HB314

209347-1

By Representative Scott

RFD: Ways and Means General Fund

First Read: 03-FEB-21
SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the boards of registrars periodically mail a notice to all registered voters seeking address confirmation. If a voter does not return the address confirmation card, the board of registrars places the voter on the inactive list of registered voters.

This bill would revise the procedures for the Secretary of State and boards of registrars to periodically update the statewide voter registration database, and would authorize the Secretary of State to adopt rules to implement this section.

Also under existing law, the state reimburses county commissions at the rate of one-fourth of the cost to publish the names proposed to be removed from the voter registration database, as required under state law.

This bill would revise the publication reimbursement rate to one-half of the costs.
A BILL

TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

Relating to voter registration lists; to amend Sections 17-4-30 and 17-4-31, Code of Alabama 1975; to revise the process used by the Secretary of State and boards of registrars to periodically update the statewide voter registration database; to authorize the Secretary of State to adopt rules; and to revise the publication reimbursement rate to counties relating to revising the statewide voter registration database.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 17-4-30 and 17-4-31, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§17-4-30.

"(a) Beginning in January 1997 February 2025, and in January February of every fourth year thereafter, the boards of registrars shall mail a nonforwardable notice to all registered voters in the county. The notice shall be designed and provided for the boards of registrars by the Secretary of State. The notice shall be sent on a postcard providing general information on elections. The notice shall be mailed to the last known address of the voter appearing on the voter registration list. If the notice is returned to the boards of registrars indicating that the voter may have relocated, the board shall send a forwardable notice to the registered voter..."
on which the voter may confirm his or her current address. The forwardable notice shall be mailed no later than 90 days after receipt of the returned nonforwardable notice. The boards Secretary of State or board of registrars shall use change-of-address information supplied by the United States Postal Service through the National Change of Address database to identify registered voters whose addresses may have changed.

"(b)(1) If the Secretary of State or a board of registrars determines from the information provided by the United States Postal Service that a registered voter has moved to a different residence address that is under the jurisdiction of the same board of registrars, the board of registrars shall change the registration records of that voter to show the new address, and the Secretary of State or board of registrars, within 90 days after identifying the potential change, shall send the voter a notice of the change by forwardable mail along with a postage prepaid, pre-addressed return card on which the registered voter may correct his or her current address information. The notice shall inform the voter that if the voter did not change his or her residence, he or she is required to return the pre-addressed card no later than the last day to register to vote before an election.

"(2) If the Secretary of State or board of registrars determines from the information provided by the United States Postal Service that a registered voter has moved
to a different residence address that is under the
jurisdiction of a different board of registrars or to a
residence address outside of the state, the Secretary of State
or board of registrars, within 90 days after identifying the
potential change, shall send the voter a notice of the change
by forwardable mail along with a postage prepaid,
pre-addressed return card on which the registered voter may
verify or correct his or her current address information. The
notice shall include both of the following:

"a. A statement informing the voter that if the
pre-addressed card is not returned within the time specified
in the notice, the voter will be permitted to vote in that
same jurisdiction during the period from the date the notice
was mailed and ending on the day after the date of the second
general election for federal office, provided the voter
completes a voter registration update form. If the voter does
not update his or her voter registration record or vote during
the period ending on the day after the date of the second
general election for federal office, the voter's name shall be
removed from the list of eligible voters.

"b. Information concerning how the voter may
continue his or her eligibility to vote in another
jurisdiction if the voter has changed his or her residence to
an address outside of the jurisdiction of the board of
registrars under which he or she is then registered.

"(c) The Secretary of State or board of registrars
shall record and maintain in the statewide voter registration
database the dates on which the nonforwardable notice was is
mailed to a registered voter and the card is subsequently
returned to the board and the date on which the forwardable
notice was mailed to by the registered voter.

"(b)(d) The boards board of registrars shall update
the voter list for the county statewide voter registration
database using the information reported to the board by the
registered voters on the address confirmation prepaid,
pre-addressed return cards provided for in subsection (a) this
section.

"(e) If the registered voter does not respond to the
forwardable notice on which the registered voter may confirm
his or her address provided in this section within 90 days of
the date on which the notice was mailed or if the forwardable
notice is returned to the board of registrars as
undeliverable, the boards board of registrars or its agent
shall place the name of the registered voter on the inactive
list of registered voters and in a suspense file in the office
of the board. The suspense file shall contain all of the
following information: change the status of the voter to
inactive and indicate in the statewide voter registration
database the date the change is recorded and that the voter
did not respond to the mailing or that the mailing was
returned as undeliverable, in a manner provided by rule by the
Secretary of State.

"(1) The name of the registered voter.

"(2) The last known address of the registered voter.
"(3) At least the last four digits of the Social
Security number or other personal identification number of the
registered voter.

"(4) The date on which the name of the registered
voter was placed in the suspense file.

"(c) The name of a registered voter who does not
vote or appear to vote in one of the next two federal
elections held after his or her name is placed in the suspense
file shall be removed from the voter list.

"(d)(f) The names of persons to be removed from the
list of registered voters pursuant to this section shall be
published in accordance with Section 17-4-10.

"(g) The Secretary of State may adopt rules as
necessary to implement this section.

"(h) The Secretary of State may act as an agent for
the boards of registrars in implementing this section.

§17-4-31.

"The state shall reimburse each county commission
for all the postage costs associated with voter lists
maintenance activities provided for in Section 17-4-30 and
one-fourth one-half of the cost of the publication of the
names of persons individuals to be removed from the list of
registered voters as required in Section 17-4-10. The
reimbursement shall be made from the Election Expenses Account
in the State Treasury upon approval by the Secretary of State
on warrants drawn by the state Comptroller."
Section 2. This act shall become effective immediately following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.