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**State Government & Tribal Relations  
Committee**

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**HB 1716**

**Brief Description:** Concerning locations at which ballots may be cast.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Valdez, Dolan and Pollet.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Modifies the locations where a county auditor is required to register voters to include, among other locations, at the county auditor's office or the division of elections if located in a separate location from the auditor's office, rather than both at the county auditor's office and the division of elections if located in a separate city from the auditor's office.
- Modifies the locations for in-person voter registration by authorizing registration at the division of elections if in a different location than, rather than a separate city from, the county auditor's office.
- Restricts certain political activity near voting centers, student engagement hubs, and ballot drop boxes during the specified voting period.

**Hearing Date:** 1/13/22

**Staff:** Jessica Cable (786-7290) and Desiree Omli (786-7105).

**Background:**

Voter registration.

A person registering to vote, or changing a residence address for voting, must submit a registration application electronically, by mail, or in person. A person wishing to register or

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submit a change of address in person must do so at a county auditor's office, the division of elections if in a separate city from the county auditor's office, a voting center, a student engagement hub, or other locations designated by the county auditor no later than 8:00 p.m. on the day of the primary, special election, or general election.

The county auditor must register voters in person at each of the following locations:

- the county auditor's office;
- the division of elections, if located in a separate city from the county auditor's office, and
- for each presidential general election, at a voting center in each city with a population of 1,000 or greater and which does not already have a voting center.

#### Voting centers.

Beginning 18 days before an election and through the end of the election, a person may not, within a voting center, influence or interfere with a voter attempting to vote in a voting center by:

- suggesting or persuading a voter to vote a certain way;
- circulating political materials or soliciting signatures;
- engaging in any practice that disrupts the administration of the voting center; or
- obstructing doors or entries to a voting center or ballot drop location.

#### **Summary of Bill:**

##### Voter registration.

A person may register to vote or change their address in person at the division of elections if it is in a different location from the county auditor's office. For special elections, a person wishing to register to vote in person or submit a change of address in person must do so by the deadline on the day of the special election in which the county is conducting an election.

The requirement that a county auditor register voters at the county auditor's office and the division of elections if located in a separate city from the county auditor's office is removed. Instead, the county auditor is required to register voters at the county auditor's office or the division of elections if located in a separate location from the county auditor's office.

##### Voting centers.

The locations where a person may not influence or interfere with a voter by means prohibited by law is expanded to include:

- a student engagement hub and any public street or room within a 100-foot radius of a voting center or student engagement hub; and
- any public street or room within a 25-foot radius of a ballot drop box.

A person may not influence or interfere with voters by means prohibited under law by using electronic amplification if the person can be understood within:

- 100 feet of the voting center or student engagement hub; or
- 25 feet of a ballot drop box.

The county auditor must designate a specific point or points as the entrance to each voting center to ensure voters are unimpeded in arriving and departing the voting center. The auditor must also post a sign at the designated entrance to provide notice of the prohibition against influencing or interfering with voters near voting centers, student engagement hubs, and ballot drop boxes.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 11, 2022.

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