

SESSION OF 2021

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2355

As Recommended by House Committee on
Elections

Brief*

HB 2355 would make several changes to election law.

The bill would amend law providing when municipal bond elections are to be held after compliance with the necessary requirements, from within 45 days to within 60 days but not sooner than 45 days after compliance.

The bill would remove the two-year prior residency requirement for an appointed county election commissioner and standardize the population threshold across statutes for a county for which the election officer is to be appointed by the Secretary of State to 130,000 residents.

The bill would also amend laws regarding all-mail ballot elections. The bill would allow mail ballots in all-mail elections to be counted up to three days after election day so long as such ballots are postmarked on or before the close of polls on election day, and the bill would require a county election officer to attempt to contact each voter who submits a mail ballot where there is no signature or a signature mismatch and allow such voter an opportunity to correct the deficiency.

Background

The bill was introduced by the House Committee on Elections at the request of a representative of the Office of the Secretary of State.

*Supplemental notes are prepared by the Legislative Research Department and do not express legislative intent. The supplemental note and fiscal note for this bill may be accessed on the Internet at <http://www.kslegislature.org>

House Committee on Elections

In the House Committee hearing on the bill, representatives of the Office of the Secretary of State and the Kansas County Clerks and Election Officials Association (KCCEOA) provided **proponent** testimony, stating the bill would correct statutory inconsistencies concerning the population threshold for appointing a county election officer, when municipal elections must be held, how mail ballots are counted, and opportunities to cure missing signatures or signature mismatches on mail ballots. Additionally, removing the residency requirement for county election commissioners would allow consideration of a wider range of candidates.

Written-only **proponent** testimony was provided by a representative of Loud Light Civic Action.

No neutral or **opponent** testimony was provided.

Fiscal Information

According to the fiscal note prepared by the Division of the Budget on the bill, the Secretary of State indicates enactment of the bill would have no fiscal effect on the agency. The Kansas Association of Counties indicates enactment of the bill could result in costs associated with the mail provisions initially, but over time the costs would be lower as fewer voters would need to be contacted due to ballot issues.

Elections; county election commissioner; county election officer; mail ballots