



DENVER
THE MILE HIGH CITY

Acceso Board Update Bill

Update to Article VII Chapter 15 D.R.M.C.

Councilwoman Stacie Gilmore

FOR CITY SERVICES VISIT | CALL
DenverGov.org | **311**

ACCESO: Spanish Language Voter Advisory Board

- **Board's Purpose:** To advise the Clerk and Recorder and the Denver Elections Division and recommend necessary policy and initiatives designed to maintain an effective and efficient Spanish language assistance program in accordance with state and federal law.
- **Section 203 of the Voting Rights Act:** Requires Counties to provide bilingual election materials and information if five percent or more of their voting-age citizens speak a language other than English or have limited English skills.
- **Acceso's History**



- Current requirements for board composition, membership, and procedure have hindered:
 - Member recruitment
 - Participation
 - The board's ability to fulfill its purpose
- Some provisions need to be updated to reflect a new Colorado law regarding multilingual ballot access.

Amend Board Composition

- Under current law, the Board has difficulty achieving a quorum to conduct business on a regular basis. This bill proposes to fix that issue by decreasing the minimum number of board members.
- **Current requirements:**
 - Minimum of 13 members
 - Maximum of 25 members
- **Under this bill:**
 - Minimum of seven members
 - Maximum of 15 members

- Currently, voting members of the board must be residents of Denver and registered to vote. This has limited recruitment efforts by preventing certain engaged, Spanish-speaking individuals from joining.
- Membership requirement under this bill:
 - Members must be residents of the State of Colorado
 - With emphasis on representation from individuals of the Denver Latino community who are civically engaged in the City and County of Denver.

- To increase member participation and ensure long-term support for the Board, the bill proposes to:
 - Allow members to join board meetings and vote on board questions electronically
 - Require the Clerk and Recorder to provide staff support to the Board (currently this is not mandatory)
 - Allow term-limited members to serve until a duly appointed replacement member is seated

- In 2021, the Colorado General Assembly passed HB21-1011, which lowered the threshold formula for determining whether a jurisdiction must provide election materials in another language. This could affect Denver in the future if another language other than Spanish qualifies under the new formula.
- HB21-1011 also expanded the services that covered jurisdictions must provide.
- This bill would:
 - Update the Board’s purpose to include reference to the new provisions under HB21-1011 (C.R.S. §§ 1-5-901 – 908)
 - Expand the Board’s planning to include future goals/needs for potential newly covered languages other than Spanish

Questions?