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H.561

Introduced by Representatives Sharpe of Bristol and Fisher of Lincoln

Referred to Committee on

Date:

Subject: Elections; local elections; budgets; school districts; Australian ballot

Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to reaffirm by the voters of a municipality the use of Australian ballots every five years for approval of the school district budget.

An act relating to the reaffirmation of the use of Australian ballots for approval of school district budgets

It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c) is amended to read:

(c) Budgets.

(1) A vote whether to use the Australian ballot system to establish the budget shall be in substantially the following form:

“Shall (name of municipality) adopt its budget article or articles by Australian ballot?”

(2) If a budget voted on by Australian ballot is rejected, the legislative body shall prepare a revised budget. The legislative body shall establish a date for the vote on the revised budget, and shall take appropriate steps to warn a

1 public informational meeting on the budget and the vote. The date of the
2 public informational meeting shall be at least five days following the public
3 notice. The date of the vote shall be at least seven days following the public
4 notice. The vote on the revised budget shall be by Australian ballot and shall
5 take place in the same locations that the first vote was taken. The budget shall
6 be established if a majority of all votes cast are in favor. If the revised budget
7 is rejected, the legislative body shall repeat the procedure in this subsection
8 until a budget is adopted. Once a municipality votes to establish its budget by
9 the Australian ballot system, the vote on the budget shall be taken by
10 Australian ballot until the municipality votes to discontinue use of the system.

11 (3) Unless a municipality, at its annual meeting or at a special meeting
12 called for that purpose, votes to have the provisions of the Australian ballot
13 system apply within five years of a previous vote to have those provisions
14 apply, those provisions shall not apply to the budget of the school district. The
15 failure of a municipality to reaffirm the use of the provisions of the Australian
16 ballot system every five years shall serve so as to discontinue the use of that
17 system.

18 Sec. 2. APPLICATION

19 The provisions of 17 V.S.A. § 2680(c)(3), as set forth in this act, shall not
20 automatically discontinue the use of the provisions of the Australian ballot
21 system for those municipalities that have not voted within the last five years to

1 have those provisions apply to the budget of the school district of those
2 municipalities, but rather those municipalities shall be required to reaffirm the
3 use of those provisions within five years of the effective date of this act.