

House Bill 632

By: Representatives Belton of the 112th, Taylor of the 79th, Welch of the 110th, Willard of the 51st, Coomer of the 14th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
2 elections and primaries generally, so as to provide a method for certain small municipalities
3 to shorten the advance voting period for municipal elections; to provide for related matters;
4 to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 style="text-align:center">**SECTION 1.**

7 Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to elections and
8 primaries generally, is amended by revising paragraph (1) of subsection (d) of Code
9 Section 21-2-385, relating to procedure for voting by absentee ballot and advance voting, as
10 follows:

11 "(d)(1) ~~There~~ Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, there shall be a period of
12 advance voting that shall commence:

- 13 (A) On the fourth Monday immediately prior to each primary or election;
14 (B) On the fourth Monday immediately prior to a runoff from a general primary;
15 (C) On the fourth Monday immediately prior to a runoff from a general election in
16 which there are candidates for a federal office on the ballot in the runoff; and
17 (D) As soon as possible prior to a runoff from any other general election in which there
18 are only state or county candidates on the ballot in the runoff

19 and shall end on the Friday immediately prior to each primary, election, or runoff.
20 Voting shall be conducted during normal business hours on weekdays during such period
21 and shall be conducted on the second Saturday prior to a primary or election during the
22 hours of 9:00 A.M. through 4:00 P.M.; provided, however, that in primaries and elections
23 in which there are no federal or state candidates on the ballot, no Saturday voting hours
24 shall be required; and provided, further, that, if such second Saturday is a public and legal
25 holiday pursuant to Code Section 1-4-1, if such second Saturday follows a public and
26 legal holiday occurring on the Thursday or Friday immediately preceding such second

27 Saturday, or if such second Saturday immediately precedes a public and legal holiday
28 occurring on the following Sunday or Monday, such advance voting shall not be held on
29 such second Saturday but shall be held on the third Saturday prior to such primary,
30 election, or runoff. Except as otherwise provided in this paragraph, counties and
31 municipalities may extend the hours for voting beyond regular business hours and may
32 provide for additional voting locations pursuant to Code Section 21-2-382 to suit the
33 needs of the electors of the jurisdiction at their option. In the case of municipalities
34 which have a population of 1,000 persons or less according to the 2010 United States
35 decennial census or any future such census, the governing authority may by ordinance
36 submit to the electors of the municipality a referendum on whether to shorten the time for
37 advance voting in municipal elections and runoffs for such municipality. If the electors
38 of the municipality approve such shortening of the advance voting period, then the
39 advance voting period for such municipality shall begin on the second Monday prior to
40 an election or runoff and shall end on the following Friday for so long as the municipality
41 has a population of 1,000 persons or less according to the 2010 United States decennial
42 census or any future such census. Such shortened advance voting period shall not be
43 applicable if the municipal election is held in conjunction with any county, state, or
44 federal election. The municipality may reverse such decision to shorten the advance
45 voting period for municipal elections by the adoption of an appropriate ordinance and
46 ratification of such ordinance in a referendum by the electors of the municipality."

47 **SECTION 2.**

48 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.