



S.B. 47

123rd General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sens. Cupp, Latta

BILL SUMMARY

- Requires boards of elections, by April 1, 2000, to generally use United States Census Bureau geographical units to determine precinct boundaries, and requires the boards to report precinct boundary changes to the Secretary of State within 45 days.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Board of election: precinct boundary determinations

Current law authorizes each board of elections to divide a political subdivision within its jurisdiction into precincts and establish, define, divide, rearrange, and combine the election precincts within its jurisdiction and change the location of the polling place for each precinct when this is necessary to maintain the requirements as to the number of voters in a precinct and to provide for the convenience of the voters and the proper conduct of elections. No change in the number of precincts or in precinct boundaries may be made during the 25 days immediately preceding a primary or general election, or between January 1 and the day on which the members of county central committees are elected in the years in which those committees are elected. Each precinct must contain a number of electors, not to exceed 1,000, that the board of elections determines to be a reasonable number after taking into consideration the type and amount of available equipment, prior voter turnout, the size and location of each selected polling place, available parking, availability of an adequate number of poll workers, and handicap accessibility and other accessibility to the polling place. (Sec. 3501.18.)

The bill generally requires each board of elections, no later than April 1, 2000, to determine all precinct boundaries using geographical units that will be used by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, in reporting the decennial census of Ohio for the year 2000 (sec. 3501.18(B)(1)). (See **COMMENT** 1 and 2.) The bill extends the date for compliance with that

requirement to April 1, 2001, when any part of the boundary of a precinct also forms a part of the boundary of a General Assembly district and the precinct boundary cannot be determined by April 1, 2000, using the Census Bureau's geographical units without making that part of the precinct boundary that also forms a part of the General Assembly district boundary different from that General Assembly district boundary (sec. 3501.18(B)(2)).

Notifications of precinct and other changes

Under existing law, when a board of elections changes, divides, or combines any precinct, or relocates a polling place, it is required, prior to the next election, to notify each of the registrants in the precinct of the change by mail. The bill also requires that, on and after April 1, 2000, whenever a board changes the boundaries of any precinct, it must notify the Secretary of State of the change no later than 45 days after making the change. (Sec. 3501.21.)

COMMENT

1. The bill does not describe the geographical units by which precincts must be determined, but presumably these are the units--census blocks, tracts, and the like--whose populations the Census Bureau reports as part of each decennial census.

2. The bill does not specify whether it is requiring the use of the geographical units that will be used in the following decennial census, or those that were used in the preceding one. Similarly, it does not make explicit whether it imposes a continuing duty to determine precinct boundaries every decennial period using the most recent geographical information as periodically updated by the Census Bureau.

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	02-02-99	pp. 95-96

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