



Elections & Redistricting

During the 2018 legislative session, the General Assembly considered measures related to a variety of elections topics, including campaign finance, local elections, redistricting, and voter registration and voting.

Campaign Finance

House Bill 18-1047 makes technical changes to the Fair Campaign Practices Act, which governs campaign finance in Colorado. The bill clarifies the definition of an independent expenditure committee, adjusts reporting requirements, and makes changes to the way attorney fees and costs can be awarded after a campaign finance violation.

Senate Bill 18-075, which was postponed indefinitely, would have imposed campaign contribution limits on candidates for school boards. *House Bill 18-1403*, which was postponed indefinitely, would have expanded the formats and types of committees for which campaign finance disclosure statements are required. Two other measures that were postponed indefinitely – *House Joint Resolution 18-1015* and *Senate Joint Memorial 18-005* – would have called for a constitutional convention to amend the U.S. Constitution to reverse recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions in the area of campaign and political finance.

Local Elections

Special districts are local governments that provide services or infrastructure to promote the health, safety, prosperity, security, and general welfare of the inhabitants of the district. Special districts

conduct elections for their board members, tax and bond questions, and other matters, pursuant to law. *House Bill 18-1039* changes the date of regular special district elections from the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May of even-numbered years to the first Tuesday after the first Monday in May of odd-numbered years. The change will go into effect July 1, 2022, and the length of terms of some special district directors will be adjusted to conform to the new dates. *House Bill 18-1268* establishes procedures governing the recall of a special district director, including procedures for recall petitions, recall elections, and the resignation of a director prior to a recall election.

The General Assembly also passed *House Bill 18-1181* concerning special district elections, but the Governor vetoed this bill. The bill would have expanded the definition of eligible elector in a special district election, allowing a special district, upon passage of a resolution, to permit individuals who do not reside in Colorado to vote in certain special district elections if they own property in the special district. The bill would have permitted these voters to vote only for special district board members, not any other candidates, ballot issues, or ballot questions in the district, if the board adopted a resolution to allow such participation.

Senate Bill 18-025 clarifies election procedures for the Urban Drainage and Flood Control District, specifying that the district can hold independent elections or coordinate elections with the counties included in the district. The bill also aligns definitions and procedures with the Uniform

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Election Code of 1992 and the Colorado Local Government Election Code.

Concerning municipal elections, *Senate Bill 18-107* repeals a process for replacing a vacancy in a nomination for municipal office. This bill was recommended by the Statutory Revision Committee, which reviews state laws on an ongoing basis and recommends non-substantive changes.

Two other local election bills, which were postponed indefinitely, addressed county commissioner and school district director elections. *Senate Bill 18-221* would have allowed the voters of a county with a population of less than 70,000 to refer a question to the ballot asking voters to change the method of electing county commissioners. If such a ballot question were to pass, commissioners could be elected only by the electors of the district in which they are running, rather than by the county as a whole. *House Bill 18-1213* would have allowed, but not required, candidates for school district director, commonly referred to as school board member, to declare the political party with which they are affiliated and have that affiliation appear on the ballot.

Redistricting

The General Assembly referred two measures to the voters regarding the redistricting process, both of which were approved in the 2018 general election, *Senate Concurrent Resolution 18-004* creates the Independent Congressional Redistricting Commission, which is charged with amending and approving congressional district maps drawn by nonpartisan legislative staff. Similarly, *Senate Concurrent Resolution 18-005* replaces the Colorado Reapportionment Commission with the Independent Legislative Redistricting Commission, which is charged with amending and approving state legislative district maps drawn by nonpartisan legislative staff. Both measures outline the process for selecting commission members, requirements for

transparency and ethics, procedures for judicial review of commission maps, and criteria the commissions must use for drawing maps.

Voting and Voter Registration

Senate Bill 18-233 is an elections clean-up bill that encompasses a number of provisions of the Uniform Election Code of 1992. The technical modifications made under the bill include eliminating the requirement that a secrecy sleeve be included in a mail ballot packet, modifying deadlines for voter registration in advance of a political party caucus, and clarifying the voter registration requirements for persons experiencing homelessness, among other topics.

Senate Bill 18-076 makes it a misdemeanor criminal offense for a person to facilitate the trading of votes between a Colorado elector and an elector in Colorado or another state, in exchange for the other person's vote for or against a particular candidate or issue.

Senate Bill 18-150 allows a person on parole to preregister to vote and requires parole and probation officers to provide individuals with voter registration information.

The General Assembly referred *House Concurrent Resolution 18-1001* to the state's voters, concerning the format of ballots for judicial retention. This measure was not approved by the necessary 55 percent threshold to amend the state constitution in the 2018 general election. It would have allowed county clerks to write a single judicial retention ballot question for each level of courts, rather than requiring that there be a separate retention question for each judge or justice on the ballot.

House Bill 18-1033, which did not pass, would have expanded the timeframe in which employees could take time off to vote and the activities related to voting for which they could use such time.