

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 985
By: Elkins
Elections
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerned parties report that election officials in certain large counties do not have adequate time to review the thousands of provisional ballots and affidavits that are generated during each election. Such cases, the parties note, could constitute a violation of law. H.B. 985 seeks to address this issue by increasing the time allotted to election officials to perform certain duties.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 985 amends the Election Code to require the early voting ballot board processing early voting results from the territory served by an early voting clerk to verify and count provisional ballots not later than the 13th day after the date of an election held on the date of the general election for state and county officers. The bill requires the procedures prescribed by the secretary of state for providing voter registrar assistance to the early voting ballot board in the verification and counting of provisional ballots to allow, in an election held on the date of the general election for state and county officers, for seven calendar days for the voter registrar to review a provisional voter's eligibility. The bill authorizes the time for the local canvass in an election held on the date of the general election for state and county officers to be set not later than the 14th day after election day and requires the governor to conduct the state canvass for such an election at the time set by the secretary of state not earlier than the 18th or later than the 33rd day after election day.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2013.