

SENATE BILL 1945

By Yager

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-14-202; Section 2-2-109; Section 2-3-204; Section 2-6-303; Section 2-7-104 and Section 2-9-105, relative to elections.

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

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-2-109(a), is amended by deleting subsection (a) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(a) A qualified voter may register or have the voter's registration altered at the commission office at any time the office is open, except that applications for registration shall not be processed for twenty-nine (29) days before an election, except as provided in subsection (b); provided, that a qualified voter may file a mail registration form by postmarking the registration form or submitting the registration form thirty (30) days before an election. A mail registration form lacking a postmark, but signed and dated at least thirty (30) days before an election, shall be timely filed if it is received by the county election commission no later than the twenty-seventh day prior to the election. A qualified voter may correct a deficient but timely filed mail registration form if the voter files a completed registration application or otherwise corrects the deficiency on or before the next regularly scheduled November general election. The administrator of elections shall register the person to vote if the person is otherwise eligible to register. Deficient registrations not corrected on or before the next regularly scheduled November general election shall no longer be considered deficient and shall be void. The administrator shall be empowered to update an existing registration until no later than five (5) days before an election to place it within the correct precinct in the county when a voter changes the voter's address through the process described in § 2-7-140.

SECTION 2. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-6-303(a), is amended by deleting subdivision (1) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(1) No later than four (4) hours prior to the closing of polls for all regularly scheduled November elections and no later than two (2) hours prior to the closing of polls for all other elections, or at such earlier time after the polls open as the county election commission may direct, on election day, the county election commission shall deliver the locked and sealed absentee ballot boxes and their keys to the counting board in the commission office.

SECTION 3. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-7-104(a), is amended by adding the following language at the end of the subsection:

A spouse of a candidate on the ballot shall not be eligible for appointment as a poll watcher.

SECTION 4. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-3-204(a), is amended by deleting the language "forty five (45)" and substituting instead the language "seventy five (75)" and by deleting the language "sixty (60)" and substituting instead the language "ninety (90)".

SECTION 5. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-3-204(c), is amended by deleting the language "thirty (30)" and substituting instead the language "ninety (90)".

SECTION 6. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 2-14-202, is amended by deleting subsection (b) in its entirety and by substituting instead the following language:

(b)

(1) The governor shall, by writs of election, set a date not less than fifty-five (55) nor more than sixty (60) days from the date of the writs for primary elections for nominations by statewide political parties to fill the vacancy and shall, by the same writs of election, set a date of not less than one hundred (100) nor more than one hundred seven (107) days from the date of the writs for a general election to fill the vacancy.

(2) Candidates for the primary elections and independent candidates for the general election shall qualify as required in regular elections but shall file qualifying petitions no later than twelve o'clock (12:00) noon prevailing time on the sixth Thursday before the day of the primary elections. Any candidate wishing to withdraw shall do so before twelve o'clock (12:00) noon, prevailing time, on the fourth day after the qualifying deadline.

(3) Except where this subsection (b) makes different provisions, part 1 of this chapter shall govern elections required by this subsection (b). The state primary boards shall perform their duties under chapter 8 of this title with respect to primaries held under this subsection (b) as quickly as practicable.

SECTION 7. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring

it.