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## **OLR Bill Analysis**

### **HB 6650**

#### ***AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTIONS OF TOWN COMMITTEE MEMBERS.***

#### **SUMMARY**

This bill establishes circumstances under which town committee members who are chosen in a direct primary in certain municipalities are deemed elected to the committee without a primary (see BACKGROUND).

Specifically, in municipalities with a population of 100,000 or more (the bill does not specify a population measure), the bill provides that no direct primary is held if, by 4:00 p.m. on the 41<sup>st</sup> day before the primary (i.e., seven days before the deadline for filing candidacy petitions), the number of people who have requested petition forms and filed a statement consenting to be a candidate (1) does not exceed the number of town committee members being elected but (2) is at least 25% of that number.

The bill instead exempts these candidates from the law's primary petition deadline and signature requirements and deems them elected to the town committee without a direct primary. (Generally, the law requires that these petitions be (1) filed with the registrar of voters by 4:00 p.m. on the 34<sup>th</sup> day before the primary; (2) signed by at least 5% of the enrolled party members in the town, or a lesser number if provided in the party rules; and (3) certified by the registrar of voters (CGS §§ 9-405 to -406 and -412).)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **BACKGROUND**

##### ***Town Committees***

Under existing law, major political parties must select a town

committee in each town. They must choose party-endorsed candidates at a caucus unless the party rules provide for a direct primary (CGS §§ 9-390(c) and -392).

By law, a party's endorsed candidates for town committee are deemed elected to the committee unless candidates numbering at least 25% of the seats to be filled on the committee successfully petition for a primary (CGS §§ 9-415(d) & -417). If the party rules provide for a direct primary, then the party does not make any endorsements. Rather, all committee members are elected in the primary (CGS § 9-390(g)). Town committee primaries are held on the first Tuesday in March in even-numbered years (CGS § 9-425).

By law, a "major party" is one whose (1) candidate for governor received, under the party's designation, at least 20% of the votes cast for governor in the preceding gubernatorial election or (2) enrolled membership comprises at least 20% of the total number of enrolled members of all political parties in the state (as of the most recent gubernatorial election) (CGS § 9-372(5)).

## **COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 11      Nay 7      (04/05/2021)