

RESOLUTION # 476

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF CHESTERFIELD, MISSOURI OPPOSING THE MISSOURI HOUSE BILL 1611, WHICH WOULD REQUIRE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES TO DECLARE A PARTY AFFILIATION.

WHEREAS, Representative Sassmann has filed House Bill 1611 for consideration during the 101st General Assembly the Missouri legislature; and,

WHEREAS, Local municipal elections in the State of Missouri are non-partisan; and,


WHEREAS, The primary function of local municipal government within the State of Missouri is provide Police, Public works, Parks, and Planning services for the benefit of the local community and businesses; and,

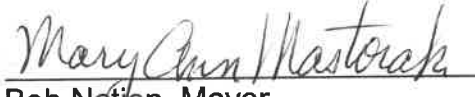
WHEREAS, Any requirement to require declaration of party affiliation as a condition of candidate filing will unnecessarily and detrimentally affect the effectiveness in the delivery of local public services; and,

WHEREAS, Party affiliation should play no role in voting, decision making and delivery of essential local services at the municipal level; and,


NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of the City of Chesterfield opposes the unnecessary and detrimental impacts associated with interjecting partisan affiliation with the non-partisan duties and responsibilities of locally elected municipal officials.

Passed this day, February 7, 2022, by the City Council of the City of Chesterfield.


Presiding Officer


Bob Natton, Mayor

Attest:


Vickie McGownd
City Clerk

HB 1611 -- CANDIDATE QUALIFICATIONS

SPONSOR: Sassmann

This bill requires candidates for political subdivision or special district offices that are currently designated as nonpartisan to file an indication of their political party membership, if any, when running for office. There is no requirement to hold primary elections or choose a particular candidate to represent a political party. Independents may continue to run for such local offices in the same manner.

HB1611

<u>Date</u>	<u>Jrn Pg</u>	<u>Activity Description</u>
12/01/2021		Prefiled (H)
1/05/2022	<u>H 18</u>	Read First Time (H)
1/06/2022	<u>H 168</u>	Read Second Time (H)
1/06/2022	<u>H 199</u>	<u>Referred: General Laws(H)</u>
1/24/2022		Public Hearing Completed (H)

The activity can be referenced in the House or Senate Journal. The JRN PG column indicates the H-House or S-Senate journal printed for that activity date and the page number for the activity.

SECOND REGULAR SESSION

HOUSE BILL NO. 1611

101ST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

INTRODUCED BY REPRESENTATIVE SASSMANN.

DANA RADEMAN MILLER, Chief Clerk

3126H.011

AN ACT

To repeal section 115.124, RSMo, and to enact in lieu thereof two new sections relating to elections.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the state of Missouri, as follows:

Section A. Section 115.124, RSMo, is repealed and two new sections enacted in lieu thereof, to be known as sections 115.124 and 115.354, to read as follows:

115.124. 1. Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, in ~~a nonpartisan~~ **an** election in any political subdivision or special district including municipal elections in any city, town, or village with two thousand or fewer inhabitants that have adopted a proposal pursuant to subsection 3 of this section but excluding municipal elections in any city, town, or village with more than two thousand inhabitants, if the notice provided for in subsection 5 of section 115.127 has been published in at least one newspaper of general circulation as defined in section 493.050 in the district, and if the number of candidates for each office in a particular political subdivision, special district, or municipality is equal to the number of positions for each office within the political subdivision, special district, or municipality to be filled by the election and no ballot measure is placed on the ballot such that a particular political subdivision will owe no proportional elections costs if an election is not held, no election shall be held, and the candidates shall assume the responsibilities of their offices at the same time and in the same manner as if they had been elected. If no election is held for a particular political subdivision, special district, or municipality as provided in this section, the election authority shall publish a notice containing the names of the candidates that shall assume the responsibilities of office under this section. Such notice shall be published in at least one newspaper of general circulation as defined in section 493.050 in such political

EXPLANATION — Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets ~~thus~~ in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted from the law. Matter in bold-face type in the above bill is proposed language.

18 subdivision or district by the first of the month in which the election would have occurred,
19 had it been contested. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, if at any
20 election the number of candidates filing for a particular office exceeds the number of
21 positions to be filled at such election, the election authority shall hold the election as
22 scheduled, even if a sufficient number of candidates withdraw from such contest for that
23 office so that the number of candidates remaining after the filing deadline is equal to the
24 number of positions to be filled.

25 2. The election authority or political subdivision responsible for the oversight of the
26 filing of candidates in any ~~nonpartisan~~ election in any political subdivision or special district
27 shall clearly designate where candidates shall form a line to effectuate such filings and
28 determine the order of such filings; except that, in the case of candidates who file a
29 declaration of candidacy with the election authority or political subdivision prior to 5:00 p.m.
30 on the first day for filing, the election authority or political subdivision may determine by
31 random drawing the order in which such candidates' names shall appear on the ballot. If a
32 drawing is conducted pursuant to this subsection, it shall be conducted so that each candidate,
33 or candidate's representative if the candidate filed under subsection 2 of section 115.355, may
34 draw a number at random at the time of filing. If such drawing is conducted, the election
35 authority or political subdivision shall record the number drawn with the candidate's
36 declaration of candidacy. If such drawing is conducted, the names of candidates filing on the
37 first day of filing for each office on each ballot shall be listed in ascending order of the
38 numbers so drawn.

39 3. The governing body of any city, town, or village with two thousand or fewer
40 inhabitants may submit to the voters at any available election, a question to adopt the
41 provisions of subsection 1 of this section for municipal elections. If a majority of the votes
42 cast by the qualified voters voting thereon are in favor of the question, then the city, town, or
43 village shall conduct ~~nonpartisan~~ municipal elections as provided in subsection 1 of this
44 section for all ~~nonpartisan~~ elections remaining in the year in which the proposal was
45 adopted and for the six calendar years immediately following such approval. At the end of
46 such six-year period, each such city, town, or village shall be prohibited from conducting such
47 elections in such a manner unless such a question is again adopted by the majority of
48 qualified voters as provided in this subsection.

**115.354. In any declaration of candidacy for an office in a political subdivision or
2 special district, a candidate shall declare affiliation with a political party, as defined in
3 section 115.013, or no affiliation. The candidate's political party affiliation or
4 nonaffiliation shall be printed on the ballot.**

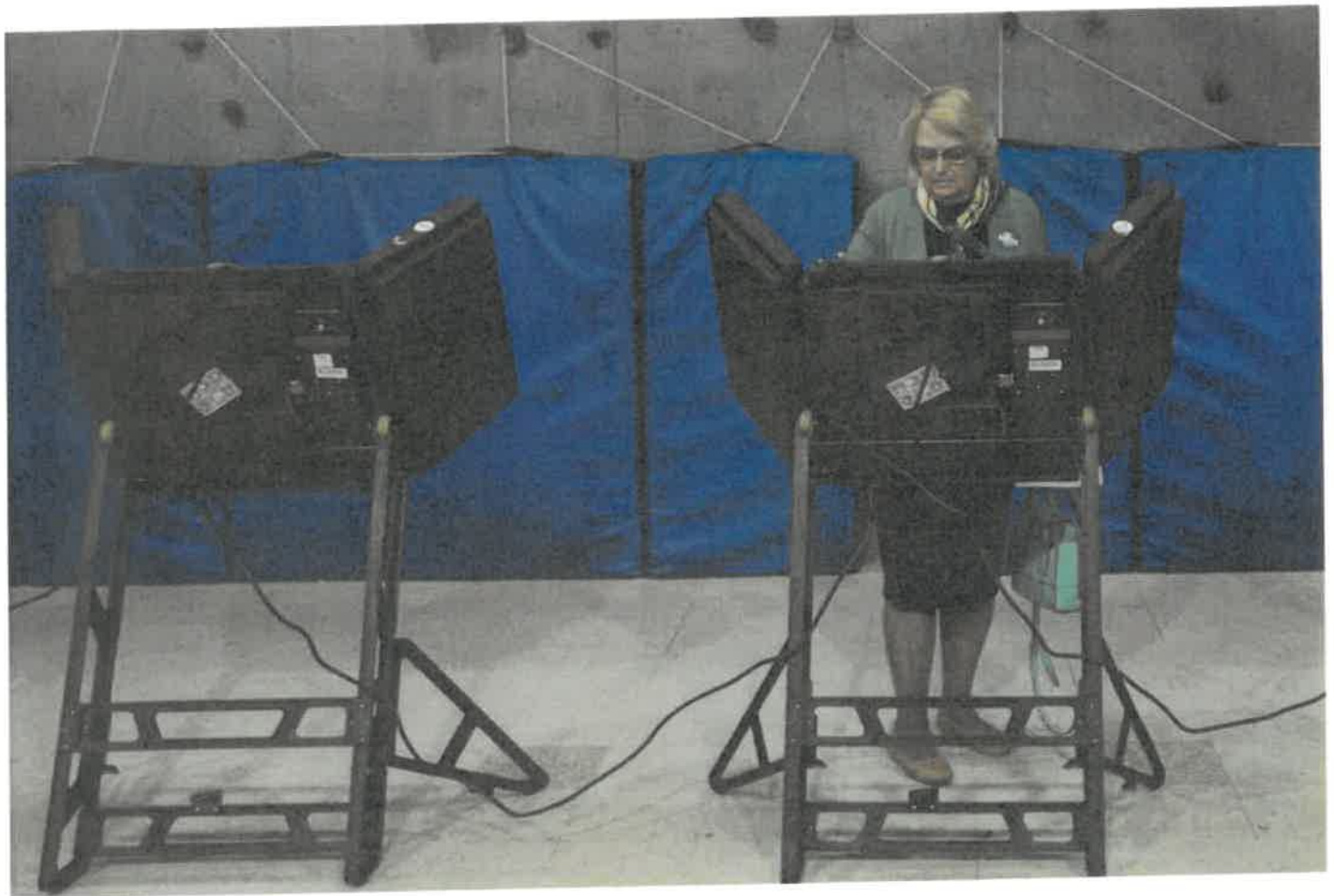
✓

https://www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics/missouri-lawmaker-s-plan-would-usher-in-partisan-elections-at-the-local-level/article_41691520-054b-595f-acad-41d43d3fcac0.html

Missouri lawmaker's plan would usher in partisan elections at the local level

Jack Suntrup

Dec 9, 2021



"I am Irish. Ever since I started running I have always worn green and my signs have always been green," said incumbent Leslie Suzanne Hogshead, who casts her vote electronically on Tuesday, April 2, 2019, at Johnson-Wabash Elementary. The Ferguson-Florissant school board will be elected using a method called cumulative voting for the first time. Cumulative voting, settles a Voting Rights Act lawsuit filed in 2014 by the ACLU of Missouri and the NAACP. Photo by Laurie Skrivan, lskrivan@post-dispatch.com
Laurie Skrivan

JEFFERSON CITY — Is the mayor a Democrat? How many Republicans are on the local school board? And is that one guy on city council actually a Libertarian?

In Missouri, where elections at the municipal and school district level are nonpartisan, candidates for office currently do not declare a political party. But that would change if legislation introduced in the state Legislature is signed into law.

A proposal by Rep. **Bruce Sassmann**, R-Bland, would require candidates in political subdivisions and special districts to declare a party affiliation, or nonaffiliation. A candidate's party, or lack of one, would appear on the ballot.

“If they (voters) don't have an opportunity to study every candidate, maybe they can get a glimpse of what the candidate's personal or political philosophy might be when they looked at the name on the ballot,” he said.

“I just think that voters have a right to know if they're going to elect school board members or city council members who are maybe particularly conservative, or may be more liberal or progressive,” Sassmann said.

People are also reading...

- 1 Warmth, rain, then 'significant' snow expected in St. Louis this week, as cold front approaches**
- 2 Award-winning Wentzville school superintendent hired away by Rockwood**
- 3 Sultan: If parents sued Missouri's attorney general**
- 4 With few details, A-B says 'Flying Eagle' sign will be fixed**

The push follows statements by Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft, a Republican, **who told St. Louis Public Radio in September he was weighing** a plan requiring local candidates to choose a party.

“If we were to make some of those partisan, we’re not trying to make them more combative, would that help more people to come out? Does calling them nonpartisan make people think they are not important?” Ashcroft asked.

House Minority Leader **Crystal Quade**, D-Springfield, said she opposes the idea because local elections have been getting “nastier” and more partisan than in the past.

“Things are becoming more and more partisan and I think Missourians, from what I’ve heard, want less partisanship not more,” she said. “I don’t see why we would change something that isn’t broken.”

County elections in Missouri are partisan, meaning county prosecutors, commissioners, clerks, sheriffs and other officials already pick a party.

At the St. Louis County Council, Republican Tim Fitch recently floated a plan to make council elections nonpartisan in Democratic-leaning St. Louis County.

Sen. **Doug Beck**, D-south St. Louis County, tweeted that he opposed that plan.

“You may have heard St. Louis County Council is considering nonpartisan elections,” Beck said. “I don’t know about you but I would like to know if a politician identifies with the party who tried to overthrow our duly elected

government.”

Fitch on Tuesday night dropped the legislation from the council’s agenda, saying it needed significant revisions.

Beck, who previously served on the Affton School Board, said in an interview that he also disagreed with Sassmann’s bill to make school board races partisan.

He said board members would start toeing party lines, making decisions not “based on what’s best for the kids.”

He said there would be “more money thrown into these races and it would become so political.”

Beck said he was fine with city council members or aldermen declaring a party, but said such a decision should be made at the local level, such as when the city of St. Louis recently switched from partisan to nonpartisan elections.

“Schools are different; fire boards are different,” Beck said. “I think those should be nonpartisan simply because of the nature of what they do. They’re providing a service.

“If you politicize that, you change what they’re about,” he said. “The other ones are trying to govern and set policies for an entire region.”

Melissa Randol, executive director of the **Missouri School Boards Association**, said the group does not support legislation to establish partisan elections for school boards.

“We (Missouri) have historically gone to great lengths to protect the governance of our children from partisan politics,” Randol said.

“Missourians have wanted our focus to be on children, not a partisan platform.”

The Legislature won't start considering legislation until it convenes on Jan.

5.

The legislation is **House Bill 1611**.

Originally posted at 12:45 p.m. Wednesday.

Bell opposes Fitch's plan for nonpartisan elections in St. Louis County