
OLR Bill Analysis

sSB 393

AN ACT CONCERNING SPECIAL ELECTIONS TO FILL VACANCIES DUE TO THE DEATH OF CERTAIN ELECTED OFFICIALS.

SUMMARY

This bill delays when the governor may issue a writ calling for a special election to fill vacancies in certain offices due to the death of the elected official or member elect. The bill maintains the existing timeline for vacancies created for other reasons, such as resignations.

Under current law, the governor generally must issue these writs within 10 days after a vacancy in the office of U.S. senator, U.S. representative, or General Assembly member. Under the bill, he must instead do so between seven and 17 days after the death occurred, subject to certain existing exceptions unchanged by the bill (see BACKGROUND).

For probate judge vacancies created due to the judge's death, the bill requires the governor to wait at least seven days after the death before issuing the writ, if he chooses to do so (§ 4). State law gives the governor discretion to call a special election to fill a probate court vacancy and does not currently set a timeline for issuing these writs.

The bill also makes technical changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

BACKGROUND

Special Writ Exceptions

In certain circumstances, the law directs when the (1) governor must issue a special writ and (2) special election must occur. For example, for General Assembly vacancies created between 49 and 125 days before the next regular election, special election writs must be issued 46 days before that regular election and the special election must be held to

coincide with it. The law has similar provisions for congressional offices.

The law also directs the governor to not issue special writs for congressional or state legislative offices if the vacancy is created within a certain period before the upcoming regular election for that office, in which case the vacancy is filled then.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 19 Nay 0 (03/20/2026)