



HOUSE BILL 605: Voters Right to Know Act.

2021-2022 General Assembly

Committee:	House Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform. If favorable, re-refer to Appropriations. If favorable, re-refer to Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House	Date:	April 20, 2021
Introduced by:	Reps. Winslow, Dahle, Hawkins, Mills	Prepared by:	Jessica Sammons and Sarah Pilon,
Analysis of:	PCS to First Edition H605-CSBKa-3		Committee Co-Counsel

OVERVIEW: *The PCS for House Bill 605 would equip voters with resources and information about the voting process prior to entering the voting place.*

CURRENT LAW: Each county board of elections is required to post certain voter information, in a manner and format approved by the State Board of Elections (State Board), at voting places for each election involving candidates for federal or State office, as provided by G.S. 166-166.7A. Voter information must include a sample ballot, the date of the election and hours the voting place will be open, instructions, and general information on voting rights and federal and State laws.

The powers and duties of the State Board, outlined by G.S. 163-22, include the duty of general supervision over the primaries and elections in the State. As part of those duties, the State Board must conduct training programs in election law for every director and every member of a county board of elections. The State Board must promulgate rules for the training of precinct officials, to be followed by the county boards of elections. The State Board is also required to conduct programs to certify election officials, including training programs and examinations in election law and procedures. G.S. 163-82.24.

BILL ANALYSIS: The PCS for House Bill 605 would do the following:

- Require the State Board to develop a placard containing information on the right to vote and how to vote for federal or State office elections, and ensure that it is prominently displayed at the entrance to each voting place during all hours the site is open during one-stop absentee voting and on Election Day. Additionally, the State Board must conduct training programs pertaining to placard displays for staff of each county board of elections at least 90 days before the beginning of each voting period.
- Require the State Board to do all of the following:
 - Establish and maintain a webpage on the State Board's website containing FAQs about the right to vote, registering to vote, absentee voting, voting in person, and deadlines, which must be reviewed and updated at least 90 days before the beginning of each voting period, and as required.

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- Establish a quick-response (QR) barcode to link to the informational webpage on the State Board's website.
- Establish a toll-free number for citizen voting questions, to be staffed by an employee of the State Board and operated each day from the time that voting places must be open through 30 minutes after the polls close each day from the first day ballots are available through Election Day.
- Advise members of the county boards of elections as to the proper methods of conducting primaries and elections, including voter education information as described in G.S. 163-166.7A.
- Ensure that voter education information, as described in G.S. 163-166.7A, is included in the training programs and certification of election official programs provided by the State Board.
- Appropriate from the General Fund to the State Board \$20,000 in recurring funds for each year of the 2021-2023 fiscal biennium to staff the toll-free telephone number for citizen voting questions, effective July 1, 2021.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Except as otherwise noted, the act would become effective October 1, 2021, and would apply to elections held on or after that date.