

HB 3291 -1 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Rules

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Meeting Dates: 4/6

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Secretary of State (SOS) to conduct study and analyze best practices for financing electoral campaigns. Requires SOS to develop recommendations regarding most effective method for financing electoral campaigns in Oregon. Requires SOS to submit report to interim legislative committees detailing recommendations by September 15, 2022. Sunsets January 2, 2023.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-1 Replaces measure. Allows ballot returned by mail to be postmarked not later than the date of the election and received at the office of the county clerk not later than seven calendar days after the date of the election. Establishes requirements for return identification envelope to include signature of elector, signature notice, and summary of penalties for knowingly making a false statement, oath, or affidavit under the election laws. Requires ballots returned by means other than mail to be received by 8 p.m. on election day. Authorizes Secretary of State (SOS) to establish by rule a procedure for announcing the status of the tally of the ballots received after the date of the election. Extends certain deadlines for county clerks and SOS after election. Changes election date from the second Tuesday in September to fourth Tuesday in August. Allows county clerks to open return identification envelopes of ballots and any used secrecy envelopes of ballots upon receipt. Applies to elections held on or after January 1, 2022.

BACKGROUND:

In Oregon, ballots must be received by the county, either through the mail or at a drop site within the county, by 8:00 p.m. on the day of the election. The date on the postmark does not count. If a voter uses a ballot drop site in a county other than the one in which they are registered, elections officials mark the ballots as received “on time” and forward them on to the appropriate county. Oregon is one of 32 states that require ballots (either vote-by-mail or absentee) to be returned on election day to be counted. Other states have different requirements for counting ballots, including postmarks by election day and receipt within a certain number of days after election day.

After election day, county elections officials resolve outstanding ballot issues, compile results, validate outcomes, and transmit results to the Secretary of State. Counties certify certain results not later than 20 days after election day. The Secretary of State must certify certain election results not later than 30 days following the election.

House Bill 3291 requires the Secretary of State to conduct study and analyze best practices for financing electoral campaigns.