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Authors: O'Driscoll

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Analyst: Matt Gehring, 651-296-5052

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Overview

This bill provides a number of technical and miscellaneous changes to the laws governing election administration.

It contains the following House Files: HF 3221 (O'Driscoll—Elections Technical); HF 1569, with committee amendment (Peterson—Alternate Voting Systems); HF 2050, with committee amendment (West—Electronic Signatures); and HF 3108 (Quam—Tuesday Special Elections).

Section

- 1 Postelection sampling.** Modifies the process for reporting statistics related to nondeliverable postal verifications sent to same-day registered voters following an election by adding deadlines for counties to submit the statistics to the secretary of state, and clarifying that the statistics required to be reported are those from the previous state general election. The content of the report remains unchanged.
- 2 Technology requirements.** Permits the use of an electronic polling place roster system that features an ability of the voter to sign in to vote electronically, rather than by signing a physical piece of paper.
- 3 Location; timing.** Reorganizes language related to the in-person absentee voting. The new language in this section is a recodification of current law.
- 4 Voting booth; electronic ballot marker.** Strikes language related to in-person absentee voting, which is recodified earlier in the bill, and reorganizes language related to the

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availability of voting booths and electronic ballot markers in a polling place. This section also clarifies the existing requirement that all polling places have a ballot marker accessible for voters with disabilities.

- 5 **Opening of envelopes.** Provides that if more than one ballot is contained in a returned absentee ballot envelope, the ballots are spoiled only if the envelope contains more than one ballot that has been marked with votes.
- 6 **Write-in candidates.** Adds language authorizing cities to adopt procedures related to counting write-in votes. Options for the city include requiring write-in candidates to file a request with the city in order for their write-in votes to be counted individually, or counting those votes only if the total number of all write-in votes for the office is equal to or greater than the fewest number of votes for a non-write-in candidate.

Procedures related to counting write-in votes for federal and state offices are unchanged.
- 7 **Authority; location.** Modifies procedures related to polling place designations. This section requires local governments to adopt a resolution by December 31 of each year, if any polling place location is to be changed for the upcoming year. Current law requires a resolution each year to designate polling places for each precinct, regardless of whether they are changed from the prior year.

This section also adds a reference to county election, when referring to other elections that may be held at a town polling location.
- 8 **Electronic voting systems.** Expands the types of electronic voting systems that may be certified for use in Minnesota to include systems that produce a marked paper ballot using a touch screen or other electronic device.
- 9 **Mail elections; questions.** Authorizes a mail election ballot to include offices in addition to ballot questions, in cases where municipal and school district jurisdictions overlap and one of the jurisdictions has a question on the ballot.
- 10 **Method.** Authorizes election judges counting blank ballots as part of the ballot counting and reconciliation process after an election to presume that the number of ballots indicated for a set of prepackaged ballots is the correct count.
- 11 **Information requirements.** Updates the content requirements for precinct summary statements, to reflect the authorization to use ballots that contain only a voter's choices.
- 12 **Publicly funded recounts.** Clarifies that the window of time during which a candidate may request a publicly-funded recount starts at the close of the canvass of the election.
- 13 **Special election; Tuesday.** Applies a Tuesday special election requirement to the special general election for a vacant legislative office.
- 14 **Nomination at special primary on other day.** Applies a Tuesday special election requirement to the special primary election for a vacant legislative office.

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- 15** **Canvass; special primary; state canvassing board; contest.** Provides that an election contest related to a special primary for state legislative office must be filed within two days after the canvass is completed, not counting Sundays and legal holidays.
- 16** **Electronic voting systems.** Provides conditions for the use of alternate electronic voting systems, including that the system must create a marked paper ballot, and that all other information required to be contained on the ballot is displayed electronically.
- 17** **Ballots in precincts with multiple styles of voting system.** Adopts standards for conducting a recount or postelection review in precincts where a ballot format was used by ten or fewer voters. Election judges from that precinct are not eligible to participate in a recount or postelection review of the precinct's results.
- 18** **Ballots.** Clarifies that the standard ballot title that must be used when both municipal and school district offices or questions appear on a ballot applies regardless of whether the election occurs in an odd-numbered or even-numbered year.
- 19** **Example ballots.** Replaces the term "sample ballot" with "example ballot," in the law governing the document provided to county auditors to illustrate the proper format of the presidential nomination primary ballots.
- 20** **Requirement; fee.** Adds officials elected at a special election to the existing law requiring persons elected to town office to take the oath of office within ten days of receiving a certificate or notice of election.