

House Bill 87 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Hightower of the 68th, Smith of the 70th, Powell of the 171st, Nix of the 69th, Cooke of the 18th, and others

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

To amend Article 7 of Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to precincts and polling places, so as to authorize the use of the boundaries of a restricted access community as the boundaries of a precinct; to require detailed maps and certain other information to be maintained; to require that such communities be open to the public on election days; to provide for related matters; to provide an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

Article 7 of Chapter 2 of Title 21 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to precincts and polling places, is amended by revising Code Section 21-2-261.1, relating to boundary requirements for precincts, as follows:

"21-2-261.1.

(a) All voting precincts established or altered under the provisions of this article shall consist of areas which are bounded on all sides only by:

(1) Visible features which are readily distinguishable upon the ground (such as streets, railroad tracks, streams, lakes, and ridges) and which are indicated upon official Department of Transportation maps, current census maps, city or county planning maps, official municipal maps, official county maps, or any combination of such maps;

~~(1.1)(2)~~ The boundaries of public parks;

~~(1.2)(3)~~ The boundaries of public school grounds;

~~(1.3)(4)~~ The boundaries of churches; ~~or~~

~~(2)(5)~~ The boundaries of counties and incorporated municipalities; or

(6) The boundaries of restricted access residential communities.

(b) The superintendent of a county or the governing authority of a municipality shall notify the board of registrars within ten days after such changes are adopted.

(c) The superintendent of a county or the governing authority of a municipality shall file with the Secretary of State and the Legislative and Congressional Reapportionment Office:

(1) A map reflecting any changes in precincts within 20 days after the changes are made;

(2) A copy of any communications to or from the United States Department of Justice relating to any precincts within 20 days after such communication is sent or received;

(3) A copy of any pleading initiating a court action potentially affecting any precincts within 30 days after it is filed;

(4) A copy of any court order affecting any precincts within 20 days after it is entered; and

(5) For precincts that use the boundaries of a restricted access residential community, a map clearly delineating the boundaries of the community and clearly depicting the streets contained within such community and a list of the streets within such community and the address ranges of such streets; and

(6) Any other documentation necessary to allow the Secretary of State to maintain a current listing of all precincts in ~~the~~ this state."

SECTION 2.

Said article is further amended by adding a new subsection (c) to Code Section 21-2-266, relating to polling places, to read as follows:

"(c) When the boundaries of a restricted access residential community are used as the boundaries for a precinct and a polling place is established within such restricted access residential community for the use of the voters in such precinct, such restricted access community and polling place shall be open to full and complete access by the public when such polling place is in use on the day of a general or special primary or general or special election, including the time while poll officers are setting up the polling place prior to the opening of the polls, the time while the polls are open, and the time while the poll officers are completing the tabulation of the votes, election paperwork, and similar functions after the close of the polls. Such restricted access community and polling place shall also be open to full and complete access by the election superintendent, investigators of the State Election Board, all affected candidates and their representatives, and the public in the event of a recount or recanvass of the votes cast in any primary or election involving such precinct and polling place conducted at such precinct and polling place. In addition, in the event of a contest or challenge to the results of any primary or election involving such precinct and polling place, the election superintendent, upon reasonable notice and at reasonable times, may require such restricted access community and polling place to be open to full and complete access by the election superintendent, investigators of the State

61 Election Board, and all affected candidates and their representatives for the purpose of
62 determining the issues involved in such contest or challenge."

63 **SECTION 3.**

64 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law
65 without such approval.

66 **SECTION 4.**

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