

1 State of Arkansas
2 95th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2025
4
5 By: Senator K. Hammer
6 By: Representative Beck
7

A Bill

SENATE BILL 297

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING MUNICIPALITIES
10 CHOOSING TO ELECT COUNCIL MEMBERS; TO REQUIRE THE
11 GOVERNING BODY OF THE MUNICIPALITY TO FILE THE
12 ORDINANCE DESCRIBING THE ELECTION OF CITY COUNCIL
13 MEMBERS WITH THE COUNTY CLERK; AND FOR OTHER
14 PURPOSES.

Subtitle

18 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING
19 MUNICIPALITIES CHOOSING TO ELECT COUNCIL
20 MEMBERS; AND TO REQUIRE FILING OF THE
21 ORDINANCE DESCRIBING THE ELECTION OF
22 CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS WITH THE COUNTY
23 CLERK.

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

27 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 14-43-307, concerning the election of
28 council members at large or by ward, is amended to add an additional
29 subsection to read as follows:

30 (c)(1) Ordinances enacted under subdivision (b)(1) of this section
31 shall be filed with the county clerk no later than August 31 of the calendar
32 year before the election of council members.

33 (2) A city of the first class that has an ordinance enacted
34 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall file the ordinance with the
35 county clerk no later than January 1, 2026.

36 (3) Once an ordinance is filed with the county clerk, changes



1 shall not be made to the election of council members until a new ordinance is
2 passed by the governing body of the municipality and filed with the county
3 clerk by August 31 of the calendar year before the election of council
4 members.

5 (4) A city of the first class that does not file an ordinance
6 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall have its council members
7 elected at large.

8
9 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 14-43-308, concerning the residence
10 qualifications of council members in primaries, is amended to add an
11 additional subsection read as follows:

12 (c)(1) Ordinances enacted under subdivision (b)(1) of this section
13 shall be filed with the county clerk no later than August 31 of the calendar
14 year before the election of council members.

15 (2) A city of the first class that has an ordinance enacted
16 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall file the ordinance with the
17 county clerk no later than January 1, 2026.

18 (3) Once an ordinance is filed with the county clerk, changes
19 shall not be made to the election of council members until a new ordinance is
20 passed by the governing body of the municipality and filed with the county
21 clerk by August 31 of the calendar year before the election of council
22 members.

23 (4) A city of the first class that does not file an ordinance
24 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall have its council members
25 elected at large.

26
27 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 14-43-309, concerning the residence
28 qualifications of council members in general elections, is amended to add an
29 additional subsection to read as follows:

30 (c)(1) Ordinances enacted under subdivision (b)(1) of this section
31 shall be filed with the county clerk no later than August 31 of the calendar
32 year before the election of council members.

33 (2) A city of the first class that has an ordinance enacted
34 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall file the ordinance with the
35 county clerk no later than January 1, 2026.

36 (3) Once an ordinance is filed with the county clerk, changes

1 shall not be made to the election of council members until a new ordinance is
2 passed by the governing body of the municipality and filed with the county
3 clerk by August 31 of the calendar year before the election of council
4 members.

5 (4) A city of the first class that does not file an ordinance
6 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section shall have its council members
7 elected at large.

8
9 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code § 14-44-103(b)(1)(C)(i), concerning the
10 election of council members in a city of the second class, is amended to read
11 as follows:

12 (C)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (b)(1)(C)(ii) of
13 this section, the county board of election commissioners ~~in the city~~ shall
14 ensure that the qualified electors of each ward have at least one (1) voting
15 precinct in each ward where the resident electors of the ward may cast their
16 ballots.

17
18 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code § 14-44-103, concerning the election of
19 council members in a city of the second class, is amended to add an
20 additional subsection to read as follows:

21 (e)(1) Ordinances enacted under subdivision (c)(1) of this section
22 shall be filed with the county clerk no later than August 31 of the calendar
23 year before the election of council members.

24 (2) A city of the second class that has an ordinance enacted
25 under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall file the ordinance with the
26 county clerk no later than January 1, 2026.

27 (3) Once an ordinance is filed with the county clerk, changes
28 shall not be made to the election of council members until a new ordinance is
29 passed by the governing body of the municipality and filed with the county
30 clerk by August 31 of the calendar year before the election of council
31 members.

32 (4) A city of the second class that does not file an ordinance
33 under subdivision (c)(1) of this section shall have its council members
34 elected at large.

35 **APPROVED: 3/12/25**

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