

## House Bill No. 1577

An act relating to Pinellas County; amending chapter 80-590, Laws of Florida; amending the home rule charter of the county to delete the reference to general law as controlling the composition of the county commission; increasing the number of county commissioners from five to seven, with four of the members to be elected from single-member districts and the three remaining members to be elected at large; providing residency requirements for the at-large members; providing for redistricting in accordance with a constitutional provision, to conform; providing for transition; providing for a ballot title and question; providing legislative intent; providing for a special referendum; providing effective dates.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. Section 3.01 of Article III of the Home Rule Charter for Pinellas County, Florida, as created by section 1 of chapter 80-590, Laws of Florida, is amended to read:

#### ARTICLE III - LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

##### Section 3.01 Board of County Commissioners

The legislative body of county government shall be the Board of County Commissioners ~~in accordance with general law.~~ The Board of County Commissioners shall be increased from five commissioners to seven commissioners, with four of the seven commissioners residing one in each of four county commission districts, the districts together covering the entire county and as nearly equal in population as practicable, and each commissioner being nominated and elected only by the qualified electors who reside in the same county commission district as the commissioner, and with three of the seven commissioners being nominated and elected at large. Each of the three at-large commissioners shall reside one in each of three districts, the three districts together covering the entire county and as nearly equal in population as practicable. Initial redistricting shall be accomplished by the Board of County Commissioners in accordance with Section 1(e) of Article VIII of the Florida Constitution. ~~The composition, election, term of office, and compensation of members shall all be in accordance with general law.~~

Section 2. The county commission district seats filled in the 1998 election shall stay in effect until the normal expiration date of that term of office. All commissioners thereafter shall be elected for 4-year terms which shall be staggered so that, alternately, the commissioners elected from either the odd-numbered or even-numbered single-member districts and one or two of the commissioners elected at large from the entire county are elected every 2 years, except that any commissioner may be elected to an initial term of less than 4 years if necessary to achieve or maintain such system of staggered terms.

Section 3. At the special referendum called pursuant to section 5, the ballot title and question shall be substantially as follows:

BALLOT TITLE: INCREASES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS TO SEVEN; PROVIDES FOUR SINGLE-MEMBER DISTRICTS AND THREE AT-LARGE DISTRICTS

BALLOT QUESTION: Shall the Board of County Commissioners of Pinellas County, Florida, be increased from five to seven members, with four of the seven members to be elected to office from single-member districts by electors residing in each of those districts only, and with the three remaining members being elected by all electors within the county at large, amending Section 3.01 of Article III of the Home Rule Charter for Pinellas County, Florida?

YES FOR APPROVAL

NO FOR REJECTION

Section 4. It is the intent of the Legislature by this act to propose amendments to Section 3.01 of Article III of the Home Rule Charter for Pinellas County, Florida, as it was created by section 1 of chapter 80-590, Laws of Florida. It is not the intent of the Legislature in any way to effectuate or to interfere with the effectuation of any amendment that has previously occurred outside the legislative process to the extent that such amendment is ultimately deemed effective or not effective.

Section 5. This act shall take effect only upon its approval by a majority vote of those qualified electors of Pinellas County voting in a referendum election to be called by the Board of County Commissioners of Pinellas County and to be held prior to November 30, 1999, in accordance with the provisions of law relating to elections currently in force, except that this section and section 3 shall take effect upon this act becoming a law.

Approved by the Governor May 26, 1999.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 26, 1999.