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HOUSE BILL NO. 168

Offered January 14, 2026

Prefiled January 6, 2026

A BILL to amend and reenact § 15.2-1400 of the Code of Virginia, relating to election of certain governing bodies; conversion to single-member districts.

Patron—Askew

Committee Referral Pending

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That § 15.2-1400 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 15.2-1400. Governing bodies.

A. The qualified voters of every locality shall elect a governing body for such locality. The date, place, number, term, and other details of the election shall be as specified by law, general or special. Qualification for office is provided in Article 4 (§ 15.2-1522 et seq.) of Chapter 15.

B. The governing body of every locality shall be composed of not fewer than three nor more than 11 members.

C. Chairmen, mayors, supervisors, and councilmen are subject to the prohibitions set forth in §§ 15.2-1534 and 15.2-1535.

D. A governing body may punish or fine a member of the governing body for disorderly behavior.

E. Notwithstanding the provisions of §§ 24.2-222 and 24.2-222.1, any city or town charter, or any other provision of law, general or special, beginning with any election held after January 1, 2022, elections for mayor, members of a local governing body, or members of an elected school board shall be held at the time of the November general election for terms to commence January 1.

F. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, general or special, in a locality that imposes district-based or ward-based residency requirements for members of the governing body, the member elected from each district or ward shall be elected by the qualified voters of that district or ward and not by the locality at large.

G. *Notwithstanding any other provision of law, general or special, the governing body of a locality that has been subject to a court order imposing a remedial election system under either the federal Voting Rights Act of 1965 or Chapter 1.1 (§ 24.2-125 et seq.) of Title 24.2, even if such order is later vacated, may adopt an ordinance to convert one or more at-large seats of such body to single-member districts. Members of such governing body in office on the effective date of such ordinance shall complete their terms of office.*