

SESSION OF 2014

SUPPLEMENTAL NOTE ON HOUSE BILL NO. 2592

As Amended by House Committee on Elections

Brief*

HB 2592 would make a number of changes regarding elections.

The bill would prohibit candidates for elective offices who either withdraw their candidacies or lose in a primary election from running as the candidate of a different political party in the general election.

In the event of the death of a person holding a state office, the Office of the Secretary of State would be required to notify the county chairpersons of the appropriate county central committees of the death, in writing, within one business day of becoming aware of the death.

When a convention is held to fill a vacancy in a district office, a precinct committeeman or committeewoman could not vote at the election unless he or she had held the precinct office for at least one business day prior to the county chairperson's receipt of the notice of vacancy.

Political parties would be allowed to promulgate their own rules regarding voting by proxy at district conventions held to elect a person to be appointed to fill a vacancy.

Background

The Chairperson of the Kansas Republican Party testified in support of the bill before the House Committee on

*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>

Elections. He said the bill would prevent the losing candidate in a primary from subsequently running in that election as the candidate of a different party, which he said almost occurred twice in the most recent two election cycles. He stated other changes in the bill were needed to fill a gap in the current statutory plan for holding a replacement meeting in the event of a death in office, to prevent “stacking” a replacement meeting by last-second appointments, and to clarify the number of proxy votes any precinct leader can carry.

The House Committee on Elections amended the bill to delete a provision that would have prohibited a candidate who was defeated in, or withdrew from, a primary election from being a write-in candidate in the general election. The Committee also struck a provision that would have allowed a precinct committeeman or committeewoman to cast no more than four proxy votes at a district convention to fill a vacancy, and replaced it with a provision allowing state parties to promulgate rules regarding voting by proxy at these types of conventions. The Committee also replaced references in the bill to “24 hours” with “one business day.”

The fiscal note submitted by the Division of the Budget on the introduced version of the bill indicates the Office of the Secretary of State estimates expenditures to send written notices to county chairs resulting from enactment of the bill would be negligible and could be absorbed within existing resources.