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State of Minnesota

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

EIGHTY-SEVENTH SESSION

H. F. No. 2359

02/20/2012 Authored by Quam

The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Elections

03/20/2012 Adoption of Report: Pass as Amended and Read Second Time

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to counties; requiring retention elections for persons appointed to certain
1.3 county offices; providing a process for making the county recorder appointive
1.4 in Dodge County; amending Minnesota Statutes 2010, section 375A.12, by
1.5 adding a subdivision.

1.6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.7 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2010, section 375A.12, is amended by adding a
1.8 subdivision to read:

1.9 Subd. 7. Retention election on appointee. (a) At the first general election after the
1.10 effective date of this section, for any office made an appointed office after the effective
1.11 date of this section, the county must at the first general election following appointment
1.12 hold an election on whether to retain the person appointed. If the voters do not approve
1.13 retention of the person appointed to the position, the appointee may stay in the position
1.14 only until January 1 immediately following the election, at which time the county board
1.15 of commissioners must appoint another person to the position. If the voters approve
1.16 retention of the person appointed to the position, the county may retain the person and
1.17 shall hold a retention election at a general election every four years while the same person
1.18 holds the appointed office.

1.19 (b) The ballot question shall be:

1.20 "May the county board retain [name] as the person appointed and responsible for the
1.21 functions of [county office title]?"

1.22 Yes

1.23 No"

1.24 EFFECTIVE DATE. This section is effective the day following final enactment.

2.1 Sec. 2. **DODGE COUNTY RECORDER MAY BE APPOINTED.**

2.2 Subdivision 1. Authority to make office appointive. Notwithstanding Minnesota
2.3 Statutes, section 382.01, upon adoption of a resolution by the Dodge County Board
2.4 of Commissioners, the office of county recorder is not elective but must be filled by
2.5 appointment by the county board as provided in the resolution.

2.6 Subd. 2. Board controls; may change as long as duties done. Upon adoption of
2.7 a resolution by the county board of commissioners and subject to subdivisions 3 and 4,
2.8 the duties of an elected official required by statute whose office is made appointive as
2.9 authorized by this section must be discharged by the county board of commissioners
2.10 acting through a department head appointed by the board for that purpose. Reorganization,
2.11 reallocation, delegation, or other administrative change or transfer does not diminish,
2.12 prohibit, or avoid the discharge of duties required by statute.

2.13 Subd. 3. Incumbents to complete term. The person elected at the last general
2.14 election to an office made appointive under this section must serve in that capacity and
2.15 perform the duties, functions, and responsibilities required by statute until the completion
2.16 of the term of office to which the person was elected or until a vacancy occurs in the
2.17 office, whichever occurs earlier.

2.18 Subd. 4. Publishing resolution; petition, referendum. (a) Before the adoption
2.19 of the resolution to provide for the appointment of the county recorder, the county board
2.20 must publish a proposed resolution notifying the public of its intent to consider the issue
2.21 once each week for two consecutive weeks in the official publication of the county.
2.22 Following publication and prior to formally adopting the resolution, the county board shall
2.23 provide an opportunity at its next regular meeting for public comment relating to the issue.
2.24 After the public comment opportunity, at the same meeting or a subsequent meeting, the
2.25 county board of commissioners may adopt a resolution that provides for the appointment
2.26 of the county recorder as permitted in this section. The resolution must be approved by
2.27 at least 80 percent of the members of the county board. The resolution may take effect
2.28 60 days after it is adopted, or at a later date stated in the resolution, unless a petition is
2.29 filed as provided in paragraph (b).

2.30 (b) Within 60 days after the county board adopts the resolution, a petition requesting
2.31 a referendum may be filed with the county auditor-treasurer. The petition must be signed
2.32 by at least ten percent of the registered voters of the county. The petition must meet
2.33 the requirements of the secretary of state, as provided in Minnesota Statutes, section
2.34 204B.071, and any rules adopted to implement that section. If the petition is sufficient, the
2.35 question of appointing the county recorder must be placed on the ballot at a regular or

3.1 special election. If a majority of the voters of the county voting on the question vote in
3.2 favor of appointment, the resolution may be implemented.

3.3 Subd. 5. **Reverting to elected offices.** (a) The county board may adopt a resolution
3.4 to provide for the election of an office made an appointed position under this section, but
3.5 not until at least three years after the office was made an appointed position. The county
3.6 board must publish a proposed resolution notifying the public of its intent to consider the
3.7 issue once each week for two consecutive weeks in the official publication of the county.
3.8 Following publication and before formally adopting the resolution, the county board must
3.9 provide an opportunity at its next regular meeting for public comment relating to the
3.10 issue. After the public comment hearing, the county board may adopt the resolution. The
3.11 resolution must be approved by at least 60 percent of the members of the county board and
3.12 is effective August 1 following adoption of the resolution.

3.13 (b) The question of whether an office made an appointed position under this section
3.14 must be made an elected office must be placed on the ballot at the next general election
3.15 if (1) the position has been an appointed position for at least three years, (2) a petition
3.16 signed by at least ten percent of the registered voters of the county is filed with the office
3.17 of the county auditor-treasurer by August 1 of the year in which the general election is
3.18 held, and (3) the petition meets the requirements of the secretary of state, as provided in
3.19 Minnesota Statutes, section 204B.071, and any rules adopted to implement that section.
3.20 If a majority of the voters of the county voting on the question vote in favor of making
3.21 the office an elected position, the election for that office must be held at the next regular
3.22 or special election.

3.23 **EFFECTIVE DATE.** This section is effective the day after the Dodge County
3.24 Board of Commissioners and its chief clerical officer timely complete their compliance
3.25 with Minnesota Statutes, section 645.021, subdivisions 2 and 3.