



Am. Sub. H.B. 234

126th General Assembly
(As Passed by the House)

Reps. Wolpert, Kearns, C. Evans, D. Evans, Beatty, Miller, Brown, Distel, S. Smith, Widowfield, Trakas, Boccieri, Hood, Allen, D. Stewart, Law, Uecker, Barrett, Book, Calvert, Carano, Cassell, Chandler, Combs, DeBose, Dolan, Domenick, Flowers, Hartnett, Harwood, Healy, Hoops, Hughes, Key, Koziura, Mason, McGregor, Otterman, T. Patton, Perry, Schneider, Seaver, G. Smith, J. Stewart, Ujvagi, White, Williams, Yuko

BILL SUMMARY

- Authorizes a board of elections, in conjunction with a board of education of a city, local, or exempted village school district, the governing authority of a community school, or the chief administrator of a nonpublic school, to establish a program to allow certain students to serve as election officials.
- Establishes eligibility criteria for students to participate in and serve as election officials in such a program.
- Authorizes a board of education, governing authority, or chief administrator to establish additional criteria for students to participate in and serve as election officials in such a program.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Existing law: appointment of precinct officers

Existing law requires a board of elections, on or before the 15th day of September in each year, to appoint for each election precinct four competent electors, who are residents of the county in which the precinct is located, as judges of election for that precinct. Not more than one-half of the judges may be members of the same political party. The board may appoint additional election officers, if necessary to expedite voting; those precinct officers also must be equally divided between the two political parties. (R.C. 3501.22(A) and 3501.27.)

If the board determines that an insufficient number of qualified electors is available in a precinct to serve as precinct officers, the board may appoint persons to serve as precinct officers who are at least 17 years of age and are registered to vote.¹ No more than two precinct officers in any precinct may be under 18 years of age. (R.C. 3501.22(B).)

Changes made by the bill

Program to allow certain students to serve as precinct officers

The bill generally retains the existing processes and requirements for appointing precinct officers, but provides an additional process by which certain students who are *not* registered electors also may serve as precinct officers (R.C. 3501.22 and 3501.27). Under the bill, a board of elections may establish a program, in conjunction with any of the following, to allow certain high school students to apply and, if appointed by the board of elections, to serve as precinct officers at a primary, special, or general election (R.C. 3501.22(C)(1)):

- A board of education of a city, local, or exempted village school district;
- The governing authority of a community school;
- The chief administrator of a nonpublic school.

The bill does not allow any student appointed as a precinct officer through any program mentioned above to be designated as a presiding judge at a precinct (R.C. 3501.22(C)(3)).

Qualifications for participation

A student must meet all of the following qualifications to be eligible to participate in a program authorized by the bill (R.C. 3501.22(C)(2)(a)):

- Be a United States citizen;
- Be a resident of the county;
- Be at least 17 years of age;

¹ A person who will be 18 years of age at the next ensuing November election, who is a United States citizen, and who, if the person continues to reside in the precinct until the next election, will have fulfilled all of the residence requirements to qualify as an elector, is permitted to register as an elector in that precinct (R.C. 3503.07--not in the bill).

- Be enrolled in the senior year of high school.

A board of education, governing authority, or chief administrator that establishes a program authorized by the bill may establish additional eligibility criteria for student participation in that program (R.C. 3501.22(C)(1)).

In order to participate, a student must declare a political party affiliation with the board of elections when applying (R.C. 3501.22(C)(2)(b)).

School attendance while working at the polls

The bill provides that a student's absence from school to serve as a precinct officer on the day of an election must be excused by the school district, community school, or nonpublic school offering a program authorized by the bill (R.C. 3501.22(C)(4)).

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE	JOURNAL ENTRY
Introduced	05-03-05	p. 736
Reported, H. Elections & Ethics	06-01-05	pp. 889-890
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