SS SCS HCS HB 1871 -- ELECTIONS

This bill designates August 12th of each year as "Election Worker Appreciation Day" in Missouri.

The bill provides that a person who registers as a lobbyist will not be prohibited from maintaining a candidate committee seeking certain local offices, provided that the lobbyist is not registered to lobby the office that the candidate committee is designated to seek.

This bill provides that, in the case of a bond election, if an election contest is not filed within 30 days after the official announcement of the election result, all conditions of state election law will be deemed to have been complied with in the issuance of the bond.

The bill allows a notice of election to be sent by email.

Currently, notice of election must be published twice. The first notice of election must be published within two weeks prior to the election, and the second must be published within one week prior to the election. This bill requires both notices to be published within six weeks prior to the election.

Currently, jurisdictions with populations under a certain size and in which no newspaper meeting the legal requirements is published are permitted to send legal notice to voters via mail instead of publishing the notice in a newspaper. The bill allows any election authority the option to mail legal notice rather than publishing the notice in a newspaper. The mailing must occur within six weeks prior to the election. The election authority is permitted to exclude from the mailing any voter designated as inactive.

Currently, the filing time for declarations of candidacy for offices in political subdivisions or special districts not otherwise specified in law or charter is from the 17th Tuesday prior to the election through the 14th Tuesday prior to the election. This bill moves the filing time by one week, from the 16th Tuesday prior to the election to the 13th Tuesday prior to the election. The bill also provides that, if the 13th Tuesday prior to the election is a State or Federal holiday, the closing filing date will be the next day that is not a State or Federal holiday.

Currently, no person on probation or parole after conviction of a felony is entitled to vote until finally discharged from probation or parole. This bill specifies certain offenses for which this will be the case, allowing persons on probation or parole after conviction of felonies not listed in the bill to vote prior to being finally discharged from probation or parole.

Currently, the election authority must have automatic tabulating equipment tested within 14 days prior to an election. This bill specifies that this test must occur no later than one week prior to an election.

Currently, covered voters eligible to register to vote can vote in certain elections by submitting a Federal postcard application to apply to vote at their polling place. This bill changes this requirement from the polling place to the office of the election authority on election day.

Currently, interstate former residents and new residents can vote absentee for presidential and vice presidential electors. The bill allows them to vote for those electors at the office of the election authority on election day.

This bill provides that all lists of absentee ballot applications for people with permanent disabilities will be kept confidential and must not be posted or displayed in an area open to the general public nor shown to any unauthorized person.

The bill requires any person who files as a candidate for a public office that performs county functions in the City of St. Louis to provide copies of paid receipts or no-tax-due statements for local personal and real property taxes received from the Assessor to the election authority.

The bill applies existing procedures for voters using provisional ballots to voters voting absentee in person at the office of the election authority or at another authorized location designated by the election authority.

This bill allows a provisional ballot to be cast in any public election.

The bill provides that votes for write-in candidates must be counted only for candidates who have filed a declaration of intent to be a write-in candidate, even if no candidate has filed for that office.

The bill adds petitioning to the list of activities that are prohibited within a certain distance from the polling place. The bill also applies election-day electioneering rules to any building in which voting is occurring during the absentee voting period.

This bill allows an election authority to, after public notice, expand the distance from the polling location within which these activities are prohibited from 25 feet to 50 feet for most electioneering activities. However, candidates not seeking to vote can still engage in these activities within 25 feet from the polling location, and campaign signs will also be permitted within that distance.

Currently, no contribution or expenditure of public funds can be made directly by any officer, employee, or agent of any political subdivision, school district, or charter school to advocate, support, or oppose the passage or defeat of any ballot measure or candidate for public office. This bill adds special districts to the list of public entities in this prohibition.

This bill requires all solicitations for campaign contributions to state, in a clear and conspicuous manner, the committee that will benefit from the contribution. The solicitation must also indicate what percentage of the contribution will be received by the committee, and any other entity that will receive any part of the contribution.

The bill allows the solicitation of automatically-recurring contributions only if the contributor gives affirmative consent for the recurring contribution. The passive action of a contributor, including but not limited to failing to uncheck a prechecked box, does not constitute affirmative consent.

This bill requires committees soliciting recurring contributions to provide receipts to the contributors, the contents of which are specified in the bill, and to cancel the recurring contributions upon request prior to the next scheduled deduction date.

Any committee that solicits and receives a contribution in violation of this bill must return the contribution to the donor immediately.

The bill allows the Missouri Ethics Commission to impose a civil penalty on a committee violating the provisions of this bill of

up to 100 times the amount of the contribution received in violation of these provisions.

The bill requires recurring contributions to expire automatically after the election at which the candidate or measure benefiting from the contribution appears on the ballot. Recurring contributions made to a candidate who wins a primary election can continue until the general election.

This bill adds childcare expenses that result directly from campaigning for office or in connection with the duties of public office and expenses associated with personal security of the holder of elective office to the list of permissible uses of campaign funds.

This bill has a severability clause.