

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

**SESSION LAW 2005-256
SENATE BILL 98**

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE ORANGE COUNTY BOARD OF ELECTIONS TO CONDUCT A PILOT PROGRAM IN CHAPEL HILL TOWNSHIP IN WHICH THE METHODS USED IN ONE-STOP VOTING WOULD CONTINUE ON ELECTION DAY AS THE VOTING METHOD, ALL TO BE KNOWN AS VOTING CENTERS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. With the approval of the State Board of Elections, the Orange County Board of Elections may conduct a pilot program in Chapel Hill Township for any or all primaries or elections occurring prior to January 1, 2007, where the requirements of this section prevail over any other requirement concerning voting at one-stop sites or on election day. The pilot program shall consist of continuing one-stop voting as provided in G.S. 163-227.2 on election day as the method of voting. Voting places, whether during the one-stop period or on election day, shall be known as voting centers. The pilot program consists of the following elements:

- (1) Any voter properly registered in Chapel Hill Township may vote at any voting center during the one-stop period established in G.S. 163-227.2 or on election day.
- (2) On election day, the only places open to vote in Chapel Hill Township are those designated as voting centers.
- (3) All voting centers shall have a Web-based or online connection to the voter registration system so that voter registration information and voting history can be checked in a timely manner to ensure against any voter voting more than once.
- (4) Notwithstanding G.S. 163-227.2(e1), the State Board of Elections shall determine which ballots must be made retrievable and identifiable to the county board of elections in order to ensure that the vote count by eligible voters is accurate. If any vote need not be identifiable, it shall not be made so, notwithstanding G.S. 163-227.2(e1).
- (5) The Plan of Implementation may provide a different system for voter sign-in than the regular one-stop process which requires completion of an absentee ballot application, but the process must be auditable. As required by G.S. 163-166.7, the voter, before voting, shall sign that voter's name on the pollbook, other voting record, or voter authorization document. As provided by G.S. 163-166.7, if the voter is unable to sign, a voting center official shall enter the person's name on the same document before the voter votes. A voter at a voting center shall be entitled to the same assistance as a voter at a voting place on election day under G.S. 163-166.8.
- (6) A larger number of voting centers may be open on election day than during the earlier part of the one-stop period.
- (7) Election returns shall be reported by regular precinct as well as by voting center. Notwithstanding G.S. 163-132.5G, for primary elections in 2006, those returns by regular precinct shall be reported by May 1, 2007, and for the 2006 general election those returns by regular

precinct shall be reported by March 1, 2007. G.S. 163-132.5G shall not apply to elections held in 2005 under this act.

- (8) Notwithstanding G.S. 163-227.2(g), the State Board of Elections may allow the county board of elections during the regular one-stop voting period to designate voting centers in commercial buildings that are not public buildings.
- (9) Notwithstanding G.S. 163-227.2(g), on election day any building may be designated as a voting center, but the office of the county board of elections does not have to be designated as a voting center.
- (10) Notwithstanding G.S. 163-227.2(g), officials appointed pursuant to G.S. 163-41, 163-42, and 163-42.1 may be assigned to staff the voting centers. The Plan of Implementation shall provide for appointment of election officials at voting centers so that political parties have a similar opportunity to recommend officials as if there were precinct polling places.
- (11) The Plan of Implementation may for administrative purposes treat the entire township as one precinct with multiple voting places on election day, but a voter must, when appearing to vote, report any change of address.
- (12) Before voting centers may be used under this section, a Plan of Implementation must be approved unanimously by the county board of elections and then approved by the Executive Director of the State Board of Elections. Prior to adoption, the county board of elections shall conduct a public hearing and notify the county chair of each political party under Article 9 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes. The county board of elections shall develop an outreach and education campaign to inform voters about the changes in voting locations.

SECTION 2. The State Board of Elections shall closely monitor the pilot program and report its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly at its 2005 Regular Session in 2006, and to the 2007 Regular Session of the General Assembly.

SECTION 3. This act is effective when it becomes law.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 11th day of August, 2005.

s/ Beverly E. Perdue
President of the Senate

s/ James B. Black
Speaker of the House of Representatives