

Senate Fiscal Agency
P. O. Box 30036
Lansing, Michigan 48909-7536

SFA**BILL ANALYSIS**

Telephone: (517) 373-5383
Fax: (517) 373-1986
TDD: (517) 373-0543

House Bill 4447 (as reported without amendment)
Sponsor: Representative Michael Hanley
House Committee: Local Government
Senate Committee: Local, Urban and State Affairs

Date Completed: 5-1-98

RATIONALE

The Charter Township Act requires that candidates for offices in charter townships be nominated at a primary election held before a general election at which township officers are to be elected. The Act also requires that the primary election be conducted "as near as may be" pursuant to the Michigan Election Law, but then specifies separate petition requirements that candidates must meet to get their names printed on the primary election ballot. Specifically, these petitions must bear the signatures of a number of registered and qualified voters of the township equal to at least 1% but not more than 4% of the total number of votes cast for the office of township supervisor in the last election in which a supervisor was elected. The Election Law, however, requires that nominating petitions for township primary ballots be signed by a number of qualified and registered electors residing in the township that is equal to not less than 1% or more than 2% of the number of votes cast by the party in the township for Secretary of State at the last general November election in which a Secretary of State was elected, but in no case less than five signatures. While the requirements in the Charter Township Act and the Election Law are similar, they are not identical, and the differences have led to confusion and conflict for local election officials and candidates. Some people believe that signature requirements for nominating petitions for township officials should be standardized.

CONTENT

The bill would amend the Charter Township Act to eliminate the requirement that a candidate for township office file nomination petitions in order to have his or her name printed on a political party heading on the official primary election ballot of the township. The bill would retain requirements that candidates for charter township office be

nominated at the general primary election held in the township before each general election at which township officers are to be elected, and that the primary election be conducted, "as near as may be", pursuant to the Michigan Election Law.

MCL 42.4

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

Supporting Argument

The bill would eliminate the separate petition requirements for candidates to get on the primary ballot in charter townships. Instead, candidates for office in charter townships would have to rely on requirements in the Michigan Election Law, thus eliminating a source of confusion for election officials and candidates.

Legislative Analyst: L. Arasim

FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: R. Ross

H9798\S4447A

This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.