
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5229

AN ACT CONCERNING MINORITY REPRESENTATION.

SUMMARY

The state's minority representation law limits the maximum number of members who may belong to the same political party on governmental bodies of the state, municipalities, and other political subdivisions. An unaffiliated person (a person who is not affiliated with any party at the time of his or her appointment or nomination) may be elected and considered part of the minority for purposes of minority representation.

For purposes of this law, this bill deems an unaffiliated person as unaffiliated for the entire duration of his or her elected term. Under the bill, a person elected as a candidate for a political party is deemed a member of that party even if he or she is not registered with that party.

The bill also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Minority Representation

Existing law limits the maximum number of members (generally two-thirds of the total) who may belong to the same political party on most state and local boards, commissions, legislative bodies, committees, and similar bodies, whether elected or appointed. But it exempts a governmental body whose members are elected based on geographical division (e.g., regional boards of education), certain legislative bodies (e.g., town meetings), and the board of directors of small taxing districts.

By law, unchanged by the bill, a person registered with a political party at the time of his or her appointment or nomination is deemed to

be a member of that political party for minority representation purposes for the entire duration of the person's term. A person elected as a candidate for a political party other than the party with which he or she is registered is deemed to be a member of the party of his or her candidacy. A person may apply to remove or change his or her party designation, but it does not take effect until three months after the application's filing date.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 18 Nay 1 (03/27/2023)