

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2005**

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HOUSE BILL 1304

Short Title: Municipal Multimember Districts.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative L. Allen.

Referred to: Local Government II.

April 20, 2005

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ALLOW CITIES TO HAVE THE SAME POWER TO CREATE
MULTIMEMBER DISTRICTS AS DO COUNTIES.

Whereas, the home rule provisions of G.S. 160A-101 allow cities to change their form of government without local legislation, but require either at-large elections, single-member districts, or a combination of both; and

Whereas, the home rule provisions of G.S. 153A-58(3) allow counties the same options, but also allow multimember districts; and

Whereas, giving cities the same powers may allow them to resolve more issues locally; Now, therefore,

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

SECTION 1. G.S. 160A-101(6) reads as rewritten:

"§ 160A-101. Optional forms.

Any city may change its name or alter its form of government by adopting any one or combination of the options prescribed by this section:

...

(6) Mode of election of the council:

a. All candidates shall be nominated and elected by all the qualified voters of the city.

b. The city shall be divided into ~~single-member~~ electoral districts; council members shall be apportioned to the districts ~~so that each member represents the same number of persons as nearly as possible, so that the quotients obtained by dividing the population of each district by the number of council members apportioned to the district are as nearly equal as practicable,~~ except for members apportioned to the city at large, if any; the qualified voters of each district shall nominate and elect candidates who reside in the district for seats apportioned to that district; and all the qualified voters of the city shall

1 nominate and elect candidates apportioned to the city at large, if
2 any.

3 c. The city shall be divided into ~~single-member~~ electoral districts;
4 council members shall be apportioned to the districts ~~so that~~
5 ~~each member represents the same number of persons as nearly~~
6 ~~as possible, so that the quotients obtained by dividing the~~
7 ~~population of each district by the number of council members~~
8 ~~apportioned to the district are as nearly equal as practicable,~~
9 except for members apportioned to the city at large; and
10 candidates shall reside in and represent the districts according to
11 the apportionment plan adopted, but all candidates shall be
12 nominated and elected by all the qualified voters of the city.

13 d. The city shall be divided into electoral districts equal in number
14 to one half the number of council seats; the council seats shall
15 be divided equally into "ward seats" and "at-large seats," ~~one~~
16 ~~each~~ some of which shall be apportioned to each district, ~~so~~
17 ~~that each council member represents the same number of~~
18 ~~persons as nearly as possible; so that the quotients obtained by~~
19 ~~dividing the population of each district by the number of~~
20 ~~council members apportioned to the district are as nearly equal~~
21 ~~as practicable,~~ the qualified voters of each district shall
22 nominate and elect candidates to the "ward seats"; candidates
23 for the "at-large seats" shall reside in and represent the districts
24 according to the apportionment plan adopted, but all candidates
25 for "at-large" seats shall be nominated and elected by all the
26 qualified voters of the city.

27 e. The city shall be divided into ~~single-member~~ electoral districts;
28 council members shall be apportioned to the districts ~~so that~~
29 ~~each member represents the same number of persons as nearly~~
30 ~~as possible, so that the quotients obtained by dividing the~~
31 ~~population of each district by the number of council members~~
32 ~~apportioned to the district are as nearly equal as practicable,~~
33 except for members apportioned to the city at large, if any; in a
34 nonpartisan primary, the qualified voters of each district shall
35 nominate the multiple of two candidates per seat in the district,
36 who reside in the district, and the qualified voters of the entire
37 city shall nominate two candidates for each seat apportioned to
38 the city at large, if any; and all candidates shall be elected by all
39 the qualified voters of the city.

40 If either of options b, c, d, or e is adopted, the council shall divide
41 the city into the requisite number of single-member electoral districts
42 according to the apportionment plan adopted, and shall cause a map of
43 the districts so laid out to be drawn up and filed as provided by
44 G.S. 160A-22 and 160A-23. No more than one half of the council may

1 be apportioned to the city at large. An initiative petition may specify
2 the number of single-member electoral districts to be laid out, but the
3 drawing of district boundaries and apportionment of members to the
4 districts shall be done in all cases by the council."

5 **SECTION 2.** This act is effective when it becomes law.