

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

Senate Bill 363 (Senator Dyson)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Election Law - Voter Registration - Change of Party Affiliation

This bill shortens the period surrounding a primary election during which a voter's party affiliation or nonaffiliation may not be changed, so that it coincides with the period during which voter registration is closed prior to and after an election. The bill repeals provisions that allow a registered voter who moves from one county to another to change party affiliation or nonaffiliation once during the prohibited period and that prohibit an individual from canceling his/her voter registration and re-registering with a different party affiliation or nonaffiliation during the prohibited period.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill would not directly affect State finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Voter registration is closed between 9 p.m. on the twenty-first day before an election until the eleventh day after an election. Party affiliation generally may not be changed between 9 p.m. on the Monday, 12 weeks before the day of a primary election until voter registration reopens on the eleventh day after the primary election. Party affiliation or nonaffiliation generally may not be changed between the time of issuance of a gubernatorial proclamation calling a special election (generally held for vacancies in the U.S. House of Representatives or a county council) and the day of the election. A special election to fill a vacancy in the U.S. House of Representatives held independent of a

regular election must be held at least 36 days after the gubernatorial proclamation. Special elections to fill a vacancy in a county council are held in accordance with the county charter.

If a registered voter has moved from one county to another since the last general election, the voter may change party affiliation or nonaffiliation once during the prohibited period. An individual may not cancel the individual's voter registration within the prohibited period and re-register in the same county during the same period with a different party affiliation or non-affiliation.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Garrett County, Dorchester County, State Board of Elections, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 20, 2007
nas/jr

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