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VOTING EQUIPMENT: DEFINE “BALLOT CONTAINER”

House Bill 5139

Sponsor: Rep. Janet Kukuk

Committee: Constitutional Law and Ethics

Complete to 4-20-00

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5139 AS INTRODUCED 11-30-99

Ballot boxes are used to store voted ballots and must be inspected and approved by county boards of canvassers, which examine ballot boxes used in any election under the act and determine whether or not the ballot boxes meet the act's requirements. Ballot boxes, for example, must be able to be sealed (“easily and securely”) with self-sealing metal seals provided to county clerks by the secretary of state. City and township boards of commissioners must furnish their cities and townships with certain election equipment, including ballot boxes that have locks and keys; openings in the lids to admit single, folded ballots; and a second cover or a metal or wooden device for closing the slot so that it can't be opened without unlocking the ballot box and breaking the seal.

The bill would add a definition of “ballot container” that, among other things, would include “ballot box” and “transfer case,” and would amend the act to allow the use of ballot containers in elections wherever ballot boxes or transfer cases currently are used. (The bill would continue to refer to “ballot boxes” and “transfer cases” in addition to adding references to “ballot containers.”) More specifically, the bill would add a definition of “ballot container” to the act. “Ballot container” would mean “a container made of metal, plastic, fiberglass, or other material that provide[d] resistance to tampering used for transporting and storing voted ballot cards and that [was] capable of being sealed with a metal seal.” A “ballot container” would include “a ballot box, a transfer case, or other container used to secure ballots, including optical scan ballots and electronic voting systems and data.”

MCL 168.14j et al.

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