



Representative Susan Manchester
78th House District

House Government Oversight Committee
House Bill 144 Sponsor Testimony
Allow an August special election for certain purposes
April 26th, 2023

Chairman Peterson, Vice Chairman Thomas, Ranking Member Forhan and members of the House Government Oversight Committee, thank you for the opportunity to give sponsor testimony regarding House Bill 144. This bill would permit for August special elections to serve specific purposes that are expanded from current law.

Under current law, August special elections are permitted for significant statewide issues, local fiscal emergencies, and congressional seats. This bill aims to expand the scope of these elections by including constitutional amendments that are initiated by the General Assembly and authorized by a joint resolution. To achieve this, the legislation broadens the language of the current election law and slightly widens the eligibility criteria. The constitutional amendments must first receive 3/5 vote in both chambers to be considered for inclusion on the ballot.

Although some concerns have been raised about HB 458 of the last General Assembly regarding August special elections, HB 144 does not contradict the provisions of this bill. August special elections are still permitted under certain circumstances, and HB 144 seeks to expand the issues that can be placed on the ballot during those elections. This bill does not attempt to recreate or fundamentally alter the existing framework of August special elections.

Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to speak to this important legislation. I am happy to answer any questions.