair; Dolan, Vice Chair; Koster, Ranking Minority Member; Volz, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Appleton, Gregerson, Irwin, Kraft and Pellicciotti.

Staff: Sean Flynn (786-7124).

Background:

The county auditor conducts all elections within the county and is responsible for processing ballots. The county canvassing board certifies election results 14 days after a primary or special election and 21 days after a general election.

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.

An election reconciliation report must be prepared by the county auditor and submitted at the time of the election certification. The county auditor must make the report available on the auditor's website. The report must contain data including:

- the number of registered voters;
- the number of ballots issued, received, counted, and rejected, including provisional, federal write-in, and overseas ballots; and
- the number of voters credited with voting.

Summary of Engrossed Bill:

County reconciliation reports must include information on the number of election ballots sent, received, and rejected. The county reports also must provide information on the reasons for ballot rejections.

Each county auditor must submit the election reconciliation report to the Secretary of State (Secretary). Within two months after the last county's election results are certified, the Secretary must prepare a statewide reconciliation report and publish it on the Secretary's website.

The statewide report must provide a comparison among counties on the rates of votes received, counted, and rejected for all ballots, including provisional, write-in, overseas ballots, and ballots transmitted electronically. The comparison data may include rankings or percentages to measure performance and trends.

The statewide report also must include an analysis of the data that can be used to gain a better understanding of election administration and policy. The analysis should combine dates over multiple years to provide broader comparisons and reveal trends of voter registration, turnout, and ballot counting. National election statistics must be incorporated into the report to the extent available.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) This bill will help to improve transparency in the election process. The data collected, reported, and analyzed will produce a more comprehensive approach to understanding election processes and practices.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Holy, prime sponsor; and Lori Augino, Office of the Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.