

SENATE BILL REPORT

EHB 1507

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
State Government, March 29, 2017

Title: An act relating to enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Brief Description: Enhancing election reconciliation reports.

Sponsors: Representatives Holy and Hudgins.

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

Committee Activity: State Government: 3/22/17, 3/29/17 [DP].

Brief Summary of 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 election reconciliation reports to include information on ballots transmitted electronically and on ballot rejections.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Miloscia, Chair; Zeiger, Vice Chair; Hunt, Ranking Minority Member; Kuderer and Pearson.

Staff: Samuel Brown (786-7470)

Background: Each county auditor conducts all general and primary elections within the county and is responsible for processing ballots. The county canvassing board canvasses the ballot returns and certifies election results. The results must be certified 14 days after a primary or special election and 21 days after a general election.

An election reconciliation report must be prepared by the county auditor and submitted at the time of the election certification. The report must be available on the auditor's website and include the following information:

- the number of registered voters;

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- 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 Bill: County Reconciliation Reports. County reconciliation reports must contain the number of ballots sent and received electronically, the number of ballots rejected, and the reasons for ballot rejections. Each county auditor must submit the election reconciliation report to the Secretary of State (Secretary) in a designated form.

State Reconciliation Reports. 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.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: This is a transparency bill that provides information about how elections are conducted and helps identify any outlier counties. The Secretary of State supports gathering and reporting this information.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Jeff Holy, Prime Sponsor; David Elliott, Office of the Secretary of State.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.