

HB 367 - AS AMENDED BY THE HOUSE

27Mar2025... 1354h

2025 SESSION

25-0414

08/09

HOUSE BILL

367

AN ACT changing the method for adopting partisan town elections to be the same as rescinding partisan town elections.

SPONSORS: Rep. Wherry, Hills. 13; Rep. Aylward, Merr. 5; Rep. Boehm, Hills. 14; Rep. Harvey-Bolia, Belk. 3; Rep. Pauer, Hills. 36; Rep. Creighton, Hills. 30

COMMITTEE: Election Law

ANALYSIS

This bill changes the method for adopting partisan town elections to be the same as rescinding partisan town elections.

Explanation: Matter added to current law appears in ***bold italics***.
Matter removed from current law appears ~~[in brackets and struckthrough.]~~
Matter which is either (a) all new or (b) repealed and reenacted appears in regular type.

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STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

In the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand Twenty Five

AN ACT changing the method for adopting partisan town elections to be the same as rescinding partisan town elections.

Be it Enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court convened:

1 1 Unofficial Ballot System. Amend RSA 669:11 to read as follows:

2 669:11 Unofficial Ballot System. If a town has not voted at a previous town meeting to adopt an
3 official ballot system as provided in RSA 669:12 or 669:13 [~~or if a town has voted to rescind such~~
4 ~~adoption~~], such town shall elect its officers by means of the unofficial ballot system as provided in
5 RSA 669:54-669:60. A majority vote shall be required to elect using unofficial ballots.

6 2 New Section; Adoption of an Unofficial Ballot System. Amend RSA 669 by inserting after
7 section 11 the following new section:

8 669:11-a Adoption of an Unofficial Ballot System. If a town, having either a partisan ballot
9 system or a non-partisan ballot system, wishes to adopt an unofficial ballot system, then using the
10 existing official ballot system, adoption of the unofficial ballot system shall be by ballot. Whenever
11 in such town there shall appear in the warrant for any town meeting on of the unofficial ballot
12 system, the town clerk shall cause to be printed on the official ballot, if any, otherwise upon a ballot
13 specially prepared for the purpose, the question, "Shall an unofficial ballot system for the election of
14 town officers be adopted by this town?", which question shall be followed by boxes in which the voter
15 may indicate "Yes" or "No". If the majority of the qualified voters present and voting at such
16 meeting shall answer said question in the affirmative, the unofficial ballot system shall be deemed to
17 an article relating to the adoption have been adopted by said town. The unofficial ballot system
18 shall not be in effect until the town election first following the town meeting at which such system is
19 adopted.

20 3 Partisan Official Ballot System. Amend RSA 669:12 to read as follows:

21 669:12 Partisan Official Ballot System. Any town may vote to adopt the partisan official ballot
22 system for election of town officers under an article in the warrant for any town meeting[~~and may~~
23 ~~rescind such action in like manner~~] ***using the procedure in RSA 669:13. In any town in which***
24 ***either the unofficial or the non-partisan ballot system is in effect, adoption of the partisan***
25 ***ballot system shall be by ballot. Whenever in such town there shall appear in the warrant***
26 ***for any town meeting an article relating to the adoption of the partisan ballot system, the***
27 ***town clerk shall cause to be printed on the official ballot, if any, otherwise upon a ballot***
28 ***specially prepared for the purpose, the question, "Shall the partisan ballot system for the***
29 ***election of town officers be adopted by this town?", which question shall be followed by***
30 ***boxes in which the voter may indicate "Yes" or "No". If the majority of the qualified voters***

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1 *present and voting at such meeting shall answer said question in the affirmative, the*
2 *partisan ballot system shall be deemed to have been adopted by said town.* The partisan
3 ballot system shall not be in effect until the town election first following the town meeting at which
4 such system is adopted. A plurality shall elect in towns using the partisan ballot system.

5 4 Non-Partisan Official Ballot System. Amend RSA 669:13 to read as follows:

6 669:13 Non-Partisan Official Ballot System. A town may vote to adopt the non-partisan official
7 ballot system for election of town officers under an article in the warrant for any town meeting~~[-and~~
8 ~~may rescind such action in like manner]~~ **using the procedure in this section.** In any town in
9 which **either the unofficial or** the partisan ballot system is in effect, ~~[and which has a population,~~
10 ~~according to most recent federal census, of 4,500 or more,]~~ adoption of the non-partisan ballot system
11 shall be by ballot. Whenever in such town there shall appear in the warrant for any town meeting
12 an article relating to the adoption of the non-partisan ballot system, the town clerk shall cause to be
13 printed on the official ballot, if any, otherwise upon a ballot specially prepared for the purpose, the
14 question, "Shall the non-partisan ballot system for the election of town officers be adopted by this
15 town?", which question shall be followed by boxes in which the voter may indicate "Yes" or "No". If
16 the majority of the qualified voters present and voting at such meeting shall answer said question in
17 the affirmative, the non-partisan ballot system shall be deemed to have been adopted by said town.
18 In all towns, the non-partisan ballot system shall not be in effect until the town election first
19 following the meeting at which such system is adopted. A plurality shall elect in towns using the
20 non-partisan ballot system.

21 5 Effective Date. This act shall take effect 60 days after its passage.