

SB 463

Elections Revisions

SB 463 – Elections – Brief Summary

LC 28 9657

1) Requires counties to track wait times and take action if voters have to wait more than an hour, while at the same time allowing needed flexibility in equipment allocation for elections other than November general elections (Sections 5 and 8)

Requires counties to track wait times in precincts at least three times during the day at a time and report to the Secretary of State. If the wait time is more than an hour, counties will have to split the precinct (if it has more than 2000 electors) or provide more voting equipment or poll workers or both at the next election. (Section 5). This is done in conjunction with providing the counties needed flexibility in how they allocate equipment in elections other than November general elections. (Section 8). Current law that was revived last year because we moved back to an optical scan voting system treats November general elections the same as special elections, which doesn't reflect reality.

2) Sync Up Voter Registration Deadlines for State and Federal Primary Runoffs (Sections 3, 4, and 16)

Due to a federal court decision, Georgia now has different voter registration deadlines for state primary runoffs and federal primary runoffs, even though those elections are held on the same day. This fix would alleviate numerous difficulties in administering these elections and reduce voter confusion.

3) Allow Photo ID to Verify Absentee Ballots (Section 11)

Due to a recently filed lawsuit that challenged Georgia's signature verification requirement for absentee ballots, this section allows for an additional way for Georgia voters to verify their absentee ballot—including a copy of their photo ID with their absentee ballot.

4) Code Cleanup (Sections 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 17)

These sections remove language related to Georgia's old voting system to make crystal clear to a federal judge, who is still considering a lawsuit about the old voting system, that Georgia does not use that system anymore and any claims about it should be moot. Section 2 revises the duties of the State Election Board to clarify that the board's duty is to "promote" uniformity, rather than the impossible standard of "obtaining" uniformity.