

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: Ethics and Elections Committee

BILL: SB 268

SPONSOR: Senator Posey

SUBJECT: Early Voting

DATE: February 24, 2005

REVISED: 02/22/05

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Babington</u>	<u>Rubinas</u>	<u>EE</u>	<u>Fav/1 amendment</u>
2.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
3.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
4.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
5.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
6.	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>

Please see last section for Summary of Amendments

- Technical amendments were recommended
- Amendments were recommended
- Significant amendments were recommended

I. Summary:

This bill changes the day that early voting ends from the day prior to the election to the Friday before the election.

This bill amends section 101.657, Florida Statutes.

This bill takes effect upon becoming law.

II. Present Situation:

Early voting proved to be popular among voters in the 2004 election cycle. Statewide, 18.7% of all voters voted early for the November 2 General Election.¹ Early voting was plagued, however, by chronic long lines and wait times that sometimes stretched to four hours in some parts of the state.

This was a particular problem on the Monday before the election, when many voters in line at poll closing time were permitted to remain in line until they voted. This meant, in some

¹ "Analysis and Report of Overvotes and Undervotes for the 2004 General Election," Florida Department of State, Division of Elections, January 31, 2005.

instances, voters were in line until 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. Supervisors and their staffs then had to shut down the early voting centers, secure the voting machines, and prepare for county-wide precinct voting that began at 7 a.m. the next morning. The resulting logistical difficulties and staff fatigue have prompted requests from many supervisors for more time between the end of early voting and Election Day.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1. The bill changes the day on which early voting ends from the day prior to the election to the Friday before the election. This will allow supervisors of elections and their staffs to better prepare for county-wide precinct voting, but will eliminate one weekend of early voting.

Section 2. The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Conducting early voting for three fewer days should result in reduced election administration costs. The fiscal impact, however, will vary from county-to-county depending on the size and number of early voting sites. Thus, the precise fiscal impact is indeterminable.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.

VIII. Summary of Amendments:

Barcode 832204 by Ethics and Elections:

Provides that candidates for state attorney and public defender are subject to the same qualification procedures as candidates for federal, state, or multicounty district offices.

(WITH TITLE AMENDMENT)

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