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SENATE BILL NO. 61

Offered January 13, 2010

Prefiled January 4, 2010

A BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-115 of the Code of Virginia, relating to appointment of officers of election.

Patron—Martin

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 24.2-115 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 24.2-115. Appointment, qualifications, and terms of officers of election.

Each electoral board at its regular meeting in the first week of February shall appoint officers of election. Their terms of office shall begin on March 1 following their appointment and continue, at the discretion of the electoral board, for a term not to exceed three years or until their successors are appointed.

Not less than three competent citizens shall be appointed for each precinct and, insofar as practicable, each officer shall be a qualified voter of the precinct he is appointed to serve, but in any case a qualified voter of the Commonwealth. In appointing the officers of election, representation shall be given to each of the two political parties having the highest and next highest number of votes in the Commonwealth for Governor at the last preceding gubernatorial election. The representation of the two parties shall be equal at each precinct having an equal number of officers and shall vary by no more than one at each precinct having an odd number of officers. If possible, officers shall be appointed from lists of nominations filed by the political parties entitled to appointments. The party shall file its nominations with the secretary of the electoral board at least 10 days before February 1 each year. The electoral board may appoint additional citizens who do not represent any political party to serve as officers but not as the chief officer or the assistant chief officer. *No more than one-third of the total number of officers appointed for each precinct may be citizens who do not represent any political party.*

Officers of election shall serve for all elections held in their respective precincts during their terms of office unless the electoral board decides that fewer officers are needed for a particular election, in which case party representation shall be maintained as provided above. For a primary election involving only one political party, persons representing the political party holding the primary shall serve as the officers of election if possible.

The electoral board shall designate one officer as the chief officer of election and one officer as the assistant for each precinct. The officer designated as the assistant for a precinct, whenever practicable, shall not represent the same political party as the chief officer for the precinct. The electoral board may also appoint at least one officer of election who reports to the precinct at least one hour prior to the closing of the precinct and whose primary responsibility is to assist with closing the precinct and reporting the results of the votes at the precinct.

The electoral board shall instruct each chief officer and assistant in his duties not less than three nor more than 30 days before each election. Each electoral board may instruct each officer of election in his duties at an appropriate time or times before each November general election.

If an officer of election is unable to serve at any election during his term of office, the electoral board may at any time appoint a substitute who shall hold office and serve for the unexpired term.

Additional officers shall be appointed in accordance with this section at any time that the electoral board determines that they are needed.

If possible, substitute officers or additional officers appointed after the electoral board's regular meeting in the first week of February shall be appointed from lists of nominations filed by the political parties entitled to appointments. The electoral board shall inform the political parties of its decision to make such appointments and the party shall file its nominations with the secretary of the electoral board within five business days.

The secretary of the electoral board shall prepare a list of the officers of election that shall be available for inspection and posted in the general registrar's office prior to March 1 each year. Whenever substitute or additional officers are appointed, the secretary shall promptly add the names of the appointees to the public list.

INTRODUCED

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