
OLR Bill Analysis

SB 395

AN ACT STUDYING EFFORTS TO INCREASE VOTER PARTICIPATION AND AUTHORIZING MUNICIPAL PILOT PROGRAMS TO PROMOTE SUCH EFFORTS.

SUMMARY

This bill establishes a nine-member task force to study ways to achieve 100% voter participation and enhance civic engagement, and assess administrative and financial barriers to reach these goals. By February 1, 2027, the task force must submit a report to the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee on its findings and recommendations, including any potential legislation to direct resources or funds to municipalities to increase voter participation. The task force terminates on the date it submits its report or February 1, 2027, whichever is later.

The bill also allows municipalities, within existing resources, to establish a pilot program to promote the goal of achieving 100% voter participation. The program may include efforts to enhance civic engagement, such as voter outreach and education campaigns. The bill specifies that these pilot programs are subject to the state's election laws and municipal restrictions on diverging from certain state election policies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

VOTER PARTICIPATION TASK FORCE

The task force must study (1) efforts to achieve, by January 1, 2030, 100% voter participation in the state, and potential implementation options; (2) ways to generally enhance civic engagement; (3) the experiences of jurisdictions that require citizens to vote; (4) municipal officials' needs in administering elections with 100% participation; and (5) needed budgetary resources to achieve 100% participation.

The task force members include the secretary of the state, or her designee, and eight members appointed as follows:

1. two by the governor; and
2. one each by the House speaker, Senate president pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders of each chamber.

Members appointed by the legislative leaders may be legislators. The bill requires (1) initial appointments to be made by August 1, 2026, and (2) the first meeting to be held by September 1, 2026. The appointing authority must fill any vacancy. The House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must select the chairpersons, who must schedule the first meeting. The GAE Committee's administrative staff must serve as the task force's administrative staff.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/20/2026)