

Legislative History for Connecticut Act

| SB 905 | PA 570 | Scanned | 1969 |
|-------------------------------|--------|---------|------|
| House - 5270 - 5271 | | | 2 |
| Senate - 2880 - 2881 | | | 2 |
| Elections - 133-134, 136, 144 | | | 4 |

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PA69-570

Joint Standing Committee hearings, Elections. 1969.

Proceedings / Connecticut General Assembly, House. 1969v.13:pt.11

Proceedings / Connecticut General Assembly, Senate. 1969 v.13:pt.6

Monday, June 2, 1969

44 REP. MAHANEY - 92nd D.

May Cal. #1494 Sub. for S.B. No. 1575 be passed retaining its place on the Cal.

MR. SPEAKER:

Is there no objection? So ordered.

THE CLERK:

Cal. 1496 Sub. for S.B. No. 905. An act concerning Clarifying the Uniform Municipal Election Dates Law and Providing for Transitional Provisions.

REP. HEALY - 87th D.

Mr. Speaker, I move acceptance of the joint committee's favorable report and passage of the bill in concurrence with the Senate.

MR. SPEAKER:

Motions on acceptance and passage in concurrence with the Senate. Will you remark?

REP. HEALY - 87th D.

Mr. Speaker, the purpose of this bill is to clear up some technical problems which we had as a result two years ago, requiring that all elections in the state be conducted in either November or May. At the same time, we also wanted the requirement that all municipal elections be held in the odd numbered years and all state elections be held in the even number years. In so far, there were people who had terms of office which do not conform to that May and November setup and did not conform to the two year requirement, we have been living for the past two years on a series of attorney general's rulings which fill in the gap

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and the intention and purpose of this is to make it a matter of legislative , the first section is transitional sort of situation, section 2 defines duration of term. Section 3 has to do with beginning of terms, section 4 applies to those relatively limited situations, where we have deferred terms, which is the situation some boards of zoning appeals, and some of the things of that sort. I would point out, that in everyone of these instances wide latitude is given to the local legislative authority as to whether to adopt the terms of the Act or not. ~~xxxxxxx~~ If it does not act within the terms of the act, well then the act prescribes certain dates, but they do have wide latitude, and section 5, permits municipality, which in optic for the mate, period for instance to subsequently change it's mind and go to Nov. by visa-versa. In section 6, they are required to notify the Secretary of State of whatever action they have so that the voting records in that office, are brought up to date. It meets a very technical situation, and was prepared by the Secretary of State's Office, they feel that it solves many problems both for them and for the towns.

MR. SPEAKER:

Will you remark further? If not the questions on acceptance and passage in concurrence with the Senate. All those in favor indicate by saying aye. Oppose nay. The bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

Cal. 1500 Mod. Senate Bill No. 256. An Act concerning

I urge the adoption of the amendment.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on the adoption of the amendment. Will you remark further. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The amendment is passed and will be known as Senate Amendment Schedule A. The Chair will rule that it is a technical amendment and may become part of Substitute Senate Bill 1257, which may be taken up now.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, I now move for the adoption of the bill as amended. I have already remarked Mr. President.

THE CHAIR:

Any further remarks on the bill as amended. If not, all those in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The aye's have it and the bill is passed as amended.

THE CLERK:

Calendar No. 1238, File No. 1498. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Elections on Substitute Senate Bill No. 905. An Act concerning Clarifying the Uniform Municipal Election Dates Law and Providing for Transitional Provisions.

SENATOR CALDWELL:

Mr. President, the bill does exactly what its title says it does. Two years ago Mr. President, we adopted a monumental piece of legislation called the Uniform Municipal Election Date, whereby all towns and municipalities could hold their elections on only two days rather than several as in the past. The only problem was

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that in passing this bill we created certain other difficulties which this particular piece of legislation clarifies. I urge the adoption of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Would you remark further on the passage of the bill. If not, as many who are in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The aye's have it, the bill is passed.

THE CLERK:

On page 23 of the Calendar. Calendar No. 859, File No. 702. Favorable report of the Joint Standing Committee on Public Personnel on Substitute House Bill No. 8136. An Act Enabling State Employees to Obtain Leave for Volunteer Ambulance Duty.

SENATOR BARBATO:

Mr. President, I move for the acceptance of the Joint Committees favorable report and passage of the bill.

THE CHAIR:

Question is on passage of this bill. Will you remark.

SENATOR BARBATO:

Mr. President, this bill allows state employees who are active members of a volunteer fire and ambulance company to report for duty with the authority of his supervisor. I think its a good bill and should pass.

THE CHAIR:

Will you remark further. If not, all those in favor signify by saying aye, opposed. The aye's have it and the bill is passed.

a cycle in the election process, is four years. In order for an official working in elections to perform every duty he is called upon to perform, the minimum term he should serve is four years. It is only in four years, that a registrar or town clerk would go through a state, municipal and national election. These bills are most deserving of your favorable consideration and action.

SB902 - TECHNICAL CHANGES IN THE ELECTION LAWS is what we call our omnibus bill. The election laws are subject to a continual scrutiny, certainly in our office, by the town clerks, by registrars and members of this committee and this bill would make those changes of clarification, no changes in substance, but merely a clarification of language that would provide for a more understanding of our election laws.

SB905 - CLARIFYING THE UNIFORM MUNICIPAL ELECTION DATES LAW AND PROVIDING FOR TRANSITIONAL PROVISIONS - In 1967 when the General Assembly enacted the uniform municipal dates law, certainly we took a great step forward in providing to our voters, a system of elections when they could concentrate their attention on the selection of municipal officials in the odd-numbered years, and the selection of state and national in even-numbered years. This also provides for a more effective training and elevation of the performance of all of us, because we can concentrate our efforts on two specific dates. This should provide for an ever improving administration of our election laws. But in the enactment of this bill, certain transitional provisions were not provided and not set forth and SB905 is intended to provide these provisions. For example, a town that was holding an election on the first Monday of October in the odd-numbered years, was compelled to select between May and November in the odd-numbered years now. Many of these towns, experience indicates have gone to the November date. What happens to the terms of the officials in these towns? Does a town whose legislative body under the uniform election date law select the November election? Is the legislative body also empowered to prescribe when the term of these officials will begin. Supposing they do not want it to begin on election day or reasons they would prefer it would begin on the first Monday in December. Do they have this power? SB905 will provide for these transitional provisions and would clarify the existing law. It really is an implementation of Public Act - 675 of the 1967 session - Uniform Municipal Date Law.

SB905 - We requested the opinion of the Attorney General with regard to many of these problems that arose and based on our experience in the past, we felt that many questions that we were asking of the Attorney General, were questions that he would answer by saying that it is not the function of a state official to answer these questions.

These questions would have to be interpreted by the town attorney or corporation council. We drafted with care, our request for the Attorney General's opinion and tried to anticipate every possible question that could arise under the Uniform Date Law in an effort to anticipate the answer might be at the local problem and have to be solved locally. I would like to leave with the committee the copies of our request of the Attorney General's opinion and also the opinions that were given to us and they will indicate better than anything else, the questions that SB905 is intended to answer and clarify.

SB906 - REQUIRING A TELEPHONE IN EACH POLLING PLACE - This arises from the results of a letter that Mrs. Grasso received a short time after the recent November election. This lady described the situation that was really beyond belief. They went to one polling place and told that was not the place that they should vote in. This was an elderly couple, and the husband, I guess was retired. They were sent to a second polling place and the officials there said you're not supposed to be voting here and went to a third polling place. Ultimately they were sent back to the first polling place. They spend a good part of election day, just wandering from polling place to place to find out late in the day, that the first place they had presented themselves, was the proper polling place. SB906 would require that a telephone be required for the election officials when in calling the registrar's or town clerks office to answer these questions for people who have presented themselves to vote. It is the responsibility of these officials to clarify these questions. This would require by law that a telephone be in each polling place.

George Tudan, Legislative Chairman of the Town Clerk's Association for the State of Connecticut. SB615 - NO ELECTION FOR CERTAIN VACANCIES - I concur with Miss Toro and think it an excellent bill. HB-5726 - HOME RULE CHARTER AMENDMENT ELECTIONS - Apparently the thought is to have home rule elections on a special election and never to co-incide with a regular election. If you do require a special election each and every time, it would be a large expense to the town and we know from past experience it is very difficult to get 15% of the voters out acting on home rule - it is practically impossible to do. On a regular election, people will come out and vote. I am opposed to this bill.

HB8279 - REQUIRING THE REMOVAL OF POLITICAL SIGNS - It seems that the town chairman of both parties would be subject to fines if these signs are not taken down. Often it is not the chairmen that put them up but some of the workers for the candidates and really a burden on the chairmen.

SB629- MINIMUM SALARY FOR ALL REGISTRARS OF VOTERS - this is a must. There are registrars throughout the state who have all the duties as the registrars in larger towns do, and are responsible for the conduct of the election, and legal conduct, but are actually, well we can't say they are getting slave wages, because frankly some of them are hardly getting anything at all and this is a situation that must be corrected not just for them, but for the benefit of all the voters in Connecticut.

SB636 - TERMS OF MUNICIPAL CLERKS - Certainly, here again it is in the interest of the voters that town clerks serve for a term of four years rather than facing an election every two years. They have many duties relative to elections and their performance is vital.

SB639 - THE ELECTION OF REGISTRARS OF VOTERS - It is vital that a registrar be elected for a term of four years because once again, a term of about two years, and you are just about getting to know your job. To serve community and state well, a four year term is necessary.

SB639 - TECHNICAL CHANGES ELECTION LAWS - I favor that because from time to time that can be very easily corrected.

SB905 - CLARIFYING UNIFORM MUNICIPAL ELECTION DATES - I favor.

SB906 - REQUIRING A TELEPHONE IN EACH POLLING PLACE - This is a must and I am really surprised that we have to have such a bill because it is certainly so necessary that a polling place be able to communicate. Believe, it or not, many times people don't know where they live and we have to tell them. I think it is quite important this bill go through.

SB1087 - I favor that.

HB6536 - HB6537 - APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT REGISTRARS TO AID REGISTRARS DURING CANVASS AND RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR ADMISSION AND REGISTRATION.

I want to go on record as being opposed to those two bills because I believe it would be an unwise procedure that would not serve any reasonable purpose and make the canvass of the electors almost impossible to complete. With our daily registration and voter making sessions, I do not see what purpose this would serve.

Rep. Vaill, 173rd: SB636 - FOUR YEAR TERM FOR TOWN CLERKS - I think this is a good bill and in small towns, town clerks do primarily all of the work and don't come in a fixed office staff like they do in the big cities.

Rep. Keilty: The non-electoral resident? If I owned \$50,000 worth of property in your town, you would choose that I do not have the right to vote on the tax question?

Atty. Marsh: Right. There are so many people who can't vote anyway. It seems grossly unfair to me.

Rep. Green: I have a bill in HB7973 on the same subject matter. It is upon the transfer of property between the dates of the last completed grand list. Perhaps we can work out some type of bill.

Atty. Marsh: You can call upon me anytime you want to.

Rep. Keilty: Mr. Marsh, we might just have to call upon you.

Atty. Marsh: I want to say one thing before I close. As a moderator I have been helped by the sessions the Secretary of State has around Connecticut before state and national elections. We all appreciate it and this is my only chance to say so.

Roger Paulhus, City Clerk and Treasurer, Willimantic. HB636 - Needless to say, I'm for this bill.

SB905 - CLARIFYING THE UNIFORM MUNICIPAL ELECTION DATES LAW - The answer for the problem in Willimantic is probably in this bill except I can't tell by the subject matter. The problem is not having chosen any date under the uniform election date. We are one of the few communities that previously had December. The problem is when do those elected in November take office? I hope you will give this bill consideration in its final form. It complicates the matter a little further in our community inasmuch as we are not under the uniform fiscal year, the fiscal year ending in a period of time between the election and the time of the, when the officers formally took office.

Rep. Keilty: It is our hope that the Election Division Attorney sitting in back of you, will clarify this law and we hope to have the answer and solve your problem.

Roger Paulhus: I'm here to present the problem and I know you will give it your consideration. Thank you and I know as long as the problem is on record you will take it up.

Mary Sullivan, Caucus of Connecticut Democrats. I wish to speak on behalf of the CCD on election reform in support of HB6540 - WRITE-IN BALLOTS.

We favor legislative measures which extend and facilitate the individual's voting rights, and we view this bill as an essentially corrective measure to make statutory provision for casting write-in ballots for president and vice-president.