

1 State of Arkansas
2 94th General Assembly
3 Regular Session, 2023
4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 235

5 By: Senator C. Tucker
6

For An Act To Be Entitled

8 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS ABSENTEE VOTER
9 INTEGRITY ACT OF 2023; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING
10 COUNTING ABSENTEE BALLOTS; TO AMEND THE LAW
11 CONCERNING ELECTIONS; TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE
12 DUTIES OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE; AND FOR OTHER
13 PURPOSES.
14

Subtitle

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16
17 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS ABSENTEE VOTER
18 INTEGRITY ACT OF 2023; TO AMEND THE LAW
19 CONCERNING COUNTING ABSENTEE BALLOTS; TO
20 AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING ELECTIONS; AND
21 TO AMEND THE LAW CONCERNING THE DUTIES OF
22 THE SECRETARY OF STATE.
23

24
25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
26

27 SECTION 1. DO NOT CODIFY. Title.

28 This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas Absentee
29 Voter Integrity Act of 2023."
30

31 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code § 7-5-416 is amended to read as follows:

32 7-5-416. Counting of absentee ballots.

33 (a)(1) The election officials for absentee ballots may meet in a place
34 designated by the county board of election commissioners no earlier than the
35 Tuesday before the election for the purpose of opening the outer envelope,
36 processing, and canvassing of absentee ballot paper work of the outer



1 envelope and no earlier than 8:30 a.m. on election day for the purpose of
2 opening the inner absentee ballot envelope and counting the absentee ballots.

3 (2) The absentee ballots shall be tabulated or counted no
4 earlier than 8:30 a.m. on election day.

5 (3) The county board of election commissioners shall give public
6 notice of the time and location of the opening, processing, canvassing, and
7 counting of absentee ballots and early voting ballots as provided in § 7-5-
8 202.

9 ~~(3)~~(4) The county clerk shall provide the county board of
10 election commissioners with a daily count of absentee applications received,
11 to be reported weekly or upon request of the county board of election
12 commissioners.

13 ~~(4)~~(5) The county clerk shall provide the county board of
14 election commissioners with a daily count of absentee ballots received, to be
15 reported weekly or upon request of the county board of election
16 commissioners.

17 ~~(5)~~(6) The county clerk shall forward the following items to the
18 election officials designated by the county board of election commissioners
19 to open, process, canvass, and count absentee ballots:

20 (A) The absentee ballot applications sorted alphabetically
21 and by precinct;

22 (B) The absentee ballots; and

23 (C) A written report containing the following information:

24 (i) The number of absentee ballot applications
25 received by the county clerk;

26 (ii) The number of absentee ballots sent by the
27 county clerk;

28 (iii) The number of absentee ballots returned to the
29 county clerk;

30 (iv) The number of absentee ballots rejected by the
31 county clerk and the reason for the rejection;

32 (v) The number of absentee ballots marked as
33 received on the paper absentee ballot applications list; and

34 (vi) If the number of absentee ballots returned to
35 the county clerk and the number of absentee ballots marked as received on the
36 paper absentee ballot lists are different and the reason for the difference

1 is known, the reason for the difference.

2 ~~(6)(7)~~ The processing and counting of absentee ballots shall be
3 open to the public, and candidates and authorized poll watchers may be
4 present in person or by a representative designated in writing under § 7-5-
5 312 during the opening, processing, canvassing, and counting of the absentee
6 ballots as provided in this subchapter.

7 ~~(7)(A)(8)(A)~~ Absentee and early votes shall be counted prior to
8 ~~the closing of the polls on election day~~ the close of business on the
9 Thursday following election day as provided under this section, except for
10 overseas voters as otherwise provided under this section.

11 (B)(i) The county board of election commissioners shall
12 report by precinct the initial count of early votes and absentee ballot votes
13 to the Secretary of State as provided under § 7-5-701 as soon as practical
14 after the polls close on election day.

15 (ii) No election results of the precinct shall be
16 printed, posted, or released until after the polls close on election day.

17 ~~(8)(A)(9)(A)~~ After the outer envelope of an absentee ballot is
18 opened, a county clerk and deputies of the county clerk shall not have access
19 to:

- 20 (i) The absentee ballots;
- 21 (ii) Absentee ballot paperwork; or
- 22 (iii) The inner envelope of an absentee ballot.

23 (B) The county board of election commissioners may grant a
24 county clerk or deputies of the county clerk access to the absentee ballot
25 materials in subdivision ~~(a)(8)(A)(a)(9)(A)~~ of this section if the access is
26 granted by an affirmative vote of the county board of election commissioners
27 for a specific purpose and for a designated election.

28 (b)(1) ~~The opening, processing, counting, and canvassing of absentee~~
29 ~~ballots~~ ballot materials shall be ~~conducted~~ opened by two (2) election
30 officials as follows:

31 (A) One (1) of the election officials shall open outer
32 absentee ballot envelopes one by one and ~~verify the contents~~ locate the
33 required voter materials;

34 (B) ~~If the required materials are properly placed in the~~
35 ~~outer absentee ballot envelope, the election official shall proceed to read~~
36 ~~aloud from the voter statement the name of the voter;~~ The election officials

1 shall:

2 (i) Read aloud from the voter statement the name of
3 the voter and the voting precinct in which the voter claims to be a legal
4 voter;

5 (ii) List the name and voting precinct of the voter;

6 (iii) Compare the voter materials as provided under
7 subdivision (b)(2) of this section; and

8 (iv) For first-time voters who registered by mail,
9 compare the first-time voter's identification document unless the voter
10 previously provided identification at the time of mailing the voter
11 registration application;

12 (C) If the required materials are not properly placed in
13 the outer absentee ~~ballot~~ envelope;

14 (i) a A second election official shall open the
15 inner absentee ~~ballot~~ envelope to ~~verify the contents~~ locate the required
16 voter materials no earlier than 8:30 a.m. on election day; and

17 ~~(D)(ii) If all required materials are present within~~
18 ~~one (1) or the other envelope, the~~ The election officials shall ~~put~~ place the
19 absentee ballot materials, while preserving the secrecy of the voter's ballot
20 within the inner absentee envelope, in the ~~proper an~~ envelope while
21 ~~preserving the secrecy of the voter's ballot and shall proceed to read aloud~~
22 ~~from the voter statement the name of the voter and the voting precinct in~~
23 ~~which the voter claims to be a legal voter;~~ marked "provisional", and the
24 absentee ballot shall be considered a provisional ballot; and

25 ~~(E) As each outer envelope is opened and the name of the~~
26 ~~voter is read, the election officials for the absentee box shall list the~~
27 ~~name and voting precinct of the voter;~~

28 (D) If the required materials are properly placed in the
29 outer absentee envelope, then the election officials shall compare the voter
30 materials as provided under subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

31 (2)(A) After the opening of the absentee ballot materials, the
32 two (2) election officials shall canvass and compare the absentee ballot
33 materials as follows:

34 (i) The election officials shall compare all
35 absentee ballot materials returned, except the voter's ballot, which shall be
36 maintained within the inner absentee ballot envelope to preserve the secrecy

1 of the ballot, including without limitation:

2 (a) Absentee ballot applications;

3 (b) Voter statements;

4 (c) A voter's voter identity documentation;

5 and

6 (d) Any additional information or
7 documentation provided by the voter in the absentee ballot envelope;

8 (ii) The election officials shall review the
9 absentee ballot materials to determine whether:

10 (a) The voter's name, residential voting
11 address, date of birth, and signature are comparable;

12 ~~(F)(i) After the election official reads aloud from the~~
13 ~~statement, the election officials shall compare the name, address, date of~~
14 ~~birth, and signature of the voter's absentee application with the voter's~~
15 ~~statement and, for first-time voters who registered by mail, the first-time~~
16 ~~voter's identification document unless the voter previously provided~~
17 ~~identification at the time of mailing the voter registration application.~~

18 ~~(ii) If the county board of election commissioners~~
19 ~~determines that the absentee application and the voter's statement do not~~
20 ~~compare as to name, residential voting address, date of birth, and signature,~~
21 ~~the absentee ballot shall not be counted.~~

22 (b) The voter identification document, voter
23 statement, and inner envelope containing the absentee ballot are present; and

24 (c) If a designated bearer, authorized agent,
25 or administrator delivers the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
26 authorized agent, or administrator written on the absentee ballot application
27 compares with the information on the voter statement;

28 (iii) The election officials shall place the
29 absentee ballot materials, including the inner envelope containing the
30 ballot, in an envelope marked "provisional", and the absentee ballot shall be
31 considered a provisional ballot if:

32 (a) The absentee application and the voter's
33 statement do not compare as to name, residential voting address, date of
34 birth, and signature; or

35 (b) A designated bearer, authorized agent, or
36 administrator delivers the ballot, and the name of the designated bearer,

1 authorized agent, or administrator does not compare with the information on
2 the voter statement;

3 (iv) If a first-time voter fails to provide the
4 required voter identification with the absentee ballot or at the time of
5 mailing the voter registration application, ~~then the absentee application,~~
6 ~~absentee ballot envelope, and voter's statement shall be placed in an~~
7 ~~envelope marked "provisional" and the absentee ballot shall be considered a~~
8 ~~provisional ballot;~~ or if any other voter fails to provide the required voter
9 identification with the absentee ballot, the election officials shall place
10 the absentee ballot materials including the inner envelope containing the
11 ballot in an envelope marked "provisional", and the absentee ballot shall be
12 considered a provisional ballot;

13 ~~(G)(i) The election officials shall compare the name and~~
14 ~~address of the bearer, agent, or administrator written on the absentee ballot~~
15 ~~return envelope with the information on the voter statement. If the~~
16 ~~information does not match, then the outer envelope, absentee application,~~
17 ~~secrecy envelope containing the ballot, and the voter's statement shall be~~
18 ~~placed in an envelope marked "provisional" and the absentee ballot shall be~~
19 ~~considered a provisional ballot.~~

20 ~~(ii) The election officials shall compare the name~~
21 ~~of the bearer written on the absentee ballot application with the information~~
22 ~~on the voter statement, and if the information does not compare, the ballot~~
23 ~~shall be a provisional ballot.~~

24 ~~(iii) An absentee ballot designated as a provisional~~
25 ~~ballot for the lack of a designation of, or name of, a designated bearer~~
26 ~~shall be counted only if the county board of election commissioners does not~~
27 ~~determine that the provisional ballot is invalid and should not be counted~~
28 ~~based on other grounds;~~

29 ~~(H) If the absentee voter fails to return the voter~~
30 ~~statement, the vote shall not be counted;~~

31 (v) The ballot shall be designated to be counted or
32 tabulated if:

33 (a) All required absentee ballot materials are
34 present;

35 (b) The voter's name, residential voting
36 address, date of birth, and signature compare; and

1 (c) If a designated bearer, authorized agent,
2 or administrator delivered the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
3 authorized agent, or administrator written on the absentee ballot application
4 compares with the information on the voter statement; and

5 (vi) The absentee ballot materials shall be
6 transmitted to the county board of election commissioners for additional
7 review if:

8 (a) Any required absentee ballot materials are
9 missing;

10 (b) The voter's name, residential voting
11 address, date of birth, and signature do not compare; or

12 (c) If a designated bearer, authorized agent,
13 or administrator delivers the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
14 authorized agent, or administrator does not compare with the information on
15 the voter statement.

16 (B)(i) A member of a county board of election
17 commissioners, acting in his or her individual capacity as an election
18 official, may perform the duties under subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section.

19 (ii) However, performance of the duties under
20 subdivision (b)(2)(A) of this section by a member of the county board of
21 election commissioners shall not satisfy or serve as performance of the
22 duties of the whole county board of election commissioners under subdivision
23 (b)(3) of this section.

24 (3) After canvassing and comparison by the election officials,
25 the absentee ballot materials shall be canvassed and compared by the county
26 board of election commissioners as follows:

27 (A)(i) The county board of election commissioners shall
28 review the absentee ballot materials transmitted to it under subdivision
29 (b)(2)(A)(vi) of this section.

30 (ii) The county board of election commissioners may:

31 (a) Review the absentee ballot materials that
32 were designated to be counted or tabulated by the election officials before
33 counting or tabulation; and

34 (b) Accept the designation of the election
35 officials that the ballot is to be counted or reverse the designation of the
36 election officials and mark the ballot as provisional;

1 (B)(i) A ballot shall be counted or tabulated if the:

2 (a) Required absentee ballot materials are
3 present;

4 (b) Voter’s name, residential voting address,
5 date of birth, and signatures compare; and

6 (c) If a designated bearer, authorized agent,
7 or administrator delivered the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
8 authorized agent, or administrator written on the absentee ballot application
9 compares with the information on the voter statement.

10 (ii) The absentee ballot materials and the absentee
11 ballot shall be placed in an envelope marked “provisional” and the absentee
12 ballot shall be considered a provisional ballot if:

13 (a) The required absentee ballot materials are
14 incomplete or missing;

15 (b) The voter’s name, residential voting
16 address, date of birth, and signature do not compare; or

17 (c) If a designated bearer, authorized agent,
18 or administrator delivers the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
19 authorized agent, or administrator does not compare with the information on
20 the voter statement;

21 ~~(I)~~(C) Failure of the voter to submit the required
22 absentee materials in the proper envelopes shall not be grounds for
23 disqualifying the voter; and

24 (D)(i) An absentee ballot that has been designated
25 provisional for not including the required voter identification with the
26 absentee ballot materials shall be cured according to the procedure set out
27 in Arkansas Constitution, Amendment 51, § 13.

28 (ii) An absentee ballot that has otherwise been
29 designated provisional under this section may be cured by the voter:

30 (a) By noon the Monday following the election;

31 (b) In person or in writing to the county
32 clerk, county board of election commissioners, or appropriately designated
33 staff or election officials; and

34 (c) By:

35 (1) Providing or correcting the absentee
36 ballot materials or verification, if the reason for designation as a

1 provisional ballot was an incomplete submission; or

2 (2) Verifying in writing under penalty
3 of perjury that he or she voted the ballot received by the county clerk, if
4 the reason for designation as a provisional ballot was that:

5 (A) The voter’s name, residential
6 voting address, date of birth, and signature did not compare; or

7 (B) If a designated bearer,
8 authorized agent, or administrator delivered the ballot, and the name of the
9 designated bearer, authorized agent, or administrator did not compare with
10 the information on the voter statement.

11 (iii) An absentee ballot shall not be counted if the
12 absentee ballot:

13 (a) Has been marked provisional and is not
14 cured under either subdivision (b)(3)(D)(i) or subdivision (b)(3)(D)(ii) of
15 this section; or

16 (b) Did not include a voter statement.

17 (iv) An absentee ballot designated as a provisional
18 ballot for the lack of a designation of, or name of, a designated bearer,
19 authorized agent, or administrator shall be counted only if the county board
20 of election commissioners does not determine that the provisional ballot is
21 invalid and should not be counted based on other grounds.

22 ~~(J) If the voter statement does not authorize a bearer,~~
23 ~~agent, or administrator to receive or return his or her absentee ballot and~~
24 ~~the ballot was received or returned by a bearer, agent, or administrator, the~~
25 ~~vote shall not be counted;~~

26 (4) Absentee ballot information is comparable or compares if
27 after a review of the information available to the election official or
28 county board of election commissioners, the election official or county board
29 of election commissioners determines that the ballot was voted by the person
30 in whose name the absentee ballot was submitted.

31 (5)(A)(i) After an absentee ballot is designated by an election
32 official or by the county board of election commissioners as provisional, the
33 county board of election commissioners shall notify the voter of the deadline
34 and process for curing his or her absentee ballot as soon as possible but no
35 later than forty-eight (48) hours after the absentee ballot is designated as
36 a provisional ballot.

1 (ii) The county board of election commissioners
2 shall notify the voter of the deadline and process for curing his or her
3 absentee ballot by email or telephone if the voter's email address or
4 telephone number is available.

5 (iii) If a voter has not provided an email address
6 or telephone number, the county board of election commissioners shall notify
7 the voter of the deadline and process for curing his or her absentee ballot
8 by mail.

9 (B) To "cure" a ballot means to remove or repair the issue
10 causing a ballot not to be counted through the process set forth in this
11 section, such that the ballot shall then be counted.

12 (C) If an absentee ballot that was previously designated
13 as needing additional review under subdivision (b)(2)(A)(vi) of this section
14 is reviewed by the county board of election commissioners and approved to be
15 counted or tabulated without being designated as provisional, then no more
16 than forty-eight (48) hours after the approval, the county board of election
17 commissioners shall by mail, email, or phone notify the voter that he or she
18 no longer needs to cure his or her ballot.

19 (6)(A) After all of the outer envelopes have been opened, the
20 election officials of the absentee box shall preserve all the statements of
21 voters, the voters' identification documents, and all other materials
22 submitted with the absentee ballot except the ballot itself and deliver them
23 to the county clerk, who shall file and keep them for the same length of time
24 after the election as is required for the retention of other ballots.

25 (B) The voter statements shall be made available for
26 public inspection and copying during regular business hours no earlier than
27 8:30 a.m. on the day following the actual delivery of the statement of the
28 number of outstanding ballots and provisional ballots to the Secretary of
29 State, and declaration of preliminary and unofficial results of the election
30 under § 7-5-701(a)(3)(C).

31 (C) The voters' identification documents shall not be
32 subject to public inspection except as part of a judicial proceeding to
33 contest the election.

34 (7) The absentee ballots that have been designated to be counted
35 or tabulated shall be opened and processed for counting or tabulation as
36 follows:

1 ~~(K)~~(A) If no challenge is made by a qualified poll
2 watcher, the election official shall remove the inner envelope, from the
3 absentee ballot materials without opening the inner envelope containing the
4 ballot, and place it in ~~the ballot~~ a box designated for ballots to be counted
5 or tabulated without marking it in any way;

6 ~~(L)(i)~~ After all of the outer envelopes have been opened,
7 the election officials of the absentee box shall preserve all the statements
8 of voters and the voters' identification documents and deliver them to the
9 county clerk, who shall file and keep them for the same length of time after
10 the election as is required for retention of other ballots.

11 (B) When all of the inner envelopes containing the ballots
12 have been placed in the ballot box, the ballot box shall be shaken thoroughly
13 to mix the ballots; and

14 (C) The ballot box shall be opened and the ballots shall
15 be removed from the inner envelopes, canvassed, and counted.

16 (8) After the counting and tabulation, the county board of
17 election commissioners shall preserve all absentee ballots and shall file and
18 keep them for the same length of time after the election as is required for
19 retention of other ballots.

20 ~~(ii)~~ The voter statements shall be made available
21 for public inspection and copying during regular business hours no earlier
22 than 8:30 a.m. on the day following the actual delivery of the statement of
23 the number of outstanding ballots and provisional ballots to the Secretary of
24 State, and declaration of preliminary and unofficial results of the election
25 under ~~§ 7-5-701(a)(3)(C).~~

26 ~~(iii)~~ The voters' identification documents shall not
27 be subject to public inspection except as part of a judicial proceeding to
28 contest the election;

29 (9)(A) If after review of the absentee ballot materials an
30 election official or the county board of election commissioners suspects that
31 an absentee ballot was fraudulently submitted, the county board of election
32 commissioners shall:

33 (i) File complaints concerning the ballot with the
34 State Board of Election Commissioners and the county prosecuting attorney no
35 later than thirty (30) days after certification of the election;

36 (ii) Provide copies of the relevant absentee ballot

1 materials, and the county clerk shall provide any relevant absentee ballot
2 materials in their possession; and

3 (iii) Fully assist all appropriate law enforcement
4 agencies in the investigation.

5 (B) A ballot is not automatically considered fraudulently
6 submitted merely because it was not counted because:

7 (i) Not all the required voter materials were
8 included;

9 (ii) The voter materials did not compare;

10 (iii) If a designated bearer, authorized agent, or
11 administrator delivered the ballot, the name of the designated bearer,
12 authorized agent, or administrator did not compare with the information on
13 the voter statement; or

14 (iv) For another innocuous reason.

15 (C) A ballot is fraudulently submitted if a voter
16 knowingly violates voting laws, including without limitation by submitting:

17 (i) More than one (1) ballot;

18 (ii) A ballot under a false identity; or

19 (iii) A ballot on behalf of another person without
20 that person's lawful authorization.

21 ~~(M) When all of the inner envelopes containing the ballots~~
22 ~~have been placed in the ballot box, the ballot box shall be shaken thoroughly~~
23 ~~to mix the ballots; and~~

24 ~~(N) The ballot box shall be opened and the ballots~~
25 ~~canvassed and counted.~~

26 ~~(2)~~(10) No election results shall be printed or released prior
27 to the closing of the polls on election day.

28 (c) If any person casting an absentee ballot dies before the polls
29 open on election day, his or her ballot shall be accepted by the county clerk
30 if the absentee ballot is:

31 (1) Signed, dated, postmarked, and mailed before the date of
32 death;

33 (2) Signed, dated, and delivered to the county clerk by a
34 designated bearer, authorized agent, or administrator before the date of
35 death; or

36 (3) The ballot of a member of the armed services or Arkansas

1 National Guard in active duty or state active duty executed before the date
2 of death.

3 ~~(d) It is the intent of this section to require the election officials~~
4 ~~for absentee ballots to meet and process, canvass, and count absentee ballots~~
5 ~~according to this section prior to the closing of the polls on election day.~~

6 ~~(e)(1)~~(d)(1) Absentee votes shall be cast on paper ballots.

7 (2)(A) The ballots shall first be counted for write-in votes by
8 the election officials.

9 (B) Then, at the discretion of the county board of
10 election commissioners, the ballots may be either hand counted or counted on
11 an electronic vote tabulating device.

12 ~~(f)(1)~~(e)(1) Absentee ballots marked as "special runoff ballots"
13 received from a qualified voter from one (1) of the categories in § 7-5-
14 406(a) shall be opened for general primary elections and general runoff
15 elections according to the procedures described in subsection (b) of this
16 section.

17 (2) However, in counting the special runoff ballot, one (1) of
18 the election officials shall open the envelope containing the special runoff
19 ballot and read the numbers indicated next to the names of the two (2)
20 candidates in the general primary election or in the general runoff election.

21 (3) The candidate with the highest ranking shall receive the
22 vote.

23 (4) A special runoff ballot received with the preferential
24 primary absentee ballot shall be counted in the general primary election, and
25 a special runoff ballot received with the general election absentee ballot
26 shall be counted in the general runoff election.

27 (5) The Secretary of State shall prepare instructions for
28 opening, counting, and canvassing special runoff ballots and provide the
29 instructions to each county board of election commissioners.

30

31 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code Title 7, Chapter 5, Subchapter 4, is amended
32 to add an additional section to read as follows:

33 7-5-420. State Board of Election Commissioners – Rules.

34 (a) The State Board of Election Commissioners shall adopt rules that:

35 (1) Set procedures for the maintenance and storage of absentee
36 ballot materials and absentee ballots;

1 (2) Set uniform methods for labeling ballot storage containers
2 that, at a minimum, document the:

3 (A) Chain of custody concerning the opening and closing of
4 the sealed boxes; and

5 (B) Contents of the boxes in a readily identifiable
6 manner;

7 (3) Set standards for the processes, software, and methods used
8 to list and describe the contents of the ballots, including without
9 limitation the appropriate use of spreadsheets and summaries;

10 (4) Prescribe forms for the lists that are required to be
11 generated and maintained under § 7-5-416;

12 (5) Set the procedure for the handling of absentee ballots and
13 voter materials; and

14 (6) Set the procedures for timely compliance with the Freedom of
15 Information Act of 1967, § 25-19-101 et seq., that ensure the secrecy and
16 integrity of the voter materials.

17 (b) The rules shall be promulgated under the Arkansas Administrative
18 Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.

19
20 SECTION 4. DO NOT CODIFY. Rules.

21 (a) When adopting the initial rules required under this act, the State
22 Board of Election Commissioners shall file the final rules with the Secretary
23 of State for adoption under § 25-15-204(f):

24 (1) On or before January 1, 2024; or

25 (2) If approval under § 10-3-309 has not occurred by January 1,
26 2024, as soon as practicable after approval under § 10-3-309.

27 (b) The board shall file the proposed rules with the Legislative
28 Council under § 10-3-309(c) sufficiently in advance of January 1, 2024, so
29 that the Legislative Council may consider the rules for approval before
30 January 1, 2024.