

HOUSE BILL 1398

By Rudd

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2,
relative to primary elections.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Tennessee Political Party Registration Act."

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-2-116, is amended by adding the following as new language on the permanent registration record when a person registers to vote:

Statewide Political Party Affiliation _____

Notice: A voter choosing not to select a statewide political party affiliation shall not be eligible to vote in a primary election.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 2, Chapter 7, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

2-7-144.

(a) Any person registered to vote prior to July 1, 2019, shall declare a statewide political party affiliation at the first primary election in which the person casts a vote which is held following such date. The county election commission shall then add that information to the voter's permanent registration record.

(b) A qualified voter who chooses to declare a statewide political party affiliation prior to a primary election or to alter a previously selected statewide political party affiliation may do so in accordance with § 2-2-109 regarding altering a voter's registration.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-7-115, is amended by deleting subsection (b) and substituting the following:

(b) A registered voter is entitled to vote in a primary election for offices for which the voter is qualified to vote at the polling place where the voter is registered:

(1) If the voter is registered as being affiliated with that political party; or

(2) If the voter was registered prior to January 1, 2020, and if the primary election is the first primary election the voter has participated in following such date, and if the voter declares allegiance to that political party. The party affiliation declared by the voter shall then be added to the voter's permanent registration record.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect January 1, 2020, the public welfare requiring it.