Technical Bulletins: New Act Permits Non-Resident Owner Voting Rights

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NEW ACT PERMITS NON-RESIDENT OWNER VOTING RIGHTS

An MTAS Technical Bulletin dated April 5, 1978, reported an opinion from the Office of the State Attorney General relative to voting in municipal elections by nonresident property owners. That opinion was dated Feb. 28, 1978, and stated that under the existing law (at that time):

(1) The ownership of property in a municipality does not in itself give the owners any right to vote in any municipal election.

(2) Before a person may vote in a municipal election he must be a bonafide resident and otherwise qualified and registered voter in a precinct within the geographic boundaries of the municipality.

This opinion appears now to have been negated by Chapter 944, Public Acts of 1978, adopted by the Tennessee General Assembly in April and signed by Governor Blanton on May 11, 1978. This new act expressly provides that:

A person shall be registered as a voter of the precinct in which he is a resident, and, if provided for by municipal charter or general law, may also be registered in a municipality in which he owns real property in order to participate in that municipality's elections.