

SENATE/HOUSE FILE _____
BY (PROPOSED SECRETARY OF
STATE BILL)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to elections by allowing changes to election
2 precinct boundaries and the establishment of voting centers
3 in all elections and allowing the establishment of pilot
4 programs for elections administration.
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

DIVISION I

PRECINCTS BOUNDARIES AND VOTING CENTERS

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Section 1. Section 49.8, subsection 7, Code 2017, is amended to read as follows:

7. Precinct boundaries established by or pursuant to section 49.3 or 49.4, and not changed under subsection 1 since the most recent federal decennial census, may be changed once during the period beginning January 1 of the second year following a year in which a federal decennial census is taken and ending June 30 of the year immediately following the year in which the next succeeding federal decennial census is taken, if the commissioner recommends and the board of supervisors finds that the change will effect a substantial savings in election costs. Changes made under this subsection shall be made not later than ninety-nine days before a primary election, unless the changes will not take effect until January 1 of the next even-numbered year.

Sec. 2. Section 49.11, subsection 3, unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2017, is amended to read as follows:

The precincts established pursuant to section 49.7 shall not be changed except in the manner provided by law. However, ~~for any election other than the primary or general election or any special election held under section 69.14~~, the county commissioner of elections may:

Sec. 3. Section 49.11, subsection 3, paragraph b, subparagraph (1), Code 2017, is amended to read as follows:

(1) Establish voting centers for ~~the regular city~~ any election, city primary election, city runoff election, regular school election, and special elections. Any registered voter who is eligible to vote in the primary or general election may vote at any voting center in the county. Any registered voter who is eligible to vote in the regular city election may vote at any voting center in the city. Any registered voter who is eligible to vote at the regular school election may vote at any voting center in the school district. Any registered

1 voter who is eligible to vote in a special election may vote at
2 any voting center established for that special election. For
3 purposes of section 48A.7A, a voting center shall be considered
4 the polling place for the precinct in which a person resides.

5 Sec. 4. Section 49.11, subsection 3, paragraph d,
6 unnumbered paragraph 1, Code 2017, is amended to read as
7 follows:

8 ~~Notwithstanding subsection 1, the~~ The commissioner may also
9 consolidate precincts for any election ~~including a primary and~~
10 ~~general election~~ under any of the following circumstances:

11 DIVISION II

12 STATE COMMISSIONER PILOT PROGRAMS

13 Sec. 5. Section 47.1, Code 2017, is amended by adding the
14 following new subsection:

15 NEW SUBSECTION. 6. *a.* The state commissioner of elections
16 may establish pilot programs related to administration of
17 elections. Pilot programs may be proposed by the state
18 commissioner or upon application by a county commissioner. A
19 pilot program established under this subsection shall:

20 (1) Last no longer than through two consecutive election
21 cycles.

22 (2) Include a number of counties sufficient for the state
23 commissioner to determine whether or not the program is
24 applicable statewide.

25 (3) Comply with voting system and equipment requirements
26 under chapter 52.

27 *b.* County commissioners participating in a pilot program
28 under this subsection shall submit an annual report to the
29 state commissioner of elections, and the state commissioner
30 shall submit a compilation of the annual reports to the general
31 assembly, no later than December 31 of each year, summarizing
32 the results of the pilot program.

33 EXPLANATION

34 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
35 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

1 This bill relates to elections and voting.

2 Division I relates to election precinct boundaries and the
3 establishment of voting centers.

4 Under current law, precincts established following a federal
5 decennial census are not allowed to be changed unless otherwise
6 provided by law. Current law also provides that a county
7 commissioner of elections (county auditor) may recommend, and a
8 board of supervisors may approve, changes to county precincts
9 that effect substantial savings in election costs. The bill
10 adds a reference to the statutory standards that must be
11 followed when establishing election precinct boundaries.

12 Also under current law, county commissioners are, in
13 certain elections, allowed to consolidate two or more precincts
14 into one, establish voting centers, and permanently divide
15 precincts. Under the bill, county commissioners are allowed to
16 consolidate two or more precincts into one, establish voting
17 centers, and permanently divide precincts in all elections.

18 Division II of the bill allows the state commissioner of
19 elections (secretary of state) to establish pilot programs
20 related to administration of elections. Under the bill,
21 pilot programs may be proposed by the state commissioner or
22 upon application by a county commissioner. A pilot program
23 under the bill can last no longer than through two consecutive
24 election cycles, must include a number of counties sufficient
25 for the state commissioner to determine whether or not the
26 program is applicable statewide, and must comply with election
27 voting system and equipment requirements under current law. By
28 operation of current law, the state commissioner is required
29 to adopt administrative rules to carry out the establishment
30 of such pilot programs.

31 Under the bill, county commissioners participating in a
32 pilot program are required to submit annual reports to the
33 state commissioner for compilation and submission to the
34 general assembly summarizing pilot program results.