

HB 253 -- URBAN SCHOOL BOARD ELECTION

SPONSOR: Fishel

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elementary and Secondary Education by a vote of 11 to 6. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules- Legislative Oversight by a vote of 6 to 2.

This bill modifies the election process for school board members for any school district in which a majority of the district is located in any home rule city with more than 155,000 but fewer than 200,000 inhabitants. Currently this refers to the Springfield Public School District.

Before December 1, 2022 the election authority shall divide the school district into five subdistricts. The five subdistricts shall be nearly equal in population as practical. There also shall be two at large districts. After each decennial census the subdistricts must be reapportioned.

The bill provides the process for candidate filing, ballot order, initial terms, and vacancy filling. On the general municipal election day in 2023 and each year thereafter the expired school board positions shall be filled in the following order: subdistrict seat 1, 3, 5, 2, and 4 first, and then the two at large seats.

Board member qualifications and term limits are included in the bill.

This bill is similar to HB 2591 (2020).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill would allow the Springfield Public School District to better reflect the population make-up of the entire district rather than a specific community, and the sub districting would be similar to how the city board is comprised. Supporters note that the current school board does not offer redress for grievances, lacks accountability, and is not a reflection of the district at large.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Fishel; Dianne Ely; Peter Radecki and Roy Holand.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full

written testimony can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.