

# 1999 ASSEMBLY BILL 553

October 25, 1999 – Introduced by Representatives GUNDRUM, KELSO, DUFF, URBAN, GUNDERSON and GROTHMAN, cosponsored by Senator FARROW. Referred to Committee on Campaigns and Elections.

1 AN ACT *to amend* 5.15 (6) (b) of the statutes; **relating to:** election returns for  
2 combined voting wards in municipalities.

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***Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau***

Under current law, a municipality with a population of 1,000 or more generally must be divided into wards and generally must report election returns by ward. However, under current law, a municipality may combine two or more voting wards in order to facilitate the use of a common polling place. Every municipality with a population of 35,000 or more currently must maintain separate election returns for each combined ward. Under this bill, only a municipality with a population of 50,000 or more must maintain separate election returns for each combined ward.

For further information see the *local* fiscal estimate, which will be printed as an appendix to this bill.

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***The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:***

3 SECTION 1. 5.15 (6) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:  
4 5.15 (6) (b) No later than 60 days before each September primary and general  
5 election, and no later than 30 days before each other election the governing body of  
6 any municipality may by resolution combine 2 or more wards for voting purposes to

**ASSEMBLY BILL 553****SECTION 1**

1 facilitate using a common polling place. Whenever wards are so combined, the  
2 original ward numbers shall continue to be utilized for all official purposes. Except  
3 as otherwise authorized under this paragraph, every municipality having a  
4 population of 50,000 or more, ~~or 35,000 or more after June 1, 1996,~~ shall maintain  
5 separate returns for each ward so combined. In municipalities having a population  
6 of less than 50,000, ~~or less than 35,000 after June 1, 1996,~~ the governing body may  
7 provide in the resolution that returns shall be maintained only for each group of  
8 combined wards at any election. ~~In municipalities having a population as shown in~~  
9 ~~the 1990 federal decennial census of at least 87,000 but not more than 150,000, the~~  
10 ~~governing body may provide in a resolution adopted prior to June 1, 1996 that groups~~  
11 ~~of not more than 2 wards shall use common ballot boxes and ballots or voting~~  
12 ~~machines and that returns shall be maintained only for each group of combined~~  
13 ~~wards at any election held prior to June 1, 1996.~~ Whenever a governing body  
14 provides for common ballot boxes and ballots or voting machines, separate returns  
15 shall be maintained for each separate ballot required under ss. 5.62 and 5.64 at the  
16 September primary and general election. The municipal clerk shall transmit a copy  
17 of the resolution to the county clerk of each county in which the municipality is  
18 contained. In municipalities having a population of less than 50,000, ~~or less than~~  
19 ~~35,000 after June 1, 1996,~~ the resolution shall remain in effect for each election until  
20 modified or rescinded, or until a new division is made under this section.

**SECTION 2. Initial applicability.**

21  
22 (1) This act first applies to returns for elections held on the effective date of this  
23 subsection.

24 (END)