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SENATE BILL NO. 429

Offered January 21, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-626 of the Code of Virginia, relating to use of various voting machines and equipment.

Patrons—Whipple, Byrne, Colgan, Couric, Edwards, Hawkins, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Marye, Maxwell, Miller, Y.B., Potts, Puller and Ticer

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 24.2-626 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 24.2-626. Governing bodies shall acquire mechanical or electronic voting or counting systems.

A. The governing body of each county having an optional form of government and of each city shall provide for the use of mechanical or electronic voting or counting systems, of a kind approved by the State Board, at every precinct and for all elections held in the county, the city, or any part of the county or city. The governing body of every other county shall provide for the use of such systems at every precinct having 750 or more registered voters. No county shall divide or create precincts so that resulting precincts will contain fewer than 750 registered voters, in order to avoid the requirements of this section.

Each county and city governing body shall purchase, lease, lease purchase, or otherwise acquire such systems and may provide for the payment therefor in the manner it deems proper. Systems of different kinds may be adopted for use and be used in different precincts of the same county or city, *or within a precinct or precincts in a county or city*, subject to the approval of the State Board.

Any county may acquire such systems for precincts containing fewer than 750 registered voters.

The governing body of a town may provide for the use of paper ballots, in lieu of such systems, in elections for town offices and in town referendum elections if every town precinct contains 500 or fewer registered voters.

B. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection A of this section, the governing body of any county may elect to use paper ballots throughout the county so long as the county meets the following criteria: (i) the population of the county is less than 7,000 according to the 1990 United States Census; (ii) the county is divided into six precincts; (iii) no precinct contains 1,000 or more registered voters; and (iv) the county has not provided for the use of mechanical or electronic voting or counting systems in any precinct prior to July 1, 1996.

INTRODUCED

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