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**HOUSE BILL NO. 104**

Offered January 8, 2014

Prefiled December 14, 2013

*A BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-115 of the Code of Virginia, relating to officers of election; chief and assistant chief election officers.*

Patron—Cole (By Request)

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 of the year in which the terms of officers of election are scheduled to expire 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 practicable, 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~~. If practicable, 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. Notwithstanding any other provision of this section, where representatives for one or both 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 are unavailable, the electoral board shall designate as the chief officer and the assistant chief officer citizens who do not represent any political party.~~ 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, and shall conduct training of the officers of election consistent with the standards set by the State Board pursuant to subsection B of § 24.2-103. Each electoral board shall certify to the State Board that such training has been conducted every four years.

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 practicable, 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

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59 within five business days.

60 The secretary of the electoral board shall prepare a list of the officers of election that shall be  
61 available for inspection and posted in the general registrar's office prior to March 1 each year. Whenever  
62 substitute or additional officers are appointed, the secretary shall promptly add the names of the  
63 appointees to the public list. Upon request and at a reasonable charge not to exceed the actual cost  
64 incurred, the secretary shall provide a copy of the list of the officers of election, including their party  
65 designation and precinct to which they are assigned, to any requesting political party or candidate.