

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SB 748

SPONSOR: Committee on Ethics and Elections and Senator Clary

SUBJECT: Elections; release of election results

DATE: March 14, 2001 REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Bradshaw	Bradshaw	EE	Favorable/CS
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 748 provides that no official results of an election may be made public until the polls have closed in all counties of the state.

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: ss. 101.5614, 101.68, and 102.071.

II. Present Situation:

Section 100.011, F.S., provides the time of opening and closing of the polling places in the state. The polls are open from 7 a.m. until 7 p.m. on election day, based on the time in standard use in the county seat of the county. There are currently 10 counties in the state on central time. The remaining counties are on eastern time. Polls in the eastern time zone close an hour before the polls in the central time zone.

During the 2000 Presidential election, the media projected Vice-President Al Gore as the winner in Florida prior to the polls closing in the central time zone. Announcing or projecting winners prior to the close of the polls discourages people from voting, if they have not already done so.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 748 amends various provisions of the election laws to provide that no official results of the election may be made public until the polls have closed in all counties in the state.

This bill will not have any effect on the media doing exit polling and projecting winners based on those exit polls.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.