



# HOUSE BILL 3: Various Local Election Changes II.

2025-2026 General Assembly

|                       |                                                                                |                     |                                                                       |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Committee:</b>     | Senate Elections. If favorable, re-refer to Rules and Operations of the Senate | <b>Date:</b>        | June 11, 2025                                                         |
| <b>Introduced by:</b> | Reps. Reeder, G. Brown                                                         | <b>Prepared by:</b> | Erika Churchill, Jessica Sammons, Hillary Woodard, and William Brewer |
| <b>Analysis of:</b>   | PCS to Second Edition<br>H3-CSTEE-1                                            |                     | Committee Co-Counsel                                                  |

**OVERVIEW:** *The PCS to House Bill 3 (PCS) would do all of the following:*

- *Change the method of filling vacancies for the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners.*
- *Change the method of election for the Currituck County Board of Education from nonpartisan to partisan, subject to a referendum, and change the method of election of the Pitt County Board of Education from nonpartisan to partisan.*
- *Change the regular municipal election cycle from odd-numbered years to even-numbered years for all of the municipalities in Pamlico County and for the Village of Simpson.*
- *Change the method of election for the City of Monroe from nonpartisan to partisan.*

## CURRENT LAW, BILL ANALYSIS, AND EFFECTIVE DATE:

### Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners Vacancies

#### Selection of Appointee to Fill a Vacancy:

When a vacancy on a county board of commissioners (board) occurs, generally that vacancy is filled in accordance with G.S. 153A-27 or G.S. 153A-27.1. Under both statutory processes, the remaining members of the board appoint a new member to fill that vacancy. G.S. 153A-27 requires consultation with the executive committee of the political party of the vacating member but the board is not bound by that political party's recommendation. G.S. 153A-27.1 requires consultation with the executive committee of the political party of the vacating member and provides that the board must appoint the political party's recommendation, if that recommendation is made within 30 days of the vacancy.

**Section 1** of the PCS would move Cabarrus County to the list of counties in which G.S. 153A-27.1 applies. This would mean for any vacancy filled after the bill becomes law, the Cabarrus County Board of Commissioners would be bound by the recommendation of the executive committee of the political party of the vacating member, if that recommendation is made within 30 days of the vacancy.

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# House 3 PCS

Page 2

## **Boards of Education – Partisan Elections**

### **Currituck County:**

The Currituck County Board of Education (Board) consists of five members, with four members elected from single-member residency districts and one member elected from the county at-large. For the candidates elected from the single-member residency districts, each candidate must reside in the district in which he or she seeks to serve, but elections are conducted county-wide. Board members are elected in even-numbered years at the time of the general election to serve staggered four-year terms. Elections are conducted using the nonpartisan plurality method.

Vacancies are filled by the remaining members of the Board. If the vacancy occurs during the first two years of the term, the appointee serves until the next election of the Board members, at which time the remaining unexpired term will be filled by election. If the vacancy occurs during the last two years of the term, the appointee serves for the remainder of the unexpired term.

**Section 2** of the PCS would submit to the voters of Currituck County the question of whether to change the method of election of the Currituck County Board of Education from nonpartisan to partisan. The referendum would be held at the time of the general election on November 3, 2026. If the referendum is approved by a majority of voters, members of the Currituck County Board of Education would be elected on a partisan basis beginning with the 2028 elections, and any vacancy occurring on the Board of those elected beginning in 2028 would be filled by the remaining members of the Board in accordance with G.S. 115C-37.1, which requires the remaining members of the Board to consult with the county executive committee of the relevant political party before filling a vacancy and to appoint that executive committee's nominee, if the recommendation is made within 30 days of the occurrence of the vacancy.

### **Pitt County:**

The Pitt County Board of Education (Board) consists of nine members elected from single-member election districts. Each candidate to the Board must reside in the district in which he or she seeks to serve, and the seat is voted on by only the qualified voters residing within that district. Board members are elected in even-numbered years at the time of the general election to serve staggered four-year terms. Elections are conducted using the nonpartisan plurality method.

Vacancies are filled by the remaining members of the Board. If the vacancy occurs during the first two years of the term, the appointee serves until the next election of the Board members, at which time the remaining unexpired term will be filled by election. If the vacancy occurs during the last two years of the term, the appointee serves for the remainder of the unexpired term.

**Section 2.1** of the PCS would provide that members of the Pitt County Board of Education would be elected on a partisan basis, beginning with the 2026 elections, and any vacancy occurring on the Board would be filled by the remaining members of the Board in accordance with G.S. 115C-37.1, which requires the remaining members of the Board to consult with the county executive committee of the relevant political party before filling a vacancy and to appoint that executive committee's nominee, if the recommendation is made within 30 days of the occurrence of the vacancy.

# House 3 PCS

Page 3

## Municipalities – Even-Numbered Year Elections

G.S. 163-279 provides for odd-numbered year municipal elections statewide, creating a default rule for the time of municipal elections.

### **Pamlico County:**

The following chart summarizes the current town officers, terms of office, and method of election in the Towns of Alliance, Arapahoe, Bayboro, Grantsboro, Mesic, Minnesott Beach, Oriental, Stonewall, and Vandemere:

| <b>Unit of Government</b>      | <b>Officers</b>                                                                                           | <b>Term of Offices</b>                                                        | <b>Election of Current Members</b>                                                                                            | <b>Method of Election</b> |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Town of Alliance</b>        | Board of Commissioners (5 members)<br><br>The Commissioner receiving the most votes is selected as Mayor. | <u>Commissioners:</u> two years                                               | <u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023                                                                                         | Nonpartisan plurality     |
| <b>Town of Arapahoe</b>        | Mayor<br><br>Board of Commissioners (5 members)                                                           | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years                    | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023                                                        | Nonpartisan plurality     |
| <b>Town of Bayboro</b>         | Mayor<br><br>Town Commissioners (5 members)                                                               | <u>Mayor:</u> four years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> four years, staggered       | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2021<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Two Commissioners elected in 2021, three Commissioners elected in 2023 | Nonpartisan plurality     |
| <b>Town of Grantsboro</b>      | Mayor<br><br>Council Members (5 members)                                                                  | <u>Mayor:</u> four years<br><u>Council Members:</u> four years, not staggered | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Council Members:</u> Elected in 2023                                                      | Nonpartisan plurality     |
| <b>Town of Mesic</b>           | Mayor<br><br>Board of Commissioners (5 members)                                                           | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years                    | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023                                                        | Nonpartisan plurality     |
| <b>Town of Minnesott Beach</b> | Mayor<br><br>Board of Commissioners (4 members)                                                           | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years                    | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023                                                        | Nonpartisan plurality     |

# House 3 PCS

Page 4

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|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Town of Oriental</b>  | Mayor<br>Board of Commissioners<br>(5 members) | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023 | Nonpartisan plurality |
| <b>Town of Stonewall</b> | Mayor<br>Board of Commissioners<br>(3 members) | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023 | Nonpartisan plurality |
| <b>Town of Vandemere</b> | Mayor<br>Board of Commissioners<br>(5 members) | <u>Mayor:</u> two years<br><u>Commissioners:</u> two years | <u>Mayor:</u> Elected in 2023<br><u>Commissioners:</u> Elected in 2023 | Nonpartisan plurality |

**Part 3** of the PCS would provide that the municipal elections for every municipality in Pamlico County would be conducted in even-numbered years, beginning in the following years:

- For the Towns of Alliance, Arapahoe, Bayboro, Mesic, Minnesott Beach, Stonewall, and Vandemere, with the 2026 elections. To implement this change, there would be no municipal elections for these Towns in 2025, and the current terms of office for the mayor and commissioners for each Town would be extended by one year. Regular municipal elections would resume in 2026 at the same time as the general election and would be conducted every two years thereafter. For the Town of Bayboro, the mayor and two of the commissioners would be elected in 2026 and three commissioners would be elected in 2028 to maintain the staggering of terms.
- For the Town of Oriental, with the 2026 elections. To implement this change, there would be a municipal election in the Town in 2025 where the mayor and five commissioners would be elected each for a one-year term. Regular municipal elections would resume in 2026 at the same time of the general election and would be conducted every two years thereafter.
- For the Town of Grantsboro, with the 2028 elections. To implement this change, there would be no municipal elections in 2027, and the current terms of office for the mayor and council members would be extended by one year. Regular municipal elections would resume in 2028 at the same time as the general election and would be conducted every four years thereafter.

## Village of Simpson:

Officers for the Village of Simpson consist of a Mayor and a three-member Village Council, all of whom serve two-year terms. The Village of Simpson conducts municipal elections in odd-numbered years, held on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November. Elections are conducted using the nonpartisan plurality method.

# House 3 PCS

Page 5

**Section 4** of the PCS would require regular municipal elections to be held in the Village of Simpson in even-numbered years, beginning with the 2026 elections. To implement this change, municipal elections would not be conducted in the Village of Simpson in 2025, extending the terms of office for the current Mayor and three Village Council members until 2026.

## **City of Monroe Partisan Elections**

Officers for the City of Monroe consist of a Mayor and six Council members. Elections are conducted in odd-numbered years, with results determined by the nonpartisan plurality method. G.S. 163-292. The six Council members serve staggered four-year terms and the Mayor serves a two-year term.

**Section 5** of the PCS would provide that beginning with the 2025 municipal elections, city officers in the City of Monroe would be elected on a partisan basis.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Except as otherwise provided, effective when it becomes law.