



House of Representatives

General Assembly

File No. 528

February Session, 2026

Substitute House Bill No. 5001

House of Representatives, April 9, 2026

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through REP. BLUMENTHAL of the 147th Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING FOR ALL AND VARIOUS OTHER REFORMS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-135 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 [(a)] Any elector eligible to vote at a primary or an election and any
4 person eligible to vote at a referendum may vote by absentee ballot, [if
5 such elector or person is unable to appear at such elector's or person's
6 polling place on the day of such primary, election or referendum for any
7 of the following reasons: (1) Such elector's or person's active service with
8 the armed forces of the United States; (2) such elector's or person's
9 absence from the town of such elector's or person's voting residence; (3)
10 sickness; (4) physical disability; (5) the tenets of such elector's or person's
11 religion forbid secular activity on the day of such primary, election or
12 referendum; or (6) the required performance of such elector's or person's
13 duties as a primary, election or referendum official, including as a town

14 clerk or registrar of voters or as staff of the clerk or registrar, at a polling
15 place other than such elector's or person's own during all of the hours
16 of voting at such primary, election or referendum] provided such elector
17 properly completes and submits an absentee ballot application in
18 accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

19 [(b) No person shall misrepresent the eligibility requirements for
20 voting by absentee ballot prescribed in subsection (a) of this section, to
21 any elector or prospective absentee ballot applicant.]

22 Sec. 2. Section 9-137 of the general statutes is repealed and the
23 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

24 (a) Each absentee ballot shall be returned to the municipal clerk,
25 inserted in [an inner] a return envelope which shall be capable of being
26 sealed and which shall have printed on its face a form containing the
27 following [statements] statement:

28 "I hereby state under the penalties of false statement in absentee
29 balloting that I am eligible to vote at the primary, election or referendum
30 in the municipality in which this absentee ballot is to be cast. [and that I
31 expect to be unable to appear at my polling place on the day of such
32 primary, election or referendum for one or more of the following
33 reasons: (1) My active service in the armed forces; (2) my absence from
34 the town in which I am eligible to vote; (3) sickness; (4) physical
35 disability; (5) the tenets of my religion which forbid secular activity on
36 the day of such primary, election or referendum; or (6) my duties as a
37 primary, election or referendum official.]

38 Date

39 (Signature)

40 (Printed name)"

41 (b) Each such return envelope shall also be endorsed on the outside
42 with the words "OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT" and bear a label
43 generated by the state-wide centralized voter registration system

44 described in section 9-50b. Such label shall include (1) (A) the name and
45 return address of the sender, (B) the applicant's name and voting
46 residence by street and number, (C) the applicant's voting district, (D)
47 the ballot style, (E) the unique ballot identification number, appearing
48 both in a text format and as a scannable barcode, and (F) the date of the
49 primary, election or referendum at which the ballot is to be cast and, if
50 the absentee ballot is to be cast at a primary, the name of the party
51 holding the primary, and (2) a notice, sufficient to warn any person
52 handling the ballot, of the restrictions set forth in section 9-140b, as
53 amended by this act, concerning who may possess or return the ballot
54 and the restrictions and penalties set forth in section 9-359 concerning
55 the completion or execution of absentee ballots. The clerk shall also
56 inscribe such clerk's official address for the return of the ballot on the
57 return envelope prior to issuance of the ballot and return envelope.

58 Sec. 3. Section 9-139a of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes
59 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
60 *passage*):

61 (a) The Secretary of the State shall prescribe and furnish the following
62 materials to municipal clerks: The absentee ballot facsimile, the
63 application for absentee ballot authorized for use at each election or
64 primary, the [inner envelope, the outer] envelope provided for the
65 return of the ballot to the municipal clerk, the instructions for the use of
66 the absentee ballot and the envelope for mailing of such forms by the
67 clerk to the absentee ballot applicant.

68 (b) The application for absentee ballot shall be in the form of a
69 statement signed under the penalties of false statement in absentee
70 balloting. Each application shall contain (1) spaces for the signature
71 under the penalties of false statement in absentee balloting of any person
72 who assists the applicant in the completion of an application together
73 with the information required in section 9-140, as amended by this act,
74 (2) spaces for the signature and the printed or typed name of the
75 applicant, and (3) a clear and conspicuous notation of the year for which
76 such application's use is authorized.

77 (c) The Secretary of the State shall prescribe and furnish to the
78 Department of Correction an application for absentee ballot form for use
79 within Department of Correction facilities. Such form shall contain
80 spaces for all information required under subsection (b) of this section.
81 Each such form shall be consecutively numbered and shall indicate that
82 such form is only for use by an absentee ballot applicant who is
83 incarcerated in a Department of Correction facility and that such
84 applicant is required to provide in the appropriate space on such form
85 a mailing address at the Department of Correction facility in order for
86 an absentee ballot to be mailed to such applicant.

87 (d) The instructions for the use of the absentee ballot shall be in plain
88 language and shall include the steps to be taken if a vote is to be
89 cancelled or changed, and shall also contain a simple and concise
90 restatement of the provisions of subsection [(l)] (k) of section 9-150a, as
91 amended by this act, [and section 9-159o] concerning rejection of ballots
92 marked in such manner as to identify the voters casting them. [, and
93 withdrawal of ballots by persons who find they are able to vote at the
94 polls.]

95 (e) A sufficient supply of such instructions and envelopes shall be
96 printed to supply the number which the municipal clerk requests or the
97 Secretary of the State deems sufficient.

98 Sec. 4. Section 9-140 of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes is
99 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
100 *passage*):

101 (a) (1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, application
102 for an absentee ballot shall be made to the clerk of the municipality in
103 which the applicant is eligible to vote or has applied for such eligibility.
104 Any person who assists another person in the completion of an
105 application shall, in the space provided, sign the application and print
106 or type [his] such person's name, residence address and telephone
107 number, except that any employee of the Department of Correction who
108 so assists an incarcerated applicant shall provide the address and
109 telephone number of the department facility to which such employee is

110 assigned in lieu of such employee's residence address and telephone
111 number. Such signature shall be made under the penalties of false
112 statement in absentee balloting. The municipal clerk shall not invalidate
113 the application solely because it does not contain the name of a person
114 who assisted the applicant in the completion of the application. The
115 municipal clerk shall not distribute with an absentee ballot application
116 any material which promotes the success or defeat of any candidate or
117 referendum question. The municipal clerk shall maintain a log of all
118 absentee ballot applications provided under this subsection, including
119 the name and address of each person to whom applications are
120 provided and the number of applications provided to each such person.
121 Each absentee ballot application provided by the municipal clerk shall
122 [be consecutively numbered] display a unique ballot identification
123 number and be stamped or marked with the name of the municipality
124 issuing the application. The application shall be signed by the applicant
125 under the penalties of false statement in absentee balloting on (A) the
126 form prescribed by the Secretary of the State pursuant to section 9-139a,
127 as amended by this act, (B) a form provided by any federal department
128 or agency if applicable pursuant to section 9-153a, or (C) any of the
129 special forms of application prescribed pursuant to section 9-150c, 9-
130 153a, 9-153b, as amended by this act, 9-153d, 9-153e, as amended by this
131 act, 9-153f, as amended by this act, or 9-158d, if applicable. Any such
132 absentee ballot applicant who is unable to write may cause the
133 application to be completed by an authorized agent who shall, in the
134 spaces provided for the date and signature, write the date and name of
135 the absentee ballot applicant followed by the word "by" and [his] such
136 authorized agent's own signature. If the ballot is to be mailed to the
137 applicant, the applicant shall list the bona fide personal mailing address
138 of the applicant in the appropriate space on the application.

139 (2) A municipal clerk may transmit an application to a person under
140 this subsection by facsimile machine or other electronic means, if so
141 requested by the applicant. If a municipal clerk has a facsimile machine
142 or other electronic means, an applicant may return a completed
143 application to the clerk by such a machine or device, provided the
144 applicant shall also mail the original of the completed application to the

145 clerk, either separately or with the absentee ballot that is issued to the
146 applicant. If the clerk does not receive such original application by the
147 close of the polls on the day of the election, primary or referendum, the
148 absentee ballot shall not be counted.

149 (3) No municipal clerk shall provide, for an election, primary or
150 referendum, five or more absentee ballot applications to any person
151 earlier than ninety days prior to the first day of issuance of absentee
152 voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of this section, for such election,
153 primary or referendum.

154 (4) No municipal clerk shall provide or accept for return, and no
155 person shall [distribute or otherwise] use, any absentee ballot
156 application in a given year unless such application contains the notation
157 described in subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 9-139a, as
158 amended by this act, authorizing such application's use in such year.

159 (b) On and after July 1, 2021:

160 (1) Application for an absentee ballot may also be made to the
161 Secretary of the State through an online system established and
162 maintained by the Secretary for such purpose if an applicant's signature
163 is in a database described in subsection (b) of section 9-19k, or the system
164 described in section 9-4c, and such signature may be imported into such
165 online application system.

166 (2) In order for an application for an absentee ballot to be submitted
167 through the online system described in subdivision (1) of this
168 subsection, the applicant's signature shall be obtained from a database
169 described in subsection (b) of section 9-19k, or the system described in
170 section 9-4c, and the applicant shall, on an online form prescribed by the
171 Secretary, (A) type [his or her] such applicant's name, (B) indicate the
172 municipality in which such applicant is eligible to vote or has applied
173 for such eligibility, and (C) mark a box associated with the following
174 statement:

175 "By clicking on the box below, I swear or affirm all of the following

176 under penalty of false statement in absentee balloting:

177 1. I am the person whose name is provided on this form, and I desire
178 to apply for an absentee ballot.

179 2. I am eligible to vote in the municipality provided on this form or
180 have applied for such eligibility.

181 3. I authorize the Department of Motor Vehicles or other Connecticut
182 state agency to transmit to the Connecticut Secretary of the State my
183 signature that is on file with such agency and understand that such
184 signature will be used by the Secretary on this online application for an
185 absentee ballot as if I had signed this form personally."

186 (3) Not later than twenty-four hours after receipt of any submitted
187 application for an absentee ballot through the online system described
188 in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Secretary shall transmit such
189 application to the clerk of the municipality indicated in such application.

190 (c) The municipal clerk shall check the name of each absentee ballot
191 applicant against the last-completed registry list and any updated
192 registry lists on file in the municipal clerk's office. If the name of such
193 applicant does not appear on any of such lists, the clerk shall send such
194 applicant a notice, in a form prescribed by the Secretary of the State, to
195 the effect that (1) the applicant's name did not appear on the list of
196 electors of the municipality at the time the application was processed,
197 and (2) unless the applicant is admitted or restored as an elector of the
198 municipality by the applicable cutoff dates, an absentee ballot will not
199 be mailed to [him] such applicant. Such notice shall not be so mailed if,
200 prior to the mailing of the notice, the registrars provide the clerk with
201 reliable information showing the absentee ballot applicant to be an
202 elector of the municipality.

203 (d) (1) An absentee voting set shall consist of (A) the mailing envelope
204 containing all other items of such set and used to issue such set to the
205 applicant, (B) an absentee ballot, [inner and outer envelopes] (C) an
206 envelope for [its] the ballot's return, (D) instructions for [its] the ballot's

207 use, and (E) if applicable, explanatory texts concerning ballot questions,
208 as provided for in sections 2-30a and 9-369b, as amended by this act.

209 (2) No other material shall be included with an absentee voting set
210 issued to an applicant, except (A) as provided in sections 9-153e, as
211 amended by this act, and 9-153f, as amended by this act, [or] (B) where
212 necessary to correct an error or omission as provided in section 9-153c,
213 as amended by this act, or (C) any voting information as may be
214 prescribed by the Secretary of the State, provided no such voting
215 information shall promote the success or defeat of any candidate or
216 question.

217 (e) Upon receipt of an application, the municipal clerk shall, unless a
218 notice is mailed to the applicant pursuant to subsection (c) of this
219 section, [write the serial number of the outer] ensure the unique ballot
220 identification number appearing on the return envelope included in the
221 absentee voting set to be issued to the applicant matches the unique
222 identification number displayed on the application form in the space
223 provided for [that purpose on the application form. Sets shall be issued
224 to applicants in consecutive ascending numerical order of the envelope
225 serial numbers, and] such purpose. As absentee voting sets are issued to
226 applicants, the clerk shall keep a list of the unique ballot identification
227 numbers [indicating beside each number] and shall indicate beside each
228 unique ballot identification number on the list the name of the applicant
229 to whom [that set] the absentee voting set corresponding with such
230 unique ballot identification number was issued. The list shall be
231 preserved as a public record as required by section 9-150b, as amended
232 by this act.

233 (f) Absentee voting sets shall be issued beginning on the thirty-first
234 day before an election and the twenty-first day before a primary or, if
235 such day is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, beginning on the next
236 preceding business day.

237 (g) (1) On the first day of issuance of absentee voting sets, the
238 municipal clerk shall mail an absentee voting set to each applicant
239 whose application was received by the clerk prior to that day. When the

240 clerk receives an application during the time period in which absentee
241 voting sets are to be issued, [he] the clerk shall mail an absentee voting
242 set to the applicant [,] within twenty-four hours, unless the applicant
243 submits [his] such applicant's application in person at the office of the
244 clerk and [asks] requests to be given [his] such applicant's absentee
245 voting set immediately, in which case the clerk shall comply with the
246 request. Any absentee voting set to be mailed to an applicant shall be
247 mailed to the bona fide personal mailing address shown on the
248 application. If an applicant has provided a mailing address at a
249 Department of Correction facility and such applicant is subsequently
250 transferred to another Department of Correction facility, the
251 Commissioner of Correction shall ensure delivery of the absentee voting
252 set to such applicant. Issuance of absentee voting sets shall also be
253 subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, section 9-150c
254 [and section 9-159q] concerning persons designated to deliver or return
255 ballots in cases involving unforeseen illness or disability and section 9-
256 159q, as amended by this act, concerning supervised voting at certain
257 health care institutions.

258 (2) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (1) of this
259 subsection, upon receipt of an application under section 9-140e, as
260 amended by this act, 9-153e, as amended by this act, 9-153f, as amended
261 by this act, or 9-158c, the municipal clerk may issue to the applicant an
262 absentee ballot by electronic means if such applicant requests such
263 manner of issuance.

264 (h) No absentee ballot shall be issued on the day of an election or
265 primary, or after the opening of the polls on the day of a referendum,
266 except in cases involving unforeseen illness or disability [or presidential
267 or overseas ballots] as provided in section 9-150c and presidential or
268 overseas ballots as provided in sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive.

269 (i) The municipal clerk shall file executed applications in alphabetical
270 order according to the applicants' surnames. Such applications shall be
271 preserved as a public record as required by section 9-150b, as amended
272 by this act.

273 (j) No person shall pay or give any compensation to another, and no
274 person shall accept any compensation, solely for (1) distributing
275 absentee ballot applications obtained from a municipal clerk or the
276 Secretary of the State, or (2) assisting any other person in the execution
277 of an absentee ballot.

278 (k) (1) A person shall register with the municipal clerk before
279 distributing five or more absentee ballot applications for an election,
280 primary or referendum, not including applications distributed to such
281 person's immediate family. Such requirement shall not apply to a person
282 who is the designee of an applicant or to any employee of the
283 Department of Correction who provides the application for absentee
284 ballot form prescribed under subsection (c) of section 9-139a, as
285 amended by this act, to one or more incarcerated absentee ballot
286 applicants.

287 (2) The municipal clerk shall reject the application of any absentee
288 ballot applicant made upon the form prescribed under subsection (c) of
289 section 9-139a, as amended by this act, if such form indicates any
290 address other than an address at a Department of Correction facility.
291 The municipal clerk shall maintain a log of all applications of
292 incarcerated absentee ballot applicants received by such municipal
293 clerk, which log shall indicate the name and address of each applicant,
294 the date of receipt of each application and the date such municipal clerk
295 mailed the absentee ballot to such applicant or the reason why such
296 application was rejected.

297 (3) Any person who distributes absentee ballot applications shall
298 maintain a list of the names and addresses of prospective absentee ballot
299 applicants who receive such applications, and shall file such list with
300 the municipal clerk prior to the date of the primary, election or
301 referendum for which the applications were so distributed, except that
302 such requirements shall not apply to any employee of the Department
303 of Correction who provides the application for absentee ballot form
304 prescribed under subsection (c) of section 9-139a, as amended by this
305 act, to incarcerated absentee ballot applicants. Any person who

306 distributes absentee ballot applications and receives an executed
307 application shall forthwith file the application with the municipal clerk.

308 (l) No candidate, party or political committee, or agent of such
309 candidate or committee shall mail or deliver unsolicited applications for
310 absentee ballots to any person, unless such [mailing includes]
311 committee or agent includes with such mailing or delivery: (1) A written
312 [explanation of the eligibility requirements for voting by absentee ballot
313 as prescribed in subsection (a) of section 9-135] disclaimer that such
314 mailing or delivery was (A) paid for by such committee or agent, and
315 (B) in the case of a candidate committee, approved by the applicable
316 candidate, and (2) a written [warning that voting or attempting to vote
317 by absentee ballot without meeting one or more of such eligibility
318 requirements subjects the elector or applicant to potential civil and
319 criminal penalties] explanation of the various ways an absentee ballot
320 may be returned, as provided in subsection (a) of section 9-140b, as
321 amended by this act. As used in this subsection, "agent" means any
322 person authorized to act on behalf of another person.

323 (m) The Secretary of the State shall conspicuously post on the
324 Secretary of the State's web site, adjacent to the absentee ballot
325 application form available for downloading, a notice that the
326 application may be downloaded by a person only for (1) the person's
327 own use, (2) the use of a member of the person's immediate family, or
328 (3) the use of a designee of the applicant. The notice shall also contain
329 an advisory statement concerning the requirements of subsection (k) of
330 this section.

331 (n) The State Elections Enforcement Commission, in consultation
332 with the Secretary of the State, shall prepare a summary of the
333 requirements and prohibitions of the absentee voting laws, which shall
334 be posted on said agencies' web sites. Candidates and political party
335 chairpersons shall provide such summary to campaign and party
336 employees and volunteers.

337 (o) As used in this section, (1) "immediate family" has the same
338 meaning as provided in subsection (a) of section 9-140b, as amended by

339 this act, and (2) "designee" has the same meaning as provided in
340 subsection (b) of section 9-140b, as amended by this act.

341 Sec. 5. Section 9-140a of the general statutes is repealed and the
342 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

343 Each absentee ballot applicant shall sign the form on the [inner]
344 return envelope provided for in section 9-137, as amended by this act,
345 which shall constitute a statement under the penalties of false statement
346 in absentee balloting. Any absentee ballot applicant who is unable to
347 write may cause [his] such applicant's name to be signed on the form by
348 an authorized agent who shall, in the space provided for the signature,
349 write the name of the applicant followed by the word "by" and [his] such
350 authorized agent's own signature. The failure of the applicant or
351 authorized agent to date the form shall not invalidate the ballot. The
352 ballot shall be inserted in the [inner envelope, and the inner envelope
353 shall be inserted in the outer] return envelope [,] prior to the return of
354 the ballot to the municipal clerk. If an applicant is required to return
355 identification with the ballot pursuant to the Help America Vote Act,
356 P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time, the municipal clerk shall
357 provide to the applicant an additional envelope preaddressed to the
358 municipal clerk for the return of such applicant's identification, which
359 envelope may be postage prepaid, and the applicant shall return such
360 identification [shall be inserted in the outer envelope so such
361 identification can be viewed without opening the inner envelope] to the
362 municipal clerk in such additional envelope.

363 Sec. 6. Section 9-140b of the general statutes, as amended by section
364 88 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
365 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

366 (a) An absentee ballot shall be cast at a primary, election or
367 referendum only if: (1) [It] Such ballot is mailed by (A) the ballot
368 applicant, (B) a designee of a person who applies for an absentee ballot
369 because of illness or physical disability, or (C) a member of the
370 immediate family of an applicant who is a student, so that [it] the ballot
371 is received by the clerk of the municipality in which the applicant is

372 qualified to vote not later than the close of the polls; (2) [it] such ballot
373 is returned by the applicant in person to [the] such clerk by the day
374 before the election or primary or prior to the opening of the polls on the
375 day of the referendum; (3) [it] such ballot is returned by a designee of
376 an ill or physically disabled ballot applicant, in person, to [said] such
377 clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the election,
378 primary or referendum; (4) [it] such ballot is returned by a member of
379 the immediate family of the [absentee voter] applicant, in person, to
380 [said] such clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the
381 election, primary or referendum; (5) in the case of a presidential or
382 overseas ballot, [it] such ballot is mailed or otherwise returned pursuant
383 to the provisions of section 9-158g, as amended by this act; or (6) [it] such
384 ballot is returned with the proper identification as required by the Help
385 America Vote Act, P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time, if
386 applicable, [inserted in the outer envelope so such identification can be
387 viewed without opening the inner envelope] in accordance with the
388 provisions of section 9-140a, as amended by this act. A person returning
389 an absentee ballot to the municipal clerk pursuant to subdivision (3) or
390 (4) of this subsection shall present identification and, on the [outer]
391 return envelope of the absentee ballot, sign [his] such person's name in
392 the presence of the municipal clerk [,] and indicate [his] such person's
393 address [, his] and relationship to the voter or [his] position [,] and the
394 date and time of such return. An absentee ballot shall be deemed cast
395 when it is received and accepted by the municipal clerk in accordance
396 with the provisions of this subsection, provided the statement on the
397 return envelope for such absentee ballot is signed by the applicant. As
398 used in this section, "immediate family" means a dependent relative
399 who resides in the individual's household or any spouse, child, parent
400 or sibling of the individual.

401 (b) As used in this section and section 9-150c, "designee" means (1) a
402 person who is caring for the applicant because of the applicant's illness
403 or physical disability, including, but not limited to, a licensed physician
404 or a registered or practical nurse, (2) a member of the applicant's family,
405 who is designated by an absentee ballot applicant and who consents to
406 such designation, or (3) a police officer, registrar of voters, deputy

407 registrar of voters or assistant registrar of voters in the municipality in
408 which the applicant resides.

409 (c) (1) For purposes of this section, "mailed" means (A) sent by the
410 United States Postal Service or any commercial carrier, courier or
411 messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the
412 State, or (B) deposited in a secure drop box designated by the municipal
413 clerk for such purpose, in accordance with instructions prescribed by
414 the Secretary.

415 (2) (A) In the case of absentee ballots mailed under subparagraph (B)
416 of subdivision (1) of this subsection, beginning on the first day of
417 issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of section
418 9-140, as amended by this act, and on each [weekday] business day
419 thereafter until the close of the polls at the election, primary or
420 referendum, including at the close of the polls at such election, primary
421 or referendum, the municipal clerk shall retrieve from the secure drop
422 box described in said subparagraph each such ballot deposited in such
423 drop box.

424 (B) On and after July 1, 2025, each municipality shall provide a video
425 recording device for each secure drop box described in subparagraph
426 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection within such municipality, which
427 device's recordings shall capture the location of such drop box and
428 evidence the date and time of each such recording beginning on the first
429 day of issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of
430 section 9-140, as amended by this act, and until the last retrieval of
431 absentee ballots from such drop box at the close of the polls at the
432 election or primary. Each such recording shall, as soon as practicable, be
433 made publicly available from the date of recording, but in no case later
434 than five days after such last retrieval. Each such recording shall be
435 retained by the municipality for a period of twelve months and may be
436 destroyed at the end of such period, except that the State Elections
437 Enforcement Commission or a court of competent jurisdiction may
438 order that such period be extended until the conclusion of any
439 investigation related to such recording.

440 (3) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
441 with the provisions of chapter 54, concerning the use of secure drop
442 boxes for the deposit of absentee ballots, including, but not limited to,
443 the placement and positioning of any such drop box and the video
444 recording of any such drop box and retention of any such recording.

445 (d) No person shall have in [his] such person's possession any official
446 absentee ballot or ballot envelope for use at any primary, election or
447 referendum except the applicant to whom it was issued, the Secretary of
448 the State or [his or her] the Secretary's authorized agents, any official
449 printer of absentee ballot forms and [his] such printer's designated
450 carriers, the United States Postal Service, any other carrier, courier or
451 messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the
452 State, any person authorized by a municipal clerk to receive and process
453 official absentee ballot forms on behalf of the municipal clerk, any
454 authorized primary, election or referendum official or any other person
455 authorized by any provision of the general statutes to possess a ballot or
456 ballot envelope.

457 (e) No (1) candidate, or (2) agent of a candidate, political party or
458 committee, as defined in section 9-601, shall knowingly be present when
459 an absentee ballot applicant executes an absentee ballot, except when
460 (A) [when] the candidate or agent is (i) a member of the immediate
461 family of the applicant, or (ii) authorized by law to be present, or (B)
462 [when] the absentee ballot is executed in the office of the municipal clerk
463 and the municipal clerk or an employee of the municipal clerk is a
464 candidate or agent.

465 Sec. 7. Section 9-140c of the general statutes is repealed and the
466 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

467 (a) (1) The municipal clerk shall retain the return envelopes
468 containing absentee ballots received by [him] such clerk under section
469 9-140b, as amended by this act, and shall not open such return
470 envelopes. [The] As the municipal clerk receives each absentee ballot,
471 such clerk shall first make a record, for the purposes of subdivision (3)
472 of this subsection, of each return envelope on which the applicant did

473 not sign the statement and shall then endorse over [his] such clerk's
474 signature [] upon each [outer] return envelope [as he receives it,] (A)
475 the date and precise time of its receipt, and (B) the method of its receipt,
476 in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection.
477 The clerk shall make an affidavit attesting to the accuracy of all such
478 endorsements [, and at the close of the polls] and shall deliver such
479 affidavit at the close of the polls to the head moderator, who shall
480 endorse the time of its receipt and return it to the clerk after all counting
481 is complete. The clerk shall preserve the affidavit for one hundred eighty
482 days in accordance with the requirements of section 9-150b, as amended
483 by this act. The clerk shall keep a list of the names of the applicants who
484 return absentee ballots to the clerk under section 9-140b, as amended by
485 this act. The list shall be preserved as a public record as required by
486 section 9-150b, as amended by this act.

487 (2) The municipal clerk shall record on the [outer] return envelope of
488 each absentee ballot [returned] received by such clerk under section 9-
489 140b, as amended by this act, whether such absentee ballot was (A) sent
490 by the United States Postal Service or any commercial carrier, courier or
491 messenger service, (B) deposited in a secure drop box, in which case the
492 location of such drop box shall also be so recorded, (C) returned in
493 person by an elector, or (D) returned in person by the designee or
494 immediate family member of an elector. As soon as reasonably
495 practicable after the close of the polls at an election or primary, the
496 municipal clerk shall submit to the Secretary of the State a report
497 detailing the total count of all absentee ballots returned for such election
498 or primary, broken down by each method described in subparagraphs
499 (A) to (D), inclusive, of this subdivision.

500 (3) (A) If the municipal clerk receives an absentee ballot without the
501 statement on the return envelope signed by the applicant, such absentee
502 ballot may be cured in person at the municipal clerk's office beginning
503 on the first day of issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in
504 subsection (f) of section 9-140, as amended by this act, and until the close
505 of the polls on the day of the election, primary or referendum. After such
506 close of the polls, no such absentee ballot may be cured.

507 (B) In the case of any absentee ballot described in subparagraph (A)
508 of this subdivision, the municipal clerk shall use best efforts to contact
509 the affected voter as soon as possible, but in no case later than twenty-
510 four hours after receiving the absentee ballot, for the purpose of curing
511 such ballot pursuant to said subparagraph. During the period beginning
512 twenty-four hours prior to the closing of the polls and until such closing
513 of the polls, the municipal clerk shall use best efforts to contact the
514 affected voter for such purpose immediately upon receiving the
515 absentee ballot. The municipal clerk's best efforts shall include, but need
516 not be limited to, contacting the affected voter by (i) calling the
517 telephone number or numbers listed on the voter's absentee ballot
518 application and voter registration, if the voter has provided any, and (ii)
519 sending an electronic mail to the electronic mail address listed on the
520 voter's absentee ballot application and voter registration, if the voter has
521 provided any. If the voter has provided neither a telephone number nor
522 an electronic mail address, the municipal clerk shall exercise discretion
523 in attempting to contact the voter by other means.

524 (b) (1) Beginning [not earlier than the seventh day before the election,
525 primary or referendum] the day after the first day of issuance of
526 absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-140, as
527 amended by this act, and on any weekday thereafter, all absentee ballots
528 received by the municipal clerk at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. of [such
529 day] the day of the election, primary or referendum may be sorted into
530 voting districts by the municipal clerk and checked as provided in this
531 subsection. On any such day, beginning as soon as the ballots have been
532 sorted, the registrars of voters, without opening the [outer] return
533 envelopes, may check the names of the applicants returning ballots on
534 the official checklist to be used at the election, primary or referendum
535 by indicating "absentee" or "A" preceding each such name and, if
536 unaffiliated electors are authorized under section 9-431 to vote in the
537 primary of either of two parties, the designation of the party in which
538 the applicants are voting preceding each such name. Unless absentee
539 ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places, pursuant to
540 subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the registrars shall also place such
541 indication on a duplicate checklist to be retained by the municipal clerk

542 until the municipal clerk delivers such duplicate checklist to the
543 registrars, in accordance with subsection (e) of this section, for the use
544 of the absentee ballot counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

545 (2) All absentee ballots received at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. of
546 the last day before the election, primary or referendum which is not a
547 Sunday or legal holiday, shall be sorted into voting districts by the
548 municipal clerk and checked as provided in subdivision (1) of this
549 subsection not later than such last day.

550 (c) If the name of the applicant returning the ballot is not on the
551 official checklist for any polling place in such municipality, the
552 registrars shall endorse on the face of [such outer] the return envelope
553 the word "rejected", followed by a statement of the reasons for rejection,
554 and [the outer] such return envelope shall not be opened [or the ballot]
555 nor shall such ballot be counted.

556 (d) After such checking has been completed on any such day, the
557 municipal clerk shall seal the unopened ballots in a package and retain
558 them in a safe place.

559 (e) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, ballots
560 received at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. on the last day before the
561 election, primary or referendum shall be delivered by the municipal
562 clerk to the registrars [between ten o'clock a.m. and twelve o'clock noon]
563 not later than seven o'clock a.m. on the day of the election, [or] primary
564 [and at twelve o'clock noon on the day of a] or referendum. Unless
565 absentee ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places,
566 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the municipal clerk shall
567 also deliver to the registrars at this time the duplicate checklist provided
568 for in subsection (b) of this section, for the use of the absentee ballot
569 counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

570 (2) [The] In the case of a special election or referendum, the municipal
571 clerk may deliver [the] such ballots at a time that is later than [the time
572 provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection] seven o'clock a.m. on the
573 day of such special election or referendum, provided such time is

574 mutually agreed upon by the municipal clerk and registrars and is not
575 later than [eight] four o'clock p.m. on the day of [the election, primary]
576 such special election or referendum.

577 (f) Absentee ballots timely received by the municipal clerk after
578 eleven o'clock a.m. of such last day before an election, primary or
579 referendum shall be sorted into voting districts by the clerk and retained
580 by the clerk separately until delivered to the registrars of voters for
581 checking.

582 (g) Any or all of such ballots received after eleven o'clock a.m. of such
583 last day before an election, primary or referendum and before six o'clock
584 p.m. on the day of the election, primary or referendum shall, upon
585 request of the registrars, be delivered to the registrars by the municipal
586 clerk at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the election, primary or
587 referendum for checking, or at a later time mutually agreed upon by the
588 clerk and registrars, provided such time is not later than eight o'clock
589 p.m. on the day of the election, primary or referendum.

590 (h) Absentee ballots received after six o'clock p.m. on the day of the
591 election, primary or referendum and any ballots received prior to six
592 o'clock p.m. of such day which were not delivered earlier shall be
593 delivered to the registrars at the close of the polls for checking. Although
594 absentee ballots shall be checked by the registrars [of voters] at various
595 times throughout the election, primary or referendum day, absentee
596 ballots may be counted at one single time during such day.

597 (i) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the absentee
598 ballot counters, upon receipt of the ballots delivered by the municipal
599 clerk to the registrars at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the election,
600 primary or referendum and at the close of the polls pursuant to
601 subsections (g) and (h) of this section, shall check the names of the
602 applicants returning ballots on the duplicate checklist in the same
603 manner as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section.

604 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
605 the names of applicants whose ballots were delivered at six o'clock p.m.

606 on the day of the election, primary or referendum shall be called in to
607 the appropriate polling places where they shall be checked by the
608 checkers on the official checklists, and they shall also be checked by the
609 absentee ballot counters on the duplicate checklist required under
610 subsection (b) of this section.

611 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
612 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the names of applicants
613 whose ballots were delivered at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the
614 election, primary or referendum shall be checked by the absentee ballot
615 counters and checkers at such polling place on the official checklist used
616 at such polling place.

617 (3) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
618 the names of applicants whose ballots were delivered at the close of the
619 polls shall be checked by the absentee ballot counters on the official
620 checklists used at the polling places and such official checklists, bearing
621 the certifications required by section 9-307, shall be delivered by the
622 registrars or assistant registrars to the central counting moderator for
623 that purpose.

624 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
625 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the official checklist used at
626 such polling place shall remain in such polling place for checking by the
627 absentee ballot counters at such polling place.

628 (4) If the name of an applicant returning a ballot has been checked on
629 the official checklist as having voted in person, the absentee ballot
630 counters shall, in checking the ballots, endorse on the face of the [outer]
631 return envelope the word "rejected" followed by a statement of the
632 reason for rejection, and [the outer] such return envelope shall not be
633 opened [or the ballot] nor shall such ballot be counted.

634 (5) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
635 when central counting is completed and the result is announced, the
636 central counting moderator shall deliver the duplicate checklist, the
637 official checklists and the returns required by section 9-150b, as

638 amended by this act, to the head moderator.

639 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
640 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, and such counting is
641 completed and the result for such polling place is announced, the
642 moderator for such polling place shall deliver the official checklist used
643 at such polling place and the return required by section 9-150b, as
644 amended by this act, to the head moderator.

645 (j) Each time absentee ballots are delivered by the clerk to the
646 registrars pursuant to this section, the clerk and registrars shall execute
647 an affidavit of delivery and receipt stating the number of ballots
648 delivered. The clerk shall preserve the affidavit for the period prescribed
649 in section 9-150b, as amended by this act.

650 (k) The absentee ballot counters shall count, in the manner provided
651 in section 9-150a, as amended by this act, each group of absentee ballots
652 upon receipt from the registrars.

653 (l) The municipal clerk shall retain all [outer] return envelopes
654 containing absentee ballots received by [him] such clerk after the close
655 of the polls, unopened, for the period prescribed in section 9-150b, as
656 amended by this act.

657 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The office of the Secretary of the
658 State shall develop and install integrated ballot-tracking software with
659 the state-wide centralized voter registration system described in section
660 9-50b of the general statutes, for use by electors who vote by absentee
661 ballot. Such software shall, at a minimum, permit the elector to track (1)
662 when the municipal clerk has received and accepted the elector's
663 absentee ballot application, (2) when the municipal clerk's office has
664 mailed the absentee ballot set to the elector, (3) when the absentee ballot
665 set has been delivered to the elector, (4) when the absentee ballot being
666 returned by the elector has been delivered to the municipal clerk, and
667 (5) whether the elector's returned absentee ballot has been accepted,
668 requires curing pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section
669 9-140c of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or has been

670 rejected.

671 Sec. 9. Section 9-140e of the general statutes is repealed and the
672 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

673 (a) Any elector who [is permanently physically disabled or suffering
674 from a long-term illness and who files an application for an absentee
675 ballot with a certification from a primary care provider, indicating that
676 such elector is permanently physically disabled or suffering from a long-
677 term illness and unable to appear in person at such elector's designated
678 polling location, shall be eligible for] files an application for an absentee
679 ballot may simultaneously request permanent absentee ballot status, in
680 a space provided on such application for such purpose. Each elector
681 granted permanent absentee ballot status [and shall receive] shall be
682 issued an absentee ballot for each election, primary or referendum
683 conducted in such elector's municipality for which such elector is
684 eligible to vote, which absentee ballot may be issued by electronic means
685 if such elector requests such manner of issuance. Such elector's
686 permanent absentee ballot status shall remain in effect until such elector:
687 (1) Is removed from the official registry list of the municipality, (2) is
688 removed from permanent absentee ballot status [pursuant to] in
689 accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, or (3)
690 requests [that he or she] in writing to the registrar of voters that such
691 elector no longer receive such permanent absentee ballot status.

692 (b) [The registrars of voters shall send written notice to each such
693 elector with permanent absentee ballot status in January of each year,
694 on a form prescribed by the Secretary of the State, for the purpose of
695 determining if such elector continues to reside at the address indicated
696 on the elector's permanent absentee ballot application. If such written
697 notice is returned as undeliverable, the elector in question shall be
698 removed from permanent absentee ballot status. If such elector indicates
699 on such notice that the elector no longer resides at such address and the
700 elector's new address is within the same municipality, the registrars of
701 voters shall change the elector's address pursuant to section 9-35 and
702 such elector shall retain permanent absentee ballot status. If the elector

703 indicates on such notice that the elector no longer resides in the
704 municipality, the registrars of voters shall remove such individual from
705 the registry list of the municipality and send such individual an
706 application for voter registration. Failure to return such written notice
707 shall not result in the removal of an elector from the official registry list
708 of the municipality or from permanent absentee ballot status.] An
709 elector granted permanent absentee ballot status shall be removed from
710 such status whenever (1) such elector's absentee ballot is returned as
711 undeliverable, (2) such elector submits a change of address form for a
712 move outside the state with the National Change of Address System of
713 the United States Postal Service, (3) a registrar of voters of the
714 municipality in which such elector previously resided receives
715 information or data, used to maintain the state-wide centralized voter
716 registration system under section 9-50c, that such elector has moved
717 outside the state, (4) the Secretary of the State or a registrar of voters of
718 the municipality in which such elector previously resided receives
719 information under section 9-21 that such elector has registered to vote
720 outside the state, or (5) such elector's name is placed on the inactive
721 registry list compiled under section 9-35.

722 (c) The Secretary of the State shall develop and conduct a state-wide
723 public awareness mailing, beginning as soon as practicable after the
724 effective date of this section, to educate the public regarding changes to
725 the absentee voting process and the availability of permanent absentee
726 ballot status. The Secretary shall make available to each municipal clerk
727 the materials comprising such mailing and, on and after the day such
728 materials are so made available, each municipal clerk shall include such
729 materials with each absentee ballot application provided by such
730 municipal clerk in 2026.

731 Sec. 10. Section 9-150a of the general statutes, as amended by section
732 90 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
733 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

734 (a) [The] Immediately after the opening of the polls on the day of an
735 election, primary or referendum, the absentee ballot counters shall

736 proceed to the central counting location or to the respective polling
737 places when counting is to take place pursuant to subsection (b) of
738 section 9-147a, [at the times designated by the registrars of voters.]

739 (b) At the time each group of ballots is delivered to them pursuant to
740 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, the counters shall perform any
741 checking of such ballots required by subsection (i) of said section and
742 shall then proceed as hereinafter provided.

743 (c) Except with respect to ballots marked "Rejected" pursuant to
744 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, or other applicable law, the
745 counters shall remove the [inner envelopes] absentee ballots from the
746 [outer] return envelopes, shall note the total number of absentee ballots
747 received and shall report such total to the moderator. They shall
748 similarly note and separately so report the total numbers of presidential
749 ballots and overseas ballots received pursuant to sections 9-158a to 9-
750 158m, inclusive.

751 (d) (1) (A) If the statement on the [inner] return envelope has not been
752 signed as required by section 9-140a, as amended by this act, such
753 [inner] return envelope shall not be opened [or] nor shall the ballot be
754 removed therefrom, [, and such inner envelope shall be replaced in the
755 opened outer envelope which shall be marked "Rejected" and the reason
756 therefor endorsed thereon by the counters.] The return envelope shall
757 be marked "Rejected" and the reason for such rejection shall be endorsed
758 on such return envelope by the counters.

759 (B) The moderator shall maintain a log of each absentee ballot
760 applicant whose ballot was marked "Rejected" under subparagraph (A)
761 of this subdivision and include thereon for each such applicant the
762 reason for the rejection. The moderator shall transmit such log to the
763 Secretary of the State at the same time and in the same manner as the
764 duplicate list to be transmitted to the Secretary by electronic means in
765 accordance with section 9-314.

766 (2) (A) If such statement is signed but the individual completing the
767 ballot is an individual described in subsection (a) of section 9-23r and

768 has not met the requirements of subsection (e) of section 9-23r, as
769 amended by this act, the counters shall replace the ballot in the opened
770 [inner envelope, replace the inner envelope in the opened outer] return
771 envelope and shall mark "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot" and endorse
772 the reason for such rejection on [the outer] such return envelope, and
773 the ballot shall be treated as a provisional ballot for federal offices only,
774 pursuant to sections 9-232i to 9-232o, inclusive.

775 (B) The moderator shall maintain a log of each absentee ballot
776 applicant whose ballot was marked "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot"
777 under subparagraph (A) of this subdivision and include thereon for
778 each such applicant the reason for the rejection. The moderator shall
779 transmit such log to the Secretary of the State at the same time and in
780 the same manner as the duplicate list to be transmitted to the Secretary
781 by electronic means in accordance with section 9-314.

782 [(e) The counters shall then remove the absentee ballots from the
783 remaining inner envelopes.]

784 [(f)] (e) Before the ballots are counted, all opened [outer and inner]
785 envelopes from which such ballots have been removed, and all [outer]
786 envelopes marked "Rejected" as required by law, shall be placed and
787 sealed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
788 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
789 municipal clerk. The counters shall seal such depository envelopes by
790 wrapping them lengthwise and sideways with nonreusable tape,
791 endorse on each such envelope their names, the voting district and the
792 time of the count, and deliver such envelopes to the moderator.

793 [(g)] (f) The counters shall then count such ballots as provided in this
794 section. The moderator shall supervise the counting.

795 [(h)] (g) The Secretary of the State shall provide a procedure manual
796 for counting absentee ballots. The manual shall include a description of
797 the steps to be followed in receiving, handling, counting and preserving
798 absentee ballots. Facsimile ballots shall be printed in the manual,
799 illustrating potential variations in ballot markings along with the correct

800 interpretation to be given in each situation illustrated.

801 [(i)] (h) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section the provisions
802 of section 9-265 shall apply to write-in votes on absentee ballots at
803 elections.

804 (2) Votes cast by absentee ballot at a primary may be counted only for
805 candidates whose names appear on the ballot on primary day, and no
806 write-in vote shall be counted except as provided in subdivision (3) of
807 this subsection.

808 (3) If a write-in vote on an absentee ballot is cast for a candidate for
809 any office whose name appears on the ballot for that office on election
810 or primary day, such candidate's name shall be deemed to have been
811 checked on such ballot and, except as otherwise provided in subsection
812 [(j)] (i) of this section, one vote shall be counted and recorded for such
813 candidate for such office.

814 (4) Except as otherwise provided in section 9-265, if the name of a
815 registered write-in candidate for an office is written in for such office on
816 an absentee ballot it shall be deemed validly written in for purposes of
817 subsection [(j)] (i) of this section.

818 [(j)] (i) In the counting of absentee ballots the intent of the voter shall
819 govern, provided the following conclusive presumptions, where
820 applicable, shall prevail in determining such intent:

821 (1) If the names of more candidates for an office than the voter is
822 entitled to vote for are checked or validly written in, then the vote cast
823 for that office shall be deemed an invalid overvote.

824 (2) If the name of a candidate who has vacated [his] such candidate's
825 candidacy is checked, such vote shall not be counted.

826 (3) On an absentee ballot on which candidates' names are printed, a
827 vote shall be deemed cast only for each candidate whose name is
828 individually checked or validly written in, except as otherwise provided
829 in this subsection. If a party designation is circled, checked, underscored

830 or similarly marked in any manner, or written in, no vote shall be
831 deemed cast or cancelled for any candidate by virtue of such marking
832 or writing.

833 ~~[(k)]~~ (j) If the intent of an absentee voter is difficult to ascertain due to
834 uncertain, conflicting or incorrect ballot markings which are not clearly
835 addressed in this section or in the procedure manual for counting
836 absentee ballots provided by the Secretary of the State, the absentee
837 ballot counters shall submit the ballot and their question to the
838 moderator. They shall then count the ballot in accordance with the
839 moderator's decision as to the voter's intent, if such intent is
840 ascertainable. A ballot or part of a ballot on which the intent is
841 determined by the moderator to be not ascertainable, shall not be
842 counted. The moderator shall endorse on the ballot the question and
843 ~~[his]~~ such moderator's decision.

844 ~~[(l)]~~ (k) No absentee ballot shall be rejected as a marked ballot unless,
845 in the opinion of the moderator, it was marked for the purpose of
846 providing a means of identifying the voter who cast it.

847 ~~[(m)]~~ (l) After the absentee ballots have been so counted they shall be
848 placed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
849 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
850 municipal clerk. Any notes, worksheets, or other written materials used
851 by the counters in counting such ballots shall be endorsed by them with
852 their names, the date and the time of the count and shall also be placed
853 in such depository envelopes together with the ballots, and with the
854 separate record of the number of votes cast on such ballots for each
855 candidate as required by section 9-150b, as amended by this act. Such
856 depository envelopes shall then be sealed, endorsed and delivered to
857 the moderator by the counters in the same manner as provided in
858 subsection ~~[(f)]~~ (e) of this section.

859 Sec. 11. Subsections (e) to (i), inclusive, of section 9-150b of the general
860 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
861 (*Effective from passage*):

862 (e) The sealed depository envelopes required by subsections [(f) and
863 (m)] (e) and (l) of section 9-150a, as amended by this act, shall be
864 returned by the moderator to the municipal clerk as soon as practicable
865 on or before the day following the election, primary or referendum.

866 (f) The municipal clerk shall preserve for sixty days after the election,
867 primary or referendum the depository envelopes containing opened
868 envelopes and rejected ballots required by subsection [(f)] (e) of section
869 9-150a, as amended by this act, and shall so preserve for one hundred
870 eighty days the depository envelopes containing counted ballots and
871 related materials required by subsection [(m)] (l) of section 9-150a, as
872 amended by this act.

873 (g) No such depository envelope shall be opened except by order of
874 a court of competent jurisdiction, by the State Elections Enforcement
875 Commission pursuant to a subpoena issued under subdivision (1) of
876 subsection (a) of section 9-7b, as amended by this act, or within five
877 business days after an election, primary or referendum for the purpose
878 of a recanvass conducted pursuant to law. After such a recanvass the
879 depository envelopes and their contents shall be returned to the
880 municipal clerk and preserved for the stated period.

881 (h) For sixty days after the election, primary or referendum the
882 following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a public record
883 open to public inspection: (1) All executed absentee ballot application
884 forms and direction by registrar forms, as required by subsection (i) of
885 section 9-140, as amended by this act; (2) the list and index of applicants
886 for presidential or overseas ballots as required by section 9-158h, as
887 amended by this act; (3) the [numerical] list of unique ballot
888 identification numbers corresponding to absentee voting sets issued as
889 required by subsection (e) of section 9-140, as amended by this act; (4)
890 the list of the names of persons whose absentee ballots are received by
891 the municipal clerk, as required by subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
892 section 9-140c, as amended by this act; (5) all unused absentee ballots;
893 and (6) all envelopes containing ballots received by the municipal clerk
894 after the close of the polls, which shall remain unopened.

895 (i) For one hundred eighty days after the election, primary or
896 referendum the following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a
897 public record open to public inspection: (1) The affidavit regarding the
898 municipal clerk's endorsement of [inner] return envelopes, as required
899 by subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-140c, as amended by this
900 act; and (2) the affidavit regarding delivery and receipt of ballots, as
901 required by subsection (j) of [said] section 9-140c, as amended by this
902 act.

903 Sec. 12. Section 9-153b of the general statutes is repealed and the
904 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

905 (a) If any absentee ballot applicant applies for an additional absentee
906 ballot, such applicant shall note on the application the reason for
907 applying for an additional absentee ballot and shall return the absentee
908 voting set formerly issued to such applicant before another set is issued,
909 provided, if such applicant is unable to return such formerly issued set,
910 such application for an additional ballot shall be accompanied by a
911 statement signed under the penalties of false statement in absentee
912 balloting in which such applicant shall note the reason for such
913 applicant's inability to return such formerly issued set. If such applicant
914 fails to file such a statement, no additional set shall be issued to such
915 applicant. An application for an additional absentee ballot shall only be
916 made by an absentee ballot applicant. Any additional absentee voting
917 set issued under this subsection shall only be either provided in person
918 to the applicant or mailed directly to the applicant at the bona fide
919 mailing address designated by such applicant.

920 (b) For all absentee voting sets or portions thereof returned under
921 subsection (a) of this section, the municipal clerk shall mark the [serially-
922 numbered outer] return envelope "rejected" and note the reasons for
923 rejection on all absentee ballots and envelopes so returned and shall seal
924 all such absentee voting sets or portions thereof in a package and retain
925 them in a safe place until delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as
926 amended by this act. The municipal clerk shall keep a list of the names
927 of each absentee ballot applicant who has applied for more than one

928 absentee ballot, as provided in section 9-140, as amended by this act,
929 together with the [serial] unique ballot identification number appearing
930 on the [outer] return envelope of each absentee voting set issued to each
931 such applicant.

932 (c) If more than one absentee ballot is received from any elector, the
933 ballot of such elector last received by the municipal clerk shall be
934 counted if no absentee ballot of such elector has already been counted.
935 For all absentee ballots of such elector that are not counted, the
936 municipal clerk shall mark the [serially-numbered outer] return
937 envelopes "rejected" and note the reasons for rejection and shall deliver
938 such ballots in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act.

939 Sec. 13. Section 9-153c of the general statutes is repealed and the
940 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

941 (a) If a municipal clerk has omitted the name of a candidate, party or
942 office designation, inserted an incorrect or misspelled name of a
943 candidate, party or office designation, provided an absentee ballot
944 applicant with a ballot which is not the correct ballot for [his] such
945 applicant's voting district, or incorrectly imprinted or failed to imprint
946 the designation of a state or local question on an absentee ballot in the
947 appropriate space, and if any such omission or error is likely to mislead
948 any voter, [he] the clerk shall, as soon as [he] such clerk becomes aware
949 of such omission or error, promptly mail to each applicant to whom
950 such an absentee ballot has been issued, a correct absentee ballot, the
951 necessary envelopes for its return and instructions, a statement
952 explaining the error or omission including the correct name or question
953 and a copy of this section. The municipal clerk shall inform the Secretary
954 of the State when [he] such clerk proceeds under this subsection.

955 (b) Any additional absentee voting sets issued to applicants under
956 this section shall be issued [in consecutive ascending numerical order
957 based upon the serial number appearing on the outer] bearing a unique
958 ballot identification number on the envelope for return of ballots to the
959 municipal clerk, and the clerk shall keep a record of such unique ballot
960 identification numbers by making a notation on, or attaching a

961 memorandum to, the applicant's original application for an absentee
962 ballot.

963 (c) The municipal clerk shall keep a list containing the name, address
964 and voting district of each absentee ballot applicant who has been issued
965 more than one absentee ballot under this section and the [serial] unique
966 ballot identification number appearing on the [outer] return envelope of
967 each absentee voting set so issued. The list shall be kept with the list
968 required under section 9-140, as amended by this act.

969 (d) If more than one ballot is received from an applicant who has been
970 sent a correct ballot under subsection (a) of this section, the ballot last
971 received by the municipal clerk shall be counted if no ballot of such
972 applicant has already been counted. For all ballots of such applicant that
973 are not counted, the municipal clerk shall inscribe the word "rejected"
974 and note the reasons for rejection on the [outer] return envelope and
975 shall seal them, unopened, in a package and retain them in a safe place
976 until delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this
977 act.

978 Sec. 14. Section 9-153e of the general statutes is repealed and the
979 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

980 A member of the armed forces who is an elector or an applicant for
981 admission as an elector, or the member's spouse or dependent if living
982 where such member is stationed, may apply before a regular election for
983 a blank absentee ballot to vote for all offices being contested at the
984 election. The municipal clerk shall make such ballots available for this
985 purpose beginning not earlier than ninety days before the election.
986 Application shall be made upon a form prescribed by the Secretary of
987 the State or on the federal postcard application form provided pursuant
988 to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 100 Stat.
989 924, 42 USC 1973ff et seq., as amended from time to time, or any other
990 applicable law and shall be issued only if the applicant states that due
991 to military contingencies the regular application procedure, as set forth
992 in section 9-140, as amended by this act, cannot be followed. Upon
993 receipt of the application, the municipal clerk shall issue [the ballot] in

994 the manner requested by the elector, either by mail or by electronic
995 means, [as requested by the elector,] the ballot which shall be prescribed
996 and provided by the Secretary of the State [,] and a list of the offices to
997 be voted upon indicating the number of individuals for which each
998 elector may vote. As soon as a complete list of nominated candidates,
999 including the party designations of such candidates, and questions is
1000 available, the municipal clerk shall send such list to each applicant. If
1001 the list of candidates and questions is not available when the ballot is
1002 issued, the municipal clerk shall include a statement indicating that such
1003 list shall be [mailed] sent as soon as it becomes available. The ballot shall
1004 permit the elector to vote by writing in the names of specific candidates
1005 and offices for which [he] such elector is voting. The elector may also
1006 vote on the questions in a manner prescribed by the Secretary of the
1007 State. If such ballot is issued by electronic means, the municipal clerk at
1008 the time of such issuance shall include a certification, prescribed by the
1009 Secretary of the State, [that] which the elector shall be required to
1010 complete, sign and return with the completed ballot in order for such
1011 ballot to be counted. If the military contingency no longer exists,
1012 application for an additional ballot for all offices may be made pursuant
1013 to the provisions of section 9-153b, as amended by this act.

1014 Sec. 15. Section 9-153f of the general statutes is repealed and the
1015 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1016 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 9-140, as amended by this
1017 act, any elector who is living, or expects to be living or traveling before
1018 and on [election] the day of an election or primary, outside the territorial
1019 limits of the several states of the United States and the District of
1020 Columbia and any member of the armed forces who is an elector or an
1021 applicant for admission as an elector, or the member's spouse or
1022 dependent if living where such member is stationed, may apply for a
1023 blank absentee ballot to vote for all offices being contested at [an] such
1024 election or primary. Application shall be made upon a form prescribed
1025 by the Secretary of the State or on the federal postcard application form
1026 provided pursuant to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee
1027 Voting Act, 100 Stat. 924, 42 USC 1973ff et seq., as amended from time

1028 to time, or any other applicable law. The municipal clerk receiving such
1029 an application shall, as soon as a complete list of candidates and
1030 questions to be voted upon at such election or primary becomes
1031 available, issue [the ballot] in the manner requested by the elector, either
1032 by mail or by electronic means, [as requested by the elector,] the ballot
1033 which shall be the blank ballot prescribed and provided by the Secretary
1034 of the State under section 9-153e, as amended by this act. The municipal
1035 clerk shall include with the ballot a complete list of the offices to be
1036 voted upon, the number of individuals for which each elector may vote,
1037 the candidates, and, in the case of an election, the party designation of
1038 each candidate and questions to be voted upon. If such ballot is issued
1039 by electronic means, the municipal clerk at the time of such issuance
1040 shall include a certification, prescribed by the Secretary of the State,
1041 [that] which the elector shall be required to complete, sign and return
1042 with the completed ballot in order for such ballot to be counted. [If
1043 application for an absentee ballot is made at the time of availability of
1044 regular absentee ballots as provided in section 9-140, the provisions of
1045 section 9-140 shall prevail.] Except as otherwise provided in this section,
1046 the procedures governing the issuance of ballots under this section shall
1047 conform as nearly as may be to the procedures provided in section 9-
1048 140, as amended by this act.

1049 Sec. 16. Section 9-158e of the general statutes is repealed and the
1050 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1051 (a) (1) A person applying for a presidential ballot in person shall
1052 present: [(1)] (A) A current and valid photo identification, or [(2)] (B) a
1053 copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check,
1054 paycheck or other government document that shows the name and
1055 address of the voter. [The application]

1056 (2) A person applying for a presidential ballot by mail shall [be
1057 accompanied by] include with such application: (A) A copy of a current
1058 and valid photo identification, or (B) a copy of a current utility bill, bank
1059 statement, government check, paycheck or government document that
1060 shows the name and address of the voter.

1061 (3) Upon receipt of an application for a presidential ballot under
1062 sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive, the municipal clerk, if satisfied that
1063 the application is proper and that the applicant is qualified to vote under
1064 said sections, shall forthwith [give or mail to the applicant, as the case
1065 may be] issue in the manner requested by the applicant, either by mail
1066 or by electronic means, a ballot for presidential and vice-presidential
1067 electors for use at the election and instructions and envelopes for [its]
1068 the return of such ballot.

1069 (b) Upon receipt of an application for an overseas ballot, the
1070 municipal clerk, if satisfied that the application is proper and that the
1071 applicant is qualified to vote at the federal election for which the
1072 application is made, pursuant to the provisions of sections 9-158b to 9-
1073 158m, inclusive, shall forthwith [mail] issue in the manner requested by
1074 the applicant, either by mail or by electronic means, a ballot containing
1075 the names and offices of the candidates for federal office and
1076 instructions and envelopes for [its return to the applicant] the return of
1077 such ballot.

1078 Sec. 17. Section 9-158f of the general statutes is repealed and the
1079 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1080 (a) The voter, after marking [his] such voter's presidential ballot so as
1081 to express [his] such voter's choice, shall fold it so as to conceal the
1082 markings, and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope furnished by the
1083 town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have imprinted upon
1084 its back a statement which shall be signed by the voter. The failure of
1085 the voter to date the statement shall not invalidate the ballot. Such
1086 statement shall be substantially as follows:

1087 Certification of Presidential Voter

1088 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false
1089 statement in absentee balloting that:

1090 (1) I am qualified to vote for Presidential and Vice-Presidential
1091 electors in the town of Connecticut, at the presidential election to be

1092 held on November ..., 20...

1093 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for
1094 Presidential and Vice-Presidential electors at said election from any
1095 other town, city, county or state, and

1096 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot
1097 in said presidential election.

1098 Dated at ..., this ... day of ... 20...

1099 (Signature of voter)

1100 (Printed name of voter)

1101 (b) The overseas elector, after marking [his] such elector's overseas
1102 ballot so as to express [his] such elector's choice, shall fold it so as to
1103 conceal the markings and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope
1104 furnished by the town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have
1105 imprinted upon its back a statement which shall be signed by the elector.
1106 The failure of the elector to date the statement shall not invalidate the
1107 ballot. The statement shall be substantially as follows:

1108 Certification of Overseas Elector

1109 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false
1110 statement in absentee balloting that:

1111 (1) I am qualified to vote for candidates for federal office in the town
1112 of ..., Connecticut, at the federal election to be held on ..., 20...

1113 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for
1114 candidates for federal office at said election from any other town, city or
1115 county in Connecticut or in any other state or election district of any
1116 state or territory or any territory or possession of the United States.

1117 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot
1118 in said federal election.

1119 Dated at ..., this ... day of ..., 20...

1120 (Signature of overseas elector)

1121 (Printed name of overseas elector)

1122 Sec. 18. Section 9-158g of the general statutes is repealed and the
1123 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1124 The voter shall sign the certification upon the [inner] return envelope,
1125 [securely seal it, enclose it in an outer serially-numbered envelope]
1126 insert the completed ballot in such return envelope, which shall bear a
1127 return label displaying the unique ballot identification number both in
1128 text format and as a scannable barcode, and return it to the municipal
1129 clerk of the town in which [he] such voter is qualified to vote. The clerk
1130 shall keep it in [his] the clerk's office until delivered by [him] such clerk
1131 to the registrars of voters at the same time and in the same manner as [is
1132 provided for absentee ballots] provided in section 9-140c, as amended
1133 by this act. If the ballot is returned by a person other than the voter or
1134 the United States Postal Service, the person delivering the ballot shall
1135 sign [his] such person's name and address and indicate the date and
1136 time of [its] such ballot's delivery on the [outer] return envelope in the
1137 clerk's presence. The ballot, to be cast, shall be returned so that [it] such
1138 ballot is received by the [town] clerk not later than the close of the polls
1139 on the day of the election.

1140 Sec. 19. Section 9-158h of the general statutes is repealed and the
1141 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1142 The clerk shall prepare and keep open to public inspection a list of all
1143 persons who have applied under sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive, to
1144 vote as presidential voters or overseas electors with their names, voting
1145 addresses and application dates together with the [serial number]
1146 unique ballot identification numbers of the return envelopes issued, and
1147 shall maintain an alphabetical index of the list for a period of one
1148 hundred eighty days after the election or primary.

1149 Sec. 20. Section 9-159p of the general statutes is repealed and the

1150 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1151 (a) Any elector may challenge the right of any person offering to vote
1152 by absentee ballot based upon false identity, disenfranchisement for
1153 conviction of a felony or lack of bona fide residence. The failure of an
1154 elector to challenge, pursuant to this section, the right of a person to vote
1155 by absentee ballot shall not bar such elector from bringing an action to
1156 contest the primary or election under section 9-323, as amended by this
1157 act, 9-324, as amended by this act, 9-328, as amended by this act, or 9-
1158 329a, as amended by this act, based on the alleged invalidity of the
1159 absentee ballot cast at such primary or election.

1160 (b) Challenges shall not be made indiscriminately and may only be
1161 made if the challenger knows or reasonably believes that the right of the
1162 person offering to vote by absentee ballot should be denied on one or
1163 more of the grounds specified in subsection (a) of this section.

1164 (c) Challenges made concerning ballots that the municipal clerk has
1165 not delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections
1166 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be made in writing to
1167 the municipal clerk. Challenges made concerning ballots that the
1168 municipal clerk has delivered to the registrars of voters for counting
1169 pursuant to sections 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be
1170 made in writing to the central counting moderator or the moderator of
1171 the polling place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to
1172 subsection (b) of section 9-147a. All challenges shall be made under oath.

1173 (d) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the municipal clerk shall
1174 send copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters and to the person
1175 offering to vote by absentee ballot. The municipal clerk shall send the
1176 copy of the challenge to the person offering to vote by first class certified
1177 mail to the mailing address shown on the application for the absentee
1178 ballot. The municipal clerk shall furnish copies of any written response
1179 to the challenge to each registrar of voters. The municipal clerk shall
1180 deliver the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall not be
1181 opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other evidence
1182 relevant to the challenge, to the registrars, who shall sign a receipt for

1183 the same.

1184 (e) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the moderator shall
1185 deliver copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters. The moderator
1186 shall also deliver, or designate another election, primary or referendum
1187 official to deliver, the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall
1188 not be opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other
1189 evidence relevant to the challenge to the registrars, who shall sign a
1190 receipt for the same.

1191 (f) The registrars of voters shall examine the challenge, any written
1192 response to the challenge and any other evidence or information they
1193 deem relevant to the challenge, including the [inner] return envelope,
1194 which shall not be opened, and shall determine whether the challenge
1195 should be upheld. If the registrars fail to agree that the challenge should
1196 be upheld, it shall be deemed to have been denied.

1197 (g) The registrars of voters shall make the determination not earlier
1198 than noon of the day of the election, primary or referendum at which
1199 the ballot is submitted and not later than the time when the counting of
1200 all other absentee ballots at the election, primary or referendum has
1201 been completed.

1202 (h) The registrars of voters shall notify, in writing, the municipal clerk
1203 and the central counting moderator, or the moderator of the polling
1204 place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to subsection (b) of
1205 section 9-147a, of their determination. If the challenge is denied, the
1206 absentee ballot shall be delivered by the registrars to the appropriate
1207 location for counting pursuant to law. If the challenge is upheld, the
1208 registrars shall mark the word "rejected" on the [serially-numbered
1209 outer] return envelope and note the reasons for rejection, and shall
1210 return it together with all other evidence received in connection with the
1211 challenge to the municipal clerk who shall retain the same until
1212 delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act,
1213 except that a challenge to a ballot which the municipal clerk has
1214 delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections 9-
1215 140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be returned to the

1216 moderator to whom the challenge was made.

1217 (i) Within five days after the election, primary or referendum the
1218 municipal clerk shall send to the person whose offer to vote was
1219 challenged a copy of the written determination of the registrars and a
1220 statement as to the disposition of the absentee ballot.

1221 Sec. 21. Subsection (g) of section 9-159q of the general statutes is
1222 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
1223 *passage*):

1224 (g) The registrars or their designees, as the case may be, shall jointly
1225 deliver the ballots to the respective applicants at the institution and shall
1226 jointly supervise the voting of such ballots. The ballots shall be returned
1227 to the registrars or their designees by the electors in the envelopes
1228 provided and in accordance with the provisions of sections 9-137, as
1229 amended by this act, [9-139] and 9-140a, as amended by this act. If any
1230 elector asks for assistance in voting his ballot, two registrars or their
1231 designees of different political parties or, for a primary, their designees
1232 of different candidates, shall render such assistance as they deem
1233 necessary and appropriate to enable such elector to vote his ballot. The
1234 registrars or their designees may reject a ballot when (1) the elector
1235 declines to vote a ballot, or (2) the registrars or their designees are unable
1236 to determine how the elector who has requested their assistance desires
1237 to vote the ballot. When the registrars or their designees reject a ballot,
1238 they shall mark the [serially-numbered outer] return envelope "rejected"
1239 and note the reasons for rejection. Nothing in this section shall limit the
1240 right of an elector to vote his ballot in secret.

1241 Sec. 22. Subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the 2026
1242 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1243 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1244 (1) To make investigations on its own initiative or with respect to
1245 statements filed with the commission by the Secretary of the State, any
1246 town clerk or any registrar of voters or upon written complaint under
1247 oath by any individual, with respect to alleged violations of any

1248 provision of the general statutes relating to any election or referendum,
1249 any primary held pursuant to section 9-423, 9-425 or 9-464 or any
1250 primary held pursuant to a special act, or alleged violations of any
1251 regulation adopted under any such provision, and to hold hearings
1252 when the commission deems necessary to investigate violations of any
1253 provisions of the general statutes relating to any such election, primary
1254 or referendum, or violations of any regulation adopted under any such
1255 provisions, and for the purpose of such hearings the commission may
1256 administer oaths, examine witnesses and receive oral and documentary
1257 evidence, and shall have the power to subpoena witnesses under
1258 procedural rules the commission shall adopt, to compel their attendance
1259 and to require the production for examination of any books and papers
1260 which the commission deems relevant to any matter under investigation
1261 or in question. Until the commission determines that it is necessary to
1262 investigate a violation, commission members and staff shall keep
1263 confidential any information concerning a complaint or preliminary
1264 investigation, except upon request of the treasurer, deputy treasurer,
1265 chairperson or candidate affiliated with a committee that is the subject
1266 of the complaint or preliminary investigation. In connection with its
1267 investigation of any alleged violation of any provision of chapter 145, or
1268 of any provision of section 9-359 or section 9-359a, as amended by this
1269 act, the commission shall also have the power to subpoena any
1270 municipal clerk and to require the production for examination of any
1271 absentee ballot, [inner and outer] return envelope from which any such
1272 ballot has been removed, depository envelope containing any such
1273 ballot or [inner or outer] return envelope as provided in sections 9-150a,
1274 as amended by this act, and 9-150b, as amended by this act, and any
1275 other record, form or document as provided in section 9-150b, as
1276 amended by this act, in connection with the election, primary or
1277 referendum to which the investigation relates. In case of a refusal to
1278 comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this subsection or to
1279 testify with respect to any matter upon which that person may be
1280 lawfully interrogated, the superior court for the judicial district of
1281 Hartford, on application of the commission, may issue an order
1282 requiring such person to comply with such subpoena and to testify;

1283 failure to obey any such order of the court may be punished by the court
1284 as a contempt thereof. In any matter under investigation which concerns
1285 the operation or inspection of or outcome recorded on any voting
1286 tabulator, the commission may issue an order to the registrars of voters
1287 to impound such tabulator until the investigation is completed;

1288 Sec. 23. Subsection (e) of section 9-23r of the general statutes is
1289 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
1290 *passage*):

1291 (e) If an individual described in subsection (a) of this section does not
1292 submit the identification described in subsection (a) of this section as
1293 part of the individual's application for admission as an elector, and if the
1294 individual votes by absentee ballot in an election for federal office, the
1295 individual shall enclose in the [outer absentee ballot envelope, and not
1296 in the inner envelope with the ballot] additional envelope provided by
1297 the municipal clerk pursuant to section 9-140a, as amended by this act,
1298 for the return of such applicant's identification: (1) A copy of a current
1299 and valid photo identification, or (2) a copy of a current utility bill, bank
1300 statement, government check, paycheck, or other government
1301 document that shows the name and address of the voter. If an individual
1302 does not meet the requirements of this subsection in an election for
1303 federal office, such individual's absentee ballot shall be processed in
1304 accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2)
1305 of subsection (d) of section 9-150a, as amended by this act, and treated
1306 as a provisional ballot for federal office only, pursuant to sections 9-232i
1307 to 9-232o, inclusive.

1308 Sec. 24. Section 9-359a of the general statutes is repealed and the
1309 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1310 (a) A person is guilty of false statement in absentee balloting when
1311 [he] such person intentionally makes a false written statement in or on,
1312 or signs the name of another person to, the application for an absentee
1313 ballot or the [inner] return envelope accompanying any such ballot,
1314 which [he] such person does not believe to be true and which statement
1315 or signature is intended to mislead a public servant in the performance

1316 of [his] such public servant's official function.

1317 (b) False statement in absentee balloting is a class D felony.

1318 Sec. 25. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
1319 section 9-369b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1320 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1321 (B) Each such explanatory text shall be prepared by the municipal
1322 clerk and shall specify the intent and purpose of each such proposal or
1323 question. Such explanatory text shall not advocate either the approval
1324 or disapproval of the proposal or question. The municipal clerk shall
1325 cause such question or proposal and such explanatory text to be printed
1326 in sufficient supply for public dissemination and shall also provide for
1327 the printing of such explanations of proposals or questions on posters
1328 of a size to be determined by said clerk. At least three such posters shall
1329 be posted at each polling place at which electors will be voting on such
1330 proposals or questions. Any posters printed in excess of the number
1331 required by this section to be posted may be displayed by said clerk at
1332 the clerk's discretion at locations which are frequented by the public.
1333 The explanatory text shall also be furnished to each absentee ballot
1334 applicant pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of section 9-140,
1335 as amended by this act. Each such explanatory text shall be subject to
1336 the approval of the municipal attorney.

1337 Sec. 26. Section 9-369a of the general statutes is repealed and the
1338 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1339 Whenever by law it is provided that a question may be submitted to
1340 a vote of the electors of a municipality at an election, as that term is
1341 defined in section 9-1:

1342 (a) The electors of the municipality [entitled to vote] voting by
1343 absentee ballot at the election under the provisions of section 9-135, as
1344 amended by this act, [shall be entitled to] may vote upon any such
1345 question.

1346 (b) When the clerk of the municipality determines that the necessary

1347 action has been taken for submission of the question, [he] the clerk shall,
1348 at least forty-five days prior to the election, file in the office of the
1349 Secretary of the State a statement setting forth the designation of the
1350 question as it is to appear on the ballot at the election, the date upon
1351 which the submitting action was taken and the reference to the law
1352 under which the action was taken. Such designation shall be in the form
1353 of a question, as provided in section 9-369. Whenever it is specifically
1354 provided in the general statutes that any such question may be
1355 approved for such submission within the period of forty-five days prior
1356 to such an election, and action is taken to submit a question within such
1357 period, the clerk of the municipality shall file the statement required by
1358 this subsection with the Secretary of the State immediately upon the
1359 taking of such action.

1360 (c) When action is taken for submission of a question, from the time
1361 of such action through the day of the election, the clerk of the
1362 municipality shall make the full text of the question and the designation
1363 which is to appear upon the ballot available for public inspection. If the
1364 designation is not prescribed by law, the clerk shall phrase the
1365 designation of the question in a form suitable for printing on the ballot.
1366 The warning of the election shall include a statement that the question
1367 is to be voted upon, the designation of the question to appear on the
1368 ballot, and a statement that the full text of the question is available for
1369 public inspection in the clerk's office.

1370 (d) The moderator or head moderator of the election shall file the
1371 results of the vote on each such question and the returns of the election
1372 with the Secretary of the State in the manner prescribed under the
1373 provisions of section 9-314 or other applicable law.

1374 Sec. 27. Subsection (b) of section 9-369c of the general statutes is
1375 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1376 *2026*):

1377 (b) At any such referendum, any person who [would be] is eligible to
1378 vote on the question or proposal [if he appeared in person and is unable
1379 to] and who will not appear in person [for one or more of the reasons

1380 set forth in section 9-135,] may cast [his] such person's vote by absentee
1381 ballot, in accordance with the requirements of this section.

1382 Sec. 28. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of
1383 section 9-163aa of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes, as
1384 amended by section 69 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following
1385 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1386 (B) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent an individual
1387 who enrolls in a political party during a period of early voting at a
1388 primary from voting by absentee ballot [, if eligible,] or in person on the
1389 day of such primary.

1390 Sec. 29. Subparagraph (A) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
1391 section 9-164 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1392 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

1393 (a) (1) (A) On and after January 1, [2022] 2027, and notwithstanding
1394 any contrary provision of law, there shall be held in each municipality
1395 [.] biennially, or quadrennially if the charter of such municipality so
1396 provides, a municipal election on the Tuesday after the first Monday of
1397 November of the odd-numbered years, except that such municipal
1398 election may be held on the first Monday of May of the odd-numbered
1399 years if the legislative body of such municipality so determines by a
1400 three-fourths vote.

1401 Sec. 30. Subsection (b) of section 9-19b of the general statutes is
1402 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
1403 *passage*):

1404 (b) Except during the period between the last session for the
1405 admission of electors prior to an election and the day following that
1406 election, either registrar of voters, or a deputy registrar or assistant
1407 registrar appointed in accordance with the provisions of section 9-192
1408 may examine the qualifications of any person applying to be admitted
1409 as an elector in the town and, except for applications submitted
1410 pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection, approve such application

1411 submitted in person (1) at the office of such official; (2) at any enrollment
1412 session of the registrars of voters; (3) at any public place; (4) at any time
1413 and at any place in the town, other than a public place, that is mutually
1414 agreed upon by such official and the person applying to be admitted as
1415 an elector in the town; or (5) at any public office of the Department of
1416 Motor Vehicles, Labor Department or Department of Social Services
1417 which is located in the town in which the registrar, deputy registrar or
1418 assistant registrar serves, if written notice of the date and time is given
1419 seven days in advance thereof to the commissioner of such department.
1420 Upon receipt of a written notice under subdivision (5) of this subsection,
1421 the commissioner of the department may designate a portion of the
1422 public office which shall be used for the admission of electors. The other
1423 registrar, or any deputy or assistant registrar, shall be permitted to be
1424 present during the admission of any person pursuant to subdivisions (4)
1425 and (5) of this subsection. Applications accepted and examined prior to
1426 the last session for admission of electors prior to an election pursuant to
1427 subdivision (4) of this subsection may be approved after such last
1428 session. The admission of any person pursuant to subdivision (4) shall
1429 be effective on the date when both registrars approve such application.
1430 The registrar who receives such application from the applicant shall
1431 give written notice to the other registrar within one business day after
1432 such receipt and the registrars shall forthwith act on such applications.
1433 No rejection of any application under subdivision (4) of this subsection
1434 shall be effective until the registrar has mailed to the other registrar and
1435 the applicant a notice stating any reason for the rejection. Any applicant
1436 whose application is rejected may appeal under the provisions of section
1437 9-31.

1438 Sec. 31. Section 9-258 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1439 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

1440 (a) (1) For municipalities with more than one voting district, the
1441 election officials of each polling place shall be electors of the state and
1442 shall consist of [(1)] (A) one moderator, [(2)] (B) at least one but not more
1443 than two official checkers, [(3)] (C) two assistant registrars of voters of
1444 opposite political parties, each of whom shall be residents of the town,

1445 [(4)] (D) at least one but not more than two ballot clerks, and [(5)] (E) at
1446 least one but not more than two voting tabulator tenders for each voting
1447 tabulator in use at the polling place. Head moderators, central counting
1448 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law
1449 shall also be deemed election officials.

1450 (2) A known candidate for any office shall not serve as an election
1451 official on election day or serve at the polls in any capacity, except that
1452 (A) a municipal clerk or a registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the
1453 same office, may perform his or her official duties, [and] (B) a deputy
1454 registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the office of registrar of voters,
1455 may perform his or her official duties, and (C) an assistant municipal
1456 clerk, who is a candidate for the office of municipal clerk, may perform
1457 his or her official duties.

1458 (3) If, in the opinion of the registrar of voters, the public convenience
1459 of the electors in any voting district so requires, provision shall be made
1460 for an additional line or lines of electors at the polling place and, if more
1461 than one line of electors is established, at least one but not more than
1462 two additional official checkers and at least one but not more than two
1463 ballot clerks for each line of electors shall be appointed and, if more than
1464 one tabulator is used in a polling place, at least one but not more than
1465 two additional voting tabulator tenders shall be appointed for each
1466 additional machine so used. [Head moderators, central counting
1467 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law
1468 shall also be deemed election officials.]

1469 (b) (1) For municipalities with one voting district, the election officials
1470 of such polling place shall be electors of the state and shall consist of
1471 [(1)] (A) one moderator, [(2)] (B) at least one but not more than two
1472 official checkers, [(3)] (C) at least one but not more than two voting
1473 tabulator tenders for each voting tabulator in use at the polling place,
1474 and [(4)] (D) at least one but not more than two ballot clerks.
1475 Additionally, such election officials may consist of two registrars of
1476 voters of opposite political parties, or two assistant registrars of voters
1477 of opposite political parties, as the case may be, subject to the

1478 requirements of sections 9-259 and 9-439, provided if the registrars of
1479 voters are present in the polling place, they shall appoint at least one
1480 designee to be present in their office. Head moderators, central counting
1481 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law
1482 shall also be deemed election officials.

1483 (2) A known candidate for any office shall not serve as an election
1484 official on election day or serve at the polls in any capacity, except that
1485 (A) a municipal clerk or a registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the
1486 same office, may perform his or her official duties, [and] (B) a deputy
1487 registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the office of registrar of voters,
1488 may perform his or her official duties, and (C) an assistant municipal
1489 clerk, who is a candidate for the office of municipal clerk, may perform
1490 his or her official duties.

1491 (3) If, in the opinion of the registrar of voters, the public convenience
1492 of the electors in any voting district so requires, provision shall be made
1493 for an additional line or lines of electors at the polling place and, if more
1494 than one line of electors is established, at least one but not more than
1495 two additional official checkers for each line of electors shall be
1496 appointed and, if more than one tabulator is used in a polling place, at
1497 least one but not more than two additional voting tabulator tenders shall
1498 be appointed for each additional tabulator so used. [Head moderators,
1499 central counting moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed
1500 pursuant to law shall be deemed to be election officials.]

1501 (c) No election official shall perform services for any party or
1502 candidate on election day nor appear at any political party headquarters
1503 prior to eight o'clock p.m. on election day.

1504 Sec. 32. Section 9-190b of the general statutes is repealed and the
1505 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

1506 If [a registrar of voters fails] one or more registrars of voters of a
1507 municipality fail to attain or maintain, whichever is applicable,
1508 certification required under subsection (a) of section 9-192a or [is the
1509 subject] are the subjects of an investigation of any matter related to the

1510 duties of such [registrar's] registrars' office resulting from a statement
1511 filed with the State Elections Enforcement Commission by the Secretary
1512 of the State, the Secretary may issue a written instruction, pursuant to
1513 section 9-3, as amended by this act, to such registrar or registrars to
1514 appear before the Secretary on the date and at such time as provided in
1515 such instruction. The Secretary shall cite the reasons for such instruction
1516 and inform such registrar or registrars that such appearance is for the
1517 purpose of determining whether to temporarily relieve such registrar or
1518 registrars of [his or her] their duties as provided in this section. The
1519 registrar or registrars shall appear before the Secretary and be given a
1520 fair opportunity to show cause, if any, why such registrar or registrars
1521 should not be temporarily relieved of [his or her] their duties. If, after
1522 such opportunity, the Secretary determines that the public interest in the
1523 orderly conduct of elections would be so served, the Secretary may
1524 temporarily relieve such registrar or registrars of [his or her] their duties
1525 and require one or more of the deputy [registrar] registrars of voters
1526 appointed by such registrar or registrars to administer the operations of
1527 such office until such certification has been attained or maintained or
1528 until the State Elections Enforcement Commission has completed such
1529 investigation and taken final action on such matter. The proceeding
1530 described in this section shall not be considered a contested case under
1531 chapter 54. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a municipality from
1532 paying the salary of any such registrar of voters while such resolution is
1533 pending.

1534 Sec. 33. Subsection (a) of section 9-364a of the general statutes is
1535 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*
1536 *2026*):

1537 (a) As used in this section, "election worker" means any municipal
1538 clerk, assistant municipal clerk, registrar of voters, deputy registrar of
1539 voters, election official described in section 9-258, as amended by this
1540 act, primary official described in section 9-436 or recanvass official
1541 described in section 9-311, as amended by this act, and "personal
1542 identifying information" has the same meaning as provided in section
1543 53a-129a.

1544 Sec. 34. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) If any municipal official,
1545 including any election worker, as defined in section 9-364a of the
1546 general statutes, as amended by this act, receives from any private or
1547 governmental entity, individual or official a subpoena, warrant or other
1548 request for or to inspect any record or recording of or produced at, or
1549 any tabulator, ballot box or other device used in the conduct of, any
1550 election, primary or referendum, such municipal official shall, not later
1551 than thirty-six hours after the receipt of such subpoena, warrant or other
1552 request, provide a copy of such subpoena, warrant or other request to
1553 the offices of the Attorney General and the Secretary of the State. The
1554 offices of the Attorney General and the Secretary of the State shall post
1555 notice, on each of said offices' Internet web sites, of the methods by
1556 which a municipal official may provide such copy to said offices. In the
1557 case of the Secretary of the State receiving such a subpoena, warrant or
1558 other request, the Secretary shall immediately provide a copy of such
1559 subpoena, warrant or other request to the office of the Attorney General.

1560 Sec. 35. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,
1561 "election worker" means any municipal clerk, assistant municipal clerk,
1562 registrar of voters, deputy registrar of voters or election official
1563 described in section 9-258 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

1564 (b) The Attorney General may seek preliminary or permanent
1565 injunctive, declaratory or other appropriate equitable relief to prevent
1566 or redress interference in connection with any election for presidential
1567 electors, a senator in Congress or representative in Congress by bringing
1568 a complaint to any judge of the Supreme Court, in which the Attorney
1569 General shall set out the claimed interference. The Attorney General
1570 shall file a certification attached to the complaint indicating that a copy
1571 of the complaint has been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the
1572 Secretary of the State, the State Elections Enforcement Commission and
1573 any other interested party. If such complaint is made prior to such
1574 election, such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render judgment on
1575 the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be given to the
1576 Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement Commission.
1577 If such complaint is made subsequent to the election, it shall be brought

1578 not later than fourteen days after the election. Upon receipt of such
1579 complaint, such judge shall forthwith order any injunctive or
1580 declaratory relief necessary to preserve or restore the status quo,
1581 including, but not limited to, ordering that an election worker retain
1582 custody of any record or recording of or produced at, or any tabulator,
1583 ballot box or other device used in the conduct of, such election. Upon a
1584 showing of exigent circumstances, such judge may issue an immediate
1585 ex parte order granting such relief as such judge deems appropriate.
1586 Such judge shall forthwith order a hearing to be had upon such
1587 complaint, upon a day not more than five or less than three days from
1588 the making of such order, and shall cause notice of not less than three or
1589 more than five days to be given to any candidate or candidates whose
1590 election may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to any
1591 election worker who may be affected by the decision upon such hearing,
1592 to the Secretary of the State, to the State Elections Enforcement
1593 Commission and to any other party or parties whom such judge deems
1594 proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing upon such
1595 complaint. Such judge, with two other judges of the Supreme Court to
1596 be designated by the Chief Court Administrator, shall, on the day fixed
1597 for such hearing and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the
1598 parties. If sufficient reason is shown, such judges may order that the
1599 State Elections Enforcement Commission maintain custody of any
1600 record or recording of or produced at, or any tabulator, ballot box or
1601 other device used in the conduct of, such election. If sufficient reason is
1602 shown, such judges may order permanent injunctive, declaratory or
1603 other appropriate equitable relief in connection with the State Elections
1604 Enforcement Commission or election worker custody of any record or
1605 recording of or produced at, or any tabulator, ballot box or other device
1606 used in the conduct of, such election.

1607 Sec. 36. Section 9-311 of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes,
1608 as amended by sections 91 and 92 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the
1609 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1610 (a) If, within three days after an election, it appears to the moderator
1611 that there is a discrepancy in the returns of any voting district, such

1612 moderator shall forthwith within said period summon, by written
1613 notice delivered personally, the recanvass officials, consisting of at least
1614 two checkers of different political parties and at least two absentee ballot
1615 counters of different political parties who served at such election, and
1616 the registrars of voters of the municipality in which the election was
1617 held and such other officials as may be required to conduct such
1618 recanvass. Such written notice shall require the clerk or registrars of
1619 voters, as the case may be, to bring with them the depository envelopes
1620 required by section 9-150a, as amended by [this act] public act 26-1, the
1621 package of write-in ballots provided for in section 9-310, the absentee
1622 ballot applications, the list of absentee ballot applications, the registry
1623 list and the moderators' returns and shall require such recanvass
1624 officials to meet at a specified time not later than the fifth business day
1625 after such election to recanvass the returns of each voting tabulator,
1626 except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, and all absentee
1627 ballots and write-in ballots used in the municipality in such election. If
1628 any of such recanvass officials are unavailable at the time of the
1629 recanvass, the registrar of voters of the same political party as that of the
1630 recanvass official unable to attend shall designate another elector
1631 having previous training and experience in the conduct of elections to
1632 take such recanvass official's place. Before such recanvass is made, such
1633 moderator shall give notice, in writing, to the chairperson of the town
1634 committee of each political party which nominated candidates for the
1635 election, and, in the case of a state election, not later than twenty-four
1636 hours after a determination is made regarding the need for a recanvass
1637 to the Secretary of the State, of the time and place where such recanvass
1638 is to be made; and each such chairperson may send party
1639 representatives to be present at such recanvass. Such party
1640 representatives may observe, but no one other than a recanvass official
1641 may take part in the recanvass. If a party representative notes any
1642 irregularity in the recanvass procedure, such party representative shall
1643 be permitted to present evidence of such irregularity in any contest
1644 relating to the election.

1645 (b) The moderator shall determine the place or places, which may
1646 include the office of the Secretary of the State, where the recanvass shall

1647 be conducted and, if such recanvass is held before the tabulators are
1648 boxed and collected in the manner required by section 9-266, the
1649 moderator may require that such recanvass of such tabulators be
1650 conducted in each place where the tabulators are located, or the
1651 moderator may require that such tabulators be removed to one central
1652 place where such recanvass shall be conducted. All recanvassing
1653 procedures shall be open to public observation, subject to the provisions
1654 of subsection (d) of this section. Such recanvass officials shall, in the
1655 presence of such moderator and registrars of voters, make a record of
1656 the number on the seal and the number on the protective counter, if one
1657 is provided, on each voting tabulator specified by such moderator. Such
1658 registrars of voters in the presence of such moderator shall turn over the
1659 keys of each such tabulator to such recanvass officials, and such
1660 recanvass officials, in the presence of such registrars of voters and
1661 moderator, shall immediately proceed to recanvass the vote cast
1662 thereon, and shall then open the package of absentee ballots and
1663 recanvass the vote cast thereon. In the course of the recanvass of the
1664 absentee ballot vote the recanvass officials shall check all [outer] return
1665 envelopes for absentee ballots [against the inner envelopes for such
1666 ballots and] against the registry list to verify postmarks, addresses and
1667 registry list markings and also to determine whether the number of
1668 envelopes from which absentee ballots have been removed is the same
1669 as the number of persons checked as having voted by absentee ballot.
1670 The write-in ballots shall also be recanvassed at this time. Any party
1671 representative present shall have a right to view each ballot as it is being
1672 recanvassed by the recanvass officials, so as to be able to discern the
1673 markings on such ballot. All of the recanvass officials shall use the same
1674 forms for tallies and returns as were used at the original canvass and the
1675 absentee ballot counters shall also sign the tallies.

1676 (c) The votes shall be announced and recorded in the manner
1677 prescribed in section 9-309 on return forms provided by the registrars of
1678 voters and appended thereto shall be a statement signed by the
1679 moderator indicating the time and place of the recanvass and the names,
1680 addresses, titles and party affiliations of the recanvass officials. The
1681 write-in ballots shall be replaced in a properly secured sealed package.

1682 Upon the completion of such recanvass, any tabulator used in such
1683 recanvass shall be locked and sealed, the keys thereof shall immediately
1684 be returned to such registrars of voters and such tabulator shall remain
1685 so locked until the expiration of fourteen days after such election or for
1686 such longer period as is ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.
1687 The absentee ballots shall be replaced in their wrappers and be resealed
1688 by the moderator in the presence of the recanvass officials. Upon the
1689 completion of such recanvass, such moderator and at least two of the
1690 recanvass officials of different political parties shall forthwith prepare
1691 and sign such return forms which shall contain a written statement
1692 giving the result of such recanvass for each tabulator and each package
1693 of absentee ballots whose returns were so recanvassed, setting forth
1694 whether or not the original canvass was correctly made and stating
1695 whether or not the discrepancy still remains unaccounted for. Such
1696 return forms containing such statement shall forthwith be filed by the
1697 moderator in the office of such clerk. If such recanvass reveals that the
1698 original canvass of returns was not correctly made, such return forms
1699 containing such statement so filed with the clerk shall constitute a
1700 corrected return. In the case of a state election, a recanvass return shall
1701 be made in duplicate on a form prescribed and provided by the
1702 Secretary of the State, and the moderator shall file one copy with the
1703 Secretary of the State and one copy with the town clerk not later than
1704 ten days after the election. Such recanvass return shall be substituted for
1705 the original return and shall have the same force and effect as an original
1706 return.

1707 (d) (1) The moderator may, when any disorder arises that interferes
1708 with the conduct of a recanvass, including any attempt by a person other
1709 than a recanvass official to take part in such recanvass or by such a
1710 person to communicate with a recanvass official, and the offender
1711 refuses to submit to the moderator's lawful authority, order that the
1712 offender be removed by the recanvass officials from such recanvass until
1713 the offender conforms to order or, if need be, until such recanvass is
1714 completed.

1715 (2) Each political party or, in the case of an office subject to recanvass

1716 for which there is more than one candidate from a political party, each
1717 candidate may appoint one representative to communicate directly with
1718 the moderator during a canvass.

1719 (e) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (c),
1720 inclusive, of this section, a canvass under this section may be
1721 conducted with, instead of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators
1722 used at the election, either a different voting tabulator or a high-speed
1723 voting tabulator whenever (A) such canvass is conducted at the office
1724 of the Secretary of the State, or (B) such canvass is conducted in the
1725 municipality in which such election was held and both (i) the moderator
1726 requests to borrow from the Secretary of the State either a different
1727 voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and
1728 (ii) the Secretary agrees to such request.

1729 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
1730 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this
1731 subsection.

1732 [(e)] (f) As used in this section, (1) "moderator" means, in the case of
1733 municipalities not divided into voting districts, the moderator of the
1734 election and, in the case of municipalities divided into voting districts,
1735 the head moderator of the election, and (2) "registrars of voters", in a
1736 municipality where there are different registrars of voters for different
1737 voting districts, means the registrars of voters in the voting district in
1738 which, at the last-preceding election, the presiding officer for the
1739 purpose of declaring the result of the vote of the whole municipality was
1740 moderator.

1741 Sec. 37. Section 9-311a of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes,
1742 as amended by section 93 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the
1743 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1744 (a) For purposes of this section, state, district and municipal offices
1745 shall be as defined in section 9-372 except that the office of presidential
1746 elector shall be deemed a state office. Forthwith after a regular or special
1747 election for municipal office, or forthwith upon tabulation of the vote

1748 for state and district offices by the Secretary of the State, when at any
1749 such election the plurality of an elected candidate for an office over the
1750 vote for a defeated candidate receiving the next highest number of votes
1751 was either (1) less than a vote equivalent to one-half of one per cent of
1752 the total number of votes cast for the office but not more than two
1753 thousand votes, or (2) less than twenty votes, there shall be a canvass
1754 of the returns of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators and absentee
1755 ballots used in such election for such office unless such defeated
1756 candidate or defeated candidates, as the case may be, for such office file
1757 a written statement waiving this right to such canvass with the
1758 municipal clerk in the case of a municipal office, or with the Secretary of
1759 the State in the case of a state or district office. In the case of state and
1760 district offices, the Secretary of the State upon tabulation of the votes for
1761 such offices shall notify the town clerks in the state or district, as the case
1762 may be, of the state and district offices which qualify for an automatic
1763 canvass and shall also notify each candidate for any such office. When
1764 a canvass is to be held, the municipal clerk shall promptly notify the
1765 moderator, as defined in section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public
1766 act 26-1, who shall proceed forthwith to cause a canvass of such
1767 returns of the office in question in the same manner as is provided in
1768 section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public act 26-1. In addition to the
1769 notice required under section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public act
1770 26-1, the moderator shall, before such canvass is [made] conducted,
1771 give notice in writing to each candidate for a municipal office that
1772 qualifies for an automatic canvass under this section of the time when
1773 [] and place, which may include the office of the Secretary of the State,
1774 where [] such canvass is to be [made to each candidate for a municipal
1775 office which qualifies for an automatic canvass under this section]
1776 conducted. Nothing in this section shall preclude the right to judicial
1777 proceedings on behalf of a candidate under any provision of chapter
1778 149. For the purposes of this section, "the total number of votes cast for
1779 the office" means, in the case of multiple openings for the same office,
1780 the total number of electors checked as having voted in the state, district,
1781 municipality or political subdivision, as the case may be. When a
1782 canvass of the returns for an office for which there are multiple

1783 openings is required by the provisions of this section, the returns for all
1784 candidates for all openings for the office shall be recanvassed. If a
1785 candidate notes any irregularity in the recanvass procedure, such
1786 candidate shall be permitted to present evidence of such irregularity in
1787 any contest relating to the election.

1788 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this
1789 section, a recanvass under this section may be conducted with, instead
1790 of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators used at the election, either a
1791 different voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator whenever
1792 (A) such recanvass is conducted at the office of the Secretary of the State,
1793 or (B) such recanvass is conducted in the municipality in which such
1794 election was held and both (i) the moderator requests to borrow from
1795 the Secretary of the State either a different voting tabulator or a high-
1796 speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and (ii) the Secretary agrees to
1797 such request.

1798 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
1799 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this
1800 subsection.

1801 Sec. 38. Section 9-311b of the general statutes is repealed and the
1802 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1803 (a) If the electors fail to elect a candidate for any office by reason of
1804 an equality of votes at any election, there shall be a recanvass of the
1805 returns for such office, in the same manner as is provided in section 9-
1806 311, as amended by this act, unless, prior to the time of such recanvass,
1807 all but one of the candidates so receiving an equal number of votes dies,
1808 withdraws his name or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold such
1809 office.

1810 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this
1811 section, a recanvass under this section may be conducted with, instead
1812 of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators used at the election, a
1813 different voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator whenever
1814 (A) such recanvass is conducted at the office of the Secretary of the State,

1815 or (B) such recanvass is conducted in the municipality in which such
1816 election was held and both (i) the moderator requests to borrow from
1817 the Secretary of the State either a different voting tabulator or a high-
1818 speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and (ii) the Secretary agrees to
1819 such request.

1820 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
1821 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this
1822 subsection.

1823 Sec. 39. Section 9-23l of the general statutes is repealed and the
1824 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1825 Registrars of voters shall accept the mail voter registration
1826 application form prescribed by the [Federal] Election Assistance
1827 Commission pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993,
1828 P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time, as an application for
1829 admission as an elector for all elections in Connecticut. The procedures
1830 in subsections (c), (d), (f) and (g) of section 9-23g which are not
1831 inconsistent with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, P.L. 103-
1832 31, as amended from time to time, shall apply to applications made
1833 under this section.

1834 Sec. 40. Section 9-23m of the general statutes is repealed and the
1835 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1836 The Secretary of the State shall make available for distribution the
1837 mail voter registration application form prescribed by the [Federal]
1838 Election Assistance Commission pursuant to the National Voter
1839 Registration Act of 1993, P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time. The
1840 secretary may make any changes in any forms required by this title
1841 which, in the opinion of the secretary, are necessary to cause said forms
1842 to conform to the provisions of applicable federal law.

1843 Sec. 41. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Any citizen who has not yet
1844 attained the age of eighteen years but who will have attained the age of
1845 eighteen years on or before the day of an election, and who is otherwise

1846 qualified to be an elector and has applied for admission as an elector,
1847 may vote at such election during the period of early voting or by
1848 absentee ballot.

1849 Sec. 42. Section 9-374 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1850 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

1851 (a) No authority of the state or any political subdivision thereof
1852 having jurisdiction over the conduct of any primary shall permit the
1853 name of a party-endorsed candidate for an office or position to be
1854 printed on the official ballot to be used at any such primary unless a
1855 copy of the party rules regulating such party and its method of selecting
1856 party-endorsed candidates for nomination to such office or for election
1857 as town committee members, as the case may be, has been filed in the
1858 office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such
1859 candidate is selected under such method of endorsement. The selection
1860 of delegates to conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of
1861 the party rules regulating the manner of making such selection has been
1862 filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before
1863 such selection is made. A duplicate copy of such rules shall also be filed
1864 with the state central committee of such party. A copy of the local party
1865 rules, relating to a party in a municipality, shall be filed forthwith by the
1866 town chairman or the secretary of the town committee of such party in
1867 such municipality with the Secretary of the State. The state party rules
1868 shall be filed by the state chairman or the secretary of the state central
1869 committee of such party.

1870 (b) In the case of a minor party, no authority of the state or any
1871 subdivision thereof having jurisdiction over the conduct of any election
1872 shall permit the name of a candidate of such party for any office to be
1873 printed on the official ballot unless at least one copy of the party rules
1874 regulating the manner of nominating a candidate for such office has
1875 been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least one hundred
1876 eighty days before the nomination of such candidate. In the case of a
1877 minor party, the selection of town committee members and delegates to
1878 conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of the party rules

1879 regulating the manner of making such selection has been filed in the
1880 office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such selection
1881 is made. [A] In the case of a minor party, a copy of local party rules shall
1882 forthwith be also filed with the town clerk of the municipality to which
1883 they relate, except that for any municipality in which no town
1884 committee of such minor party exists and no local party rules of such
1885 minor party have been filed with the town clerk, the state party rules of
1886 such minor party that have been filed with the office of the Secretary of
1887 the State shall be deemed the party rules for purposes of enrolled
1888 members and candidates of such minor party in such municipality.

1889 (c) Party rules shall not be effective until sixty days after the filing of
1890 the same with the Secretary of the State. A party in any municipality for
1891 which local party rules with respect to any office or position have not
1892 been filed as provided in this section shall, as to such office or position,
1893 be subject to the provisions of the effective state rules of such party
1894 applicable in municipalities which do not have local party rules, until
1895 such time as local party rules therefor are filed and become effective as
1896 provided in this section. The town chairman of a party in any
1897 municipality for which local party rules have not been adopted and filed
1898 as provided in this section shall forthwith file a statement with the
1899 Secretary of the State to the effect that such party in such municipality
1900 does not have local party rules. Any dispute arising under the party
1901 rules of any party shall be referred to the state central committee of such
1902 party.

1903 (d) The term "party rules" as used in this section includes any
1904 amendment to such party rules. When any amendment is to be filed as
1905 required by this section, complete party rules incorporating such
1906 amendment shall be filed, together with a separate copy of such
1907 amendment. All party rules and all amendments to such party rules
1908 shall ensure such party's compliance with the federal Americans with
1909 Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12101, et seq., as amended from time to time.

1910 Sec. 43. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 9-409 of the general statutes
1911 are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*

1912 October 1, 2026):

1913 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, petition forms
1914 for candidacies for nomination to municipal office or for election as
1915 members of town committees shall be available from the registrar
1916 [beginning on the day following the making of the party's endorsement
1917 of a candidate or candidates for such office or position, or] beginning on
1918 the day following the final day for the making of [such endorsement]
1919 the party's endorsement of a candidate or candidates for such office or
1920 position under the provisions of section 9-391. [, whichever comes first.]

1921 (b) Petition forms for candidacies for nomination to the municipal
1922 offices of state senator and state representative shall be available from
1923 the registrar beginning on the seventy-seventh day preceding the day of
1924 the primary for such office.

1925 Sec. 44. Section 7-22 of the general statutes is repealed and the
1926 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1927 Whenever [complaint in writing is made to the Attorney General that
1928 the town clerk of any town is guilty of misconduct, wilful and material
1929 neglect of duty or incompetence in the conduct of such town clerk's
1930 office, the Attorney General shall make such investigation of the
1931 charges] the State Elections Enforcement Commission consults with the
1932 Attorney General pursuant to subdivision (7) of subsection (a) of section
1933 9-7b, as the result of an investigation made pursuant to subdivision (1)
1934 of said subsection with respect to an alleged violation by a municipal
1935 clerk of any provision of the general statutes relating to any election,
1936 primary or referendum described in subdivision (1) of said subsection,
1937 or of any regulation adopted under any such provision, the Attorney
1938 General may make such investigation of the alleged violation as the
1939 Attorney General deems proper and shall, if the Attorney General is of
1940 the opinion that the evidence obtained warrants such action, prepare a
1941 statement in writing of [the charges against such town clerk] such
1942 municipal clerk's alleged violations, together with a citation in the name
1943 of the state, commanding such [town] municipal clerk to appear before
1944 a judge of the Superior Court at a date named in the citation and show

1945 cause, if any, why such [town] municipal clerk should not be removed
1946 from office as provided in this section. The Attorney General shall cause
1947 a copy of such statement and citation to be served by some proper officer
1948 upon the defendant [town] municipal clerk at least ten days before the
1949 date of appearance named in such citation, and the original statement
1950 and citation, with the return of the officer thereon, shall be returned to
1951 the clerk of the superior court for the judicial district within which such
1952 [town] municipality is situated. To carry into effect the proceedings
1953 authorized by this section, the Attorney General shall have power to
1954 summon witnesses, require the production of necessary books, papers
1955 and other documents and administer oaths to witnesses; and upon the
1956 date named in such citation for the appearance of such [town] municipal
1957 clerk, or upon any adjourned date fixed by the judge before whom such
1958 proceedings are pending, the Attorney General shall appear and
1959 conduct the hearing on behalf of the state. If, after a full hearing of all
1960 the evidence offered by the Attorney General and by and on behalf of
1961 the defendant, such judge is of the opinion that the evidence presented
1962 warrants the removal of such [town] municipal clerk from office, the
1963 judge shall cause to be prepared a written order to that effect, which
1964 order shall be signed by the judge and lodged with the clerk of the
1965 superior court for the judicial district in which such defendant resides.
1966 Such clerk of the superior court shall cause a certified copy of such order
1967 to be served forthwith upon such [town] municipal clerk, and upon such
1968 service the office held by such [town] municipal clerk shall become
1969 vacant, notwithstanding the pendency of any appeal of such written
1970 order, and the vacancy thereby created shall be filled at once in the
1971 manner provided in section 9-220. Any witnesses summoned and any
1972 officer making service under the provisions of this section shall be
1973 allowed and paid by the state the same fees as are allowed by law in
1974 criminal prosecutions.

1975 Sec. 45. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) (a) Not earlier than the
1976 fifteenth day after any state election and not later than two business
1977 days before the canvass of votes by the Secretary of the State, Treasurer
1978 and Comptroller, commencing on a day designated by the Secretary, the
1979 registrars of voters shall conduct a risk-limiting audit of such election.

1980 Each such audit shall be noticed in advance and be open to public
1981 observation. Any election official who participates in the administration
1982 and conduct of an audit pursuant to this section shall be compensated
1983 by the municipality at the standard rate of pay established by such
1984 municipality for elections.

1985 (b) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, the
1986 offices subject to a risk-limiting audit pursuant to this section shall be
1987 (A) the office of presidential elector, if applicable, (B) all applicable state
1988 offices, as defined in section 9-372 of the general statutes, (C) at least one
1989 representative in Congress, selected in a random drawing by the
1990 Secretary of the State, (D) at least five per cent, in the aggregate, of the
1991 offices of state senator and state representative, selected in a random
1992 drawing by the Secretary, and (E) any other office required to be audited
1993 by federal law. Whenever an office is randomly selected by the Secretary
1994 under this subsection, the selection process shall be open to the public.

1995 (2) (A) If an office of representative in Congress is subject to
1996 recanvass, other than under section 9-311a, as amended by this act, or 9-
1997 311b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or to an election
1998 contest pursuant to any provision of the general statutes, the Secretary
1999 of the State shall ensure such office is included in the office or offices
2000 selected under subparagraph (C) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

2001 (B) If an office of state senator or state representative is subject to
2002 recanvass, other than under section 9-311a, as amended by this act, or 9-
2003 311b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or to an election
2004 contest pursuant to any provision of the general statutes, the Secretary
2005 of the State shall ensure such office is included in the offices selected
2006 under subparagraph (D) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

2007 (C) If any office is subject to recanvass under section 9-311a, as
2008 amended by this act, or 9-311b of the general statutes, as amended by
2009 this act, or if a candidate was elected to an office without opposition by
2010 another candidate for such office, the Secretary of the State shall ensure
2011 such office is excluded from the offices selected under subdivision (1) of
2012 this subsection.

2013 (c) Prior to the day designated by the Secretary of the State for the
2014 commencement of the risk-limiting audit described in subsection (a) of
2015 this section, the registrars of voters shall submit to the Secretary the
2016 ballot manifests created under section 48 of this act.

2017 (d) The risk-limiting audit described in subsection (a) of this section
2018 shall be conducted in accordance with instructions and procedures
2019 prescribed by the Secretary of the State not later than January 1, 2027,
2020 which instructions and procedures shall be consistent across all offices
2021 subject to such audit. The risk limit for each such audit shall be not more
2022 than five per cent. The results of each audit conducted pursuant to this
2023 section, including any such audit that produces an outcome of
2024 "INCONCLUSIVE" as described in subsection (e) of this section, shall be
2025 reported on a form and in a manner prescribed by the Secretary. Such
2026 reported results shall be filed with the Secretary, who shall immediately
2027 forward such reported results to The University of Connecticut for
2028 analysis. The University of Connecticut shall submit to the Secretary a
2029 written report regarding such analysis that describes any concerns
2030 identified. After receipt of such written report, the Secretary shall
2031 transmit a copy of such written report to the State Elections Enforcement
2032 Commission.

2033 (e) In the event a risk-limiting audit conducted pursuant to this
2034 section for a particular office produces an outcome of
2035 "INCONCLUSIVE", the Secretary of the State shall order a manual
2036 recount of all ballots cast for such office.

2037 (f) If the written report submitted by The University of Connecticut
2038 under subsection (d) of this section indicates that a voting tabulator
2039 failed to record votes accurately and in the manner provided by title 9
2040 of the general statutes, the Secretary of the State shall require that the
2041 voting tabulator be examined and recertified by the Secretary or the
2042 Secretary's designee. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to
2043 prohibit the Secretary from requiring that a voting tabulator be
2044 examined and recertified.

2045 (g) The audit results reported to the Secretary of the State pursuant to

2046 subsection (d) of this section shall be open to public inspection and may
2047 be used as prima facie evidence of an irregularity in any contest arising
2048 pursuant to chapter 149 of the general statutes or for any other cause of
2049 action arising from such election.

2050 (h) If the audit officials are unable to reconcile the results from an
2051 audit described in subsection (a) of this section with the outcome of the
2052 person declared elected by virtue of having received the greatest
2053 number of votes, as determined by the paper ballots, the Secretary of the
2054 State shall conduct such further investigation of the voting tabulator as
2055 may be necessary for the purpose of reviewing whether or not to
2056 decertify the voting tabulator or tabulators in question or to order the
2057 voting tabulator to be examined and recertified in accordance with
2058 subsection (f) of this section. Any report produced by the Secretary as a
2059 result of such investigation shall be filed with the State Elections
2060 Enforcement Commission, and the commission may initiate such
2061 further investigation in accordance with subdivision (1) of subsection
2062 (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, as may
2063 be required to determine if any violations of the general statutes
2064 concerning election law have been committed.

2065 (i) The individual paper ballots used at an election shall be carefully
2066 preserved and returned in their designated receptacle in accordance
2067 with the requirements of section 9-266 or 9-310 of the general statutes,
2068 as applicable.

2069 (j) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude any
2070 candidate or elector from seeking additional remedies pursuant to
2071 chapter 149 of the general statutes.

2072 (k) After a state election, any voting tabulator may be kept locked for
2073 a period longer than that prescribed by sections 9-266, 9-310 and 9-447
2074 of the general statutes, if such an extended period is ordered by a court
2075 of competent jurisdiction, the Secretary of the State or the State Elections
2076 Enforcement Commission. Such court or the Secretary of the State may
2077 order an audit of such voting tabulator to be conducted by such persons
2078 as the court or the Secretary may designate, provided the State Elections

2079 Enforcement Commission may order such an audit where the particular
2080 office in question is that of the Secretary of the State. If the machine
2081 utilized in such election is an optical scan voting system, such order to
2082 lock such machine shall include the tabulator, memory card and all
2083 other components and processes utilized in the programming of such
2084 machine.

2085 (l) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
2086 with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, for the conduct
2087 of risk-limiting audits described in subsection (a) of this section and to
2088 establish guidelines for expanded audits when the results from such a
2089 risk-limiting audit cannot be reconciled with the outcome of the person
2090 declared elected by virtue of having received the greatest number of
2091 votes, as determined by the paper ballots.

2092 (m) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the
2093 Secretary of the State shall have access to the code in any voting machine
2094 whenever any problem is discovered as a result of an audit described in
2095 subsection (a) of this section.

2096 (n) As used in this section:

2097 (1) "Risk-limiting audit" means a publicly verifiable auditing
2098 procedure that (A) manually examines a statistical sample of paper
2099 ballots that reflect the intents of the voters having cast such ballots, (B)
2100 produces an outcome of either "ACCEPTABLE" or "INCONCLUSIVE",
2101 and (C) guarantees a specified risk limit;

2102 (2) "Risk limit" means the maximum probability that an audit would
2103 produce an outcome of "ACCEPTABLE" when there is a disagreement
2104 between the person declared elected and the person who received the
2105 greatest number of votes as determined by the paper ballots; and

2106 (3) "State election" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-1
2107 of the general statutes.

2108 Sec. 46. Subsection (a) of section 9-320 of the general statutes is
2109 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*

2110 1, 2027):

2111 (a) The clerk of each municipality shall, [within ten days after the
2112 municipal election] not later than the last day of the month in which the
2113 municipal election was held, return to the Secretary of the State a
2114 statement of the name, post-office address and term of each person
2115 elected to office in such election. If an elected [town] municipal clerk is
2116 registrar of vital statistics, ex officio, such return shall so indicate. Each
2117 municipal clerk neglecting to make such return shall be fined not more
2118 than twenty-five dollars.

2119 Sec. 47. Section 9-320f of the general statutes is repealed and the
2120 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2121 (a) [(1)] Not earlier than the fifteenth day after any federal or state
2122 [election or] primary or any municipal election or primary and not later
2123 than two business days before the canvass of votes by the Secretary of
2124 the State, Treasurer and Comptroller, [and (2) not earlier than the fifth
2125 day after any municipal election or primary and not later than two
2126 business days before the canvass of votes] or by the town clerk, as
2127 applicable, the registrars of voters shall conduct a manual audit, or an
2128 electronic audit authorized under section 9-320g, as amended by this
2129 act, of the votes recorded in not less than five per cent of the voting
2130 districts in the state, district or municipality, whichever is applicable.
2131 For the purposes of this section, any central location used in a
2132 municipality for the counting of absentee ballots, early voting ballots or
2133 same-day election registration ballots shall be deemed a voting district.
2134 Such manual or electronic audit shall be noticed in advance and be open
2135 to public observation. Any election official who participates in the
2136 administration and conduct of an audit pursuant to this section shall be
2137 compensated by the municipality at the standard rate of pay established
2138 by such municipality for elections or primaries, as the case may be.

2139 (b) The voting districts subject to an audit described in subsection (a)
2140 of this section shall be selected in a random drawing by the Secretary of
2141 the State and such selection process shall be open to the public. The
2142 offices subject to an audit pursuant to this section shall be, (1) [in the

2143 case of an election where the office of presidential elector is on the ballot,
2144 all offices required to be audited by federal law, plus one additional
2145 office selected in a random drawing by the Secretary of the State, but in
2146 no case less than three offices, (2) in the case of an election where the
2147 office of Governor is on the ballot, all offices required to be audited by
2148 federal law, plus one additional office selected in a random drawing by
2149 the Secretary of the State, but in no case less than three offices, (3)] in the
2150 case of a municipal election, three offices or twenty per cent of the
2151 number of offices on the ballot, whichever is greater, selected at random
2152 by the municipal clerk, and [(4)] (2) in the case of a primary, [election,]
2153 all offices required to be audited by federal law, plus one additional
2154 office, if any, but in no event less than twenty per cent of the offices on
2155 the ballot, selected in a random drawing by the municipal clerk.

2156 (c) If a selected voting district has an office that is subject to recanvass
2157 or an election or primary contest pursuant to any provision of the
2158 general statutes, the Secretary of the State shall select an alternative
2159 district, pursuant to the process described in subsection (b) of this
2160 section.

2161 (d) The manual or electronic audit described in subsection (a) of this
2162 section shall consist of the manual or electronic tabulation of the paper
2163 ballots cast and counted by each voting tabulator subject to such audit.
2164 Once complete, the vote totals established pursuant to such manual or
2165 electronic tabulation shall be compared to the results reported by the
2166 voting tabulator on the day of the election or primary. The results of
2167 such manual or electronic tabulation shall be reported on a form
2168 prescribed by the Secretary of the State which shall include the total
2169 number of ballots counted, the total votes received by each candidate in
2170 question, the total votes received by each candidate in question on
2171 ballots that were properly completed by each voter and the total votes
2172 received by each candidate in question on ballots that were not properly
2173 completed by each voter. Such [report] reported results shall be filed
2174 with the Secretary, [of the State] who shall immediately forward such
2175 [report] reported results to The University of Connecticut for analysis.
2176 The University of Connecticut shall [file] submit to the Secretary a

2177 written report [with the Secretary of the State] regarding such analysis
2178 that describes any discrepancies identified. After receipt of such written
2179 report, the Secretary [of the State shall file such report with] shall
2180 transmit a copy of such written report to the State Elections Enforcement
2181 Commission.

2182 (e) For the purposes of this section, a ballot that has not been properly
2183 completed will be deemed to be a ballot on which (1) votes have been
2184 marked by the voter outside the vote targets, (2) votes have been marked
2185 by the voter using a manual marking device that cannot be read by the
2186 voting tabulator, or (3) in the judgment of the registrars of voters, the
2187 voter marked the ballot in such a manner that the voting tabulator may
2188 not have read the marks as votes cast.

2189 (f) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 9-311, as amended by
2190 this act, the Secretary of the State shall order a discrepancy canvass of
2191 the returns of an election or primary for any office if a discrepancy, as
2192 defined in subsection (o) of this section, exists where the margin of
2193 victory in the race for such office is less than the amount of the
2194 discrepancy multiplied by the total number of voting districts where
2195 such race appeared on the ballot, provided in a year in which the
2196 Secretary of the State is a candidate for an office on the ballot and that
2197 office is subject to an audit as provided by this section, the State
2198 Elections Enforcement Commission shall order a discrepancy canvass
2199 if a discrepancy, as defined by subsection (o) of this section, has
2200 occurred that could affect the outcome of the election or primary for
2201 such office.

2202 (g) If the written report submitted by The University of Connecticut
2203 [report described in] under subsection (d) of this section indicates that a
2204 voting tabulator failed to record votes accurately and in the manner
2205 provided by [the general statutes] this title, the Secretary of the State
2206 shall require that the voting tabulator be examined and recertified by
2207 the Secretary, [of the State,] or the Secretary's designee. Nothing in this
2208 subsection shall be construed to prohibit the Secretary [of the State] from
2209 requiring that a voting tabulator be examined and recertified.

2210 (h) The audit [report filed] results reported to the Secretary of the
2211 State pursuant to subsection (d) of this section shall be open to public
2212 inspection and may be used as prima facie evidence of a discrepancy in
2213 any contest arising pursuant to chapter 149 or for any other cause of
2214 action arising from such election or primary.

2215 (i) If the audit officials are unable to reconcile the manual or electronic
2216 count from an audit described in subsection (a) of this section with the
2217 electronic vote tabulation and discrepancies from the election or
2218 primary, the Secretary of the State shall conduct such further
2219 investigation of the voting tabulator malfunction as may be necessary
2220 for the purpose of reviewing whether or not to decertify the voting
2221 tabulator or tabulators in question or to order the voting tabulator to be
2222 examined and recertified [pursuant to] in accordance with subsection
2223 (g) of this section. Any report produced by the Secretary [of the State] as
2224 a result of such investigation shall be filed with the State Elections
2225 Enforcement Commission and the commission may initiate such further
2226 investigation in accordance with subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
2227 section 9-7b, as amended by this act, as may be required to determine if
2228 any violations of the general statutes concerning election law have been
2229 committed.

2230 (j) The individual paper ballots used at an election or primary shall
2231 be carefully preserved and returned in their designated receptacle in
2232 accordance with the requirements of section 9-266 or 9-310, [whichever
2233 is] as applicable.

2234 (k) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude any
2235 candidate or elector from seeking additional remedies pursuant to
2236 chapter 149.

2237 (l) After an election or primary, any voting tabulator may be kept
2238 locked for a period longer than that prescribed by sections 9-266, 9-310
2239 and 9-447, if such an extended period is ordered by [either] a court of
2240 competent jurisdiction, the Secretary of the State or the State Elections
2241 Enforcement Commission. [Either the] Such court or the Secretary of the
2242 State may order an audit of such voting tabulator to be conducted by

2243 such persons as the court or the Secretary [of the State] may designate,
2244 provided the State Elections Enforcement Commission may order such
2245 an audit under the circumstances prescribed in subsection (f) of this
2246 section. If the machine utilized in such election or primary is an optical
2247 scan voting system, such order to lock such machine shall include the
2248 tabulator, memory card and all other components and processes utilized
2249 in the programming of such machine.

2250 (m) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
2251 with the provisions of chapter 54, [as may be necessary] for the conduct
2252 of the manual or electronic tabulation of the paper ballots described in
2253 subsection (a) of this section and to establish guidelines for expanded
2254 audits when there are differences between the manual or electronic
2255 counts from the audit described in subsection (a) of this section and
2256 tabulator counts from the election or primary.

2257 (n) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the
2258 Secretary of the State shall have access to the code in any voting machine
2259 whenever any problem is discovered as a result of an audit described in
2260 subsection (a) of this section.

2261 (o) As used in this section: [, "discrepancy"]

2262 (1) "Discrepancy" means any difference in vote totals between
2263 tabulator counts from an election or primary and manual or electronic
2264 counts from an audit described in subsection (a) of this section in a
2265 voting district that exceeds one-half of one per cent of the lesser amount
2266 of the vote totals between such tabulator counts and such manual or
2267 electronic counts where such differences cannot be resolved through an
2268 accounting of ballots that were not marked properly in accordance with
2269 subsection (e) of this section; [, "state election" means "state election", as
2270 defined in section 9-1, "municipal election"]

2271 (2) "Municipal election" means a municipal election held pursuant to
2272 section 9-164, as amended by this act; [, "manual"]

2273 (3) "Manual" means by hand and without the assistance of electronic

2274 equipment; and ["electronic"]

2275 (4) "Electronic" means through the use of equipment described in
2276 section 9-320g, as amended by this act.

2277 Sec. 48. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) (a) Except in the case of a
2278 recanvass subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, not
2279 later than seventy-two hours after the close of the polls at each state
2280 election, as defined in section 9-1 of the general statutes:

2281 (1) The election officials in each polling place shall create a ballot
2282 manifest for such polling place in accordance with procedures
2283 prescribed by the Secretary of the State; and

2284 (2) The absentee ballot counters in each central counting location shall
2285 create a ballot manifest for such central counting location in accordance
2286 with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of the State.

2287 (b) Not later than twenty-four hours after the completion of any
2288 recanvass conducted at a state election in a voting district, the recanvass
2289 officials shall create a ballot manifest for such district in accordance with
2290 procedures prescribed by the Secretary of the State.

2291 (c) All ballot manifest creation procedures shall be open to public
2292 observation.

2293 (d) Immediately after a ballot manifest has been created pursuant to
2294 this section, the moderator shall submit such ballot manifest to the
2295 registrars of voters.

2296 Sec. 49. Section 9-323 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2297 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2298 Any elector or candidate who claims that he or she is aggrieved by
2299 any ruling of any election official in connection with any election for
2300 presidential electors and for a senator in Congress and for
2301 representative in Congress or any of them, held in his or her town, or
2302 that there was a mistake in the count of the votes cast at such election

2303 for candidates for such electors, senator in Congress and representative
2304 in Congress, or any of them, at any voting district in his or her town, or
2305 any candidate for such an office who claims that he or she is aggrieved
2306 by a violation of any provision of section 9-355, 9-357 to 9-361, inclusive,
2307 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the casting of absentee
2308 ballots at such election, may bring his or her complaint to any judge of
2309 the Supreme Court, in which he or she shall set out the claimed errors
2310 of such election official, the claimed errors in the count or the claimed
2311 violations of said sections. In any action brought pursuant to the
2312 provisions of this section, the complainant shall file a certification
2313 attached to the complaint indicating that a copy of the complaint has
2314 been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the State Elections
2315 Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made prior to such
2316 election, such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render judgment on
2317 the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be given to the
2318 Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement Commission.
2319 If such complaint is made subsequent to the election, it shall be brought
2320 not later than fourteen days after the election or, if such complaint is
2321 brought in response to [the manual tabulation of paper ballots
2322 authorized] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended
2323 by this act, or section 45 of this act, such complaint shall be brought not
2324 later than seven days after the close of any such [manual tabulation]
2325 audit, and in either such circumstance, the judge shall forthwith order a
2326 hearing to be had upon such complaint, upon a day not more than five
2327 or less than three days from the making of such order, and shall cause
2328 notice of not less than three or more than five days to be given to any
2329 candidate or candidates whose election may be affected by the decision
2330 upon such hearing, to such election official, to the Secretary of the State,
2331 to the State Elections Enforcement Commission and to any other party
2332 or parties whom such judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time
2333 and place for the hearing upon such complaint. Such judge, with two
2334 other judges of the Supreme Court to be designated by the Chief Court
2335 Administrator, shall, on the day fixed for such hearing and without
2336 unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient reason is
2337 shown, such judges may order any voting tabulators to be unlocked or

2338 any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes cast, including
2339 absentee ballots, to be made. Such judges shall thereupon, in the case
2340 they, or any two of them, find any error in the rulings of the election
2341 official, any mistake in the count of such votes or any violation of said
2342 sections, certify the result of their finding or decision, or the finding or
2343 decision of a majority of them, to the Secretary of the State before the
2344 first Tuesday after the second Wednesday in December. Such judges
2345 may order a new election or a change in the existing election schedule,
2346 provided such order complies with Section 302 of the Help America
2347 Vote Act, P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time. Such certificate of
2348 such judges, or a majority of them, shall be final upon all questions
2349 relating to the rulings of such election officials, to the correctness of such
2350 count and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,
2351 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding
2352 officers so as to conform to such finding or decision.

2353 Sec. 50. Section 9-324 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2354 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2355 Any elector or candidate who claims that such elector or candidate is
2356 aggrieved by any ruling of any election official in connection with any
2357 election for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State
2358 Treasurer, Attorney General, State Comptroller or judge of probate, held
2359 in such elector's or candidate's town, or that there has been a mistake in
2360 the count of the votes cast at such election for candidates for said offices
2361 or any of them, at any voting district in such elector's or candidate's
2362 town, or any candidate for such an office who claims that such candidate
2363 is aggrieved by a violation of any provision of section 9-355, 9-357 to 9-
2364 361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the
2365 casting of absentee ballots at such election or any candidate for the office
2366 of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State
2367 Treasurer, Attorney General or State Comptroller, who claims that such
2368 candidate is aggrieved by a violation of any provision of sections 9-700
2369 to 9-716, inclusive, may bring such elector's or candidate's complaint to
2370 any judge of the Superior Court, in which such elector or candidate shall
2371 set out the claimed errors of such election official, the claimed errors in

2372 the count or the claimed violations of said sections. In any action
2373 brought pursuant to the provisions of this section, the complainant shall
2374 send a copy of the complaint by first-class mail, or deliver a copy of the
2375 complaint by hand, to the State Elections Enforcement Commission. If
2376 such complaint is made prior to such election, such judge shall proceed
2377 expeditiously to render judgment on the complaint and shall cause
2378 notice of the hearing to be given to the Secretary of the State and the
2379 State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made
2380 subsequent to the election, it shall be brought not later than fourteen
2381 days after the election or, if such complaint is brought in response to
2382 [the manual tabulation of paper ballots authorized] an audit conducted
2383 pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section 45 of this
2384 act, such complaint shall be brought not later than seven days after the
2385 close of any such [manual tabulation] audit and, in either such
2386 circumstance, such judge shall forthwith order a hearing to be had upon
2387 such complaint, upon a day not more than five nor less than three days
2388 from the making of such order, and shall cause notice of not less than
2389 three nor more than five days to be given to any candidate or candidates
2390 whose election may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to
2391 such election official, the Secretary of the State, the State Elections
2392 Enforcement Commission and to any other party or parties whom such
2393 judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing
2394 upon such complaint. Such judge shall, on the day fixed for such hearing
2395 and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient
2396 reason is shown, such judge may order any voting tabulators to be
2397 unlocked or any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes
2398 cast, including absentee ballots, to be made. Such judge shall thereupon,
2399 in case such judge finds any error in the rulings of the election official,
2400 any mistake in the count of the votes or any violation of said sections,
2401 certify the result of such judge's finding or decision to the Secretary of
2402 the State before the fifteenth day of the next succeeding December. Such
2403 judge may order a new election or a change in the existing election
2404 schedule. Such certificate of such judge of such judge's finding or
2405 decision shall be final and conclusive upon all questions relating to
2406 errors in the rulings of such election officials, to the correctness of such

2407 count, and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,
2408 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding
2409 officers, so as to conform to such finding or decision, unless the same is
2410 appealed from as provided in section 9-325.

2411 Sec. 51. Section 9-328 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2412 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2413 Any elector or candidate claiming to have been aggrieved by any
2414 ruling of any election official in connection with an election for any
2415 municipal office or a primary for justice of the peace, or any elector or
2416 candidate claiming that there has been a mistake in the count of votes
2417 cast for any such office at such election or primary, or any candidate in
2418 such an election or primary claiming that he is aggrieved by a violation
2419 of any provision of sections 9-355, 9-357 to 9-361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a,
2420 as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the casting of absentee ballots at such
2421 election or primary, may bring a complaint to any judge of the Superior
2422 Court for relief therefrom. In any action brought pursuant to the
2423 provisions of this section, the complainant shall send a copy of the
2424 complaint by first-class mail, or deliver a copy of the complaint by hand,
2425 to the State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is
2426 made prior to such election or primary, such judge shall proceed
2427 expeditiously to render judgment on the complaint and shall cause
2428 notice of the hearing to be given to the Secretary of the State and the
2429 State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made
2430 subsequent to such election or primary, it shall be brought not later than
2431 fourteen days after such election or primary, except that if such
2432 complaint is brought in response to [the manual tabulation of paper
2433 ballots, authorized] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as
2434 amended by this act, or section 45 of this act, such complaint shall be
2435 brought not later than seven days after the close of any such [manual
2436 tabulation] audit, to any judge of the Superior Court, in which he shall
2437 set out the claimed errors of the election official, the claimed errors in
2438 the count or the claimed violations of said sections. Such judge shall
2439 forthwith order a hearing to be had upon such complaint, upon a day
2440 not more than five nor less than three days from the making of such

2441 order, and shall cause notice of not less than three nor more than five
2442 days to be given to any candidate or candidates whose election or
2443 nomination may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to such
2444 election official, the Secretary of the State, the State Elections
2445 Enforcement Commission and to any other party or parties whom such
2446 judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing
2447 upon such complaint. Such judge shall, on the day fixed for such hearing
2448 and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient
2449 reason is shown, he may order any voting tabulators to be unlocked or
2450 any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes cast, including
2451 absentee ballots, to be made. Such judge shall thereupon, if he finds any
2452 error in the rulings of the election official or any mistake in the count of
2453 the votes, certify the result of his finding or decision to the Secretary of
2454 the State before the tenth day succeeding the conclusion of the hearing.
2455 Such judge may order a new election or primary or a change in the
2456 existing election schedule. Such certificate of such judge of his finding
2457 or decision shall be final and conclusive upon all questions relating to
2458 errors in the ruling of such election officials, to the correctness of such
2459 count, and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,
2460 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding
2461 officers, so as to conform to such finding or decision, except that this
2462 section shall not affect the right of appeal to the Supreme Court and it
2463 shall not prevent such judge from reserving such questions of law for
2464 the advice of the Supreme Court as provided in section 9-325. Such
2465 judge may, if necessary, issue his writ of mandamus, requiring the
2466 adverse party and those under him to deliver to the complainant the
2467 appurtenances of such office, and shall cause his finding and decree to
2468 be entered on the records of the Superior Court in the proper judicial
2469 district.

2470 Sec. 52. Subsection (a) of section 9-329a of the general statutes is
2471 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*
2472 *1, 2027*):

2473 (a) Any (1) elector or candidate aggrieved by a ruling of an election
2474 official in connection with any primary held pursuant to (A) section 9-

2475 423, 9-425 or 9-464, or (B) a special act, (2) elector or candidate who
2476 alleges that there has been a mistake in the count of the votes cast at such
2477 primary, or (3) candidate in such a primary who alleges that he is
2478 aggrieved by a violation of any provision of sections 9-355, 9-357 to 9-
2479 361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the
2480 casting of absentee ballots at such primary, may bring his complaint to
2481 any judge of the Superior Court for appropriate action. In any action
2482 brought pursuant to the provisions of this section, the complainant shall
2483 file a certification attached to the complaint indicating that a copy of the
2484 complaint has been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the State
2485 Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made prior to
2486 such primary such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render
2487 judgment on the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be
2488 given to the Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement
2489 Commission. If such complaint is made subsequent to such primary it
2490 shall be brought, not later than fourteen days after such primary, or if
2491 such complaint is brought in response to [the manual tabulation of
2492 paper ballots, described in] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-
2493 320f, as amended by this act, or section 45 of this act, such complaint
2494 shall be brought, not later than seven days after the close of any such
2495 [manual tabulation] audit, to any judge of the Superior Court.

2496 Sec. 53. Subsection (b) of section 9-3 of the general statutes, as
2497 amended by section 89 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following
2498 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2499 (b) During any municipal, state or federal election, primary or
2500 recanvass, or any audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as
2501 amended by this act, or section 45 of this act, the Secretary of the State
2502 may issue an order, whether orally or in writing, to any registrar of
2503 voters or moderator to correct any irregularity or impropriety in the
2504 conduct of such election, primary or recanvass or audit. Any such order
2505 shall be effective upon issuance. As soon as practicable after issuance of
2506 an oral order pursuant to this subsection, the Secretary shall reduce such
2507 order to writing, cite within such order any applicable provision of law
2508 authorizing such order and cause a copy of such written order to be

2509 delivered to the individual who is the subject of such order or, in the
2510 case that such order was originally issued in writing, issue a subsequent
2511 written order that conforms to such requirements. The Superior Court,
2512 on application of the Secretary or the Attorney General, may enforce by
2513 appropriate decree or process any such order issued pursuant to this
2514 subsection.

2515 Sec. 54. Subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 9-229 of the general
2516 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
2517 (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2518 (3) The duties of each regional election advisor shall include, but not
2519 be limited to: (A) Holding the instructional sessions described in
2520 subdivision (2) of this subsection; (B) communicating with registrars of
2521 voters to assist, to the extent permitted under law, in preparations for
2522 and operations of any election, primary or recanvass, or any audit
2523 conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section
2524 45 of this act; and (C) transmitting any order issued by the Secretary of
2525 the State, pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-3, as amended by this
2526 act.

2527 Sec. 55. Subsection (a) of section 9-229b of the general statutes is
2528 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*
2529 *1, 2027*):

2530 (a) Any regional council of governments organized under the
2531 provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, may appoint a regional
2532 election advisor, who shall represent, consult with and act on behalf of
2533 such regional council of governments and any combination of regional
2534 councils of governments or member towns of regional councils of
2535 governments that may seek the assistance of such regional election
2536 advisor. A regional election advisor shall consult and coordinate with
2537 the Secretary of the State to provide such assistance in preparations for
2538 and operations of any election, primary or recanvass, or any audit
2539 conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section
2540 45 of this act.

2541 Sec. 56. Section 9-320g of the general statutes is repealed and the
2542 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2543 Notwithstanding any provision of this title, the Secretary of the State,
2544 in consultation and coordination with The University of Connecticut,
2545 may authorize the use of electronic equipment for the purpose of
2546 conducting any audit required pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended
2547 by this act, [for any primary or general election held on or after January
2548 1, 2016] or section 45 of this act, provided (1) the Secretary of the State
2549 prescribes specifications for (A) the testing, set-up and operation of such
2550 equipment, and (B) the training of election officials in the use of such
2551 equipment; and (2) the Secretary of the State and The University of
2552 Connecticut agree that such equipment is sufficient in quantity to
2553 accommodate the total number of audits to be conducted. Nothing in
2554 this section shall preclude any candidate or elector from seeking
2555 additional remedies pursuant to chapter 149 as a result of any
2556 information revealed by such process.

2557 Sec. 57. (*Effective from passage*) The Secretary of the State shall establish
2558 a pilot program for the conduct of risk-limiting audits at state elections
2559 in 2026. The Secretary shall randomly select three municipalities for
2560 participation in such pilot program, provided the Secretary shall select:
2561 (1) One municipality with a population of less than twenty thousand;
2562 (2) one municipality with a population of twenty thousand or greater,
2563 but less than ninety thousand; and (3) one municipality with a
2564 population of ninety thousand or greater. For the purposes of this
2565 section, "risk-limiting audit" has the same meaning as provided in
2566 section 45 of this act and "population" means the estimated number of
2567 people according to the most recent version of the State Register and
2568 Manual prepared pursuant to section 3-90 of the general statutes.

2569 Sec. 58. Sections 9-139, 9-159o and 9-192b of the general statutes are
2570 repealed. (*Effective from passage*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-135
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	9-137
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	9-139a
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	9-140
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	9-140a
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	9-140b
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	9-140c
Sec. 8	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 9	<i>from passage</i>	9-140e
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	9-150a
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	9-150b(e) to (i)
Sec. 12	<i>from passage</i>	9-153b
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	9-153c
Sec. 14	<i>from passage</i>	9-153e
Sec. 15	<i>from passage</i>	9-153f
Sec. 16	<i>from passage</i>	9-158e
Sec. 17	<i>from passage</i>	9-158f
Sec. 18	<i>from passage</i>	9-158g
Sec. 19	<i>from passage</i>	9-158h
Sec. 20	<i>from passage</i>	9-159p
Sec. 21	<i>from passage</i>	9-159q(g)
Sec. 22	<i>from passage</i>	9-7b(a)(1)
Sec. 23	<i>from passage</i>	9-23r(e)
Sec. 24	<i>from passage</i>	9-359a
Sec. 25	<i>from passage</i>	9-369b(a)(1)(B)
Sec. 26	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-369a
Sec. 27	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-369c(b)
Sec. 28	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-163aa(a)(4)(B)
Sec. 29	<i>October 1, 2026</i>	9-164(a)(1)(A)
Sec. 30	<i>from passage</i>	9-19b(b)
Sec. 31	<i>January 1, 2027</i>	9-258
Sec. 32	<i>January 1, 2027</i>	9-190b
Sec. 33	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-364a(a)
Sec. 34	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 35	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 36	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-311
Sec. 37	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-311a
Sec. 38	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-311b
Sec. 39	<i>from passage</i>	9-23l
Sec. 40	<i>from passage</i>	9-23m
Sec. 41	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section

Sec. 42	October 1, 2026	9-374
Sec. 43	October 1, 2026	9-409(a) and (b)
Sec. 44	July 1, 2026	7-22
Sec. 45	January 1, 2027	New section
Sec. 46	January 1, 2027	9-320(a)
Sec. 47	January 1, 2027	9-320f
Sec. 48	January 1, 2027	New section
Sec. 49	January 1, 2027	9-323
Sec. 50	January 1, 2027	9-324
Sec. 51	January 1, 2027	9-328
Sec. 52	January 1, 2027	9-329a(a)
Sec. 53	January 1, 2027	9-3(b)
Sec. 54	January 1, 2027	9-229(b)(3)
Sec. 55	January 1, 2027	9-229b(a)
Sec. 56	January 1, 2027	9-320g
Sec. 57	from passage	New section
Sec. 58	from passage	Repealer section

Statement of Legislative Commissioners:

In Section 4(d)(1)(C) and (D), "its" was changed to "[its] the ballot's" for clarity; in Section 9(b), "state, and (5)" was changed to "state, or (5)" for accuracy and "Pursuant to subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of this section" was deleted for clarity; in Section 9(c), "beginning the day" was changed to "on and after the day" for consistency with standard drafting conventions; in Sections 36(e)(1)(B), 37(b)(1)(B) and 38(b)(1)(B), clause designators were added for clarity; in Section 42(b), the provision was rewritten for clarity; in Section 44, "statement in writing of the [charges] alleged violations against such [town] municipal clerk" was changed to "statement in writing of [the charges against such town clerk] such municipal clerk's alleged violations" for accuracy and consistency; in Section 47(a), "or municipal election and" was changed to "or any municipal election or primary and" for accuracy; and in Section 47(l), "Such court or the Secretary [of the State]" was changed to "Such court or the Secretary of the State", and "as the court or the Secretary of the State may designate" was changed to "as the court or the Secretary [of the State] may designate", for consistency.

GAE *Joint Favorable Subst.*

The following Fiscal Impact Statement and Bill Analysis are prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose. In general, fiscal impacts are based upon a variety of informational sources, including the analyst's professional knowledge. Whenever applicable, agency data is consulted as part of the analysis, however final products do not necessarily reflect an assessment from any specific department.

OFA Fiscal Note

State Impact:

Agency Affected	Fund-Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$	FY 29 \$
Secretary of the State	GF - Cost	1.9 million to 2.05 million	341,000 to 459,000	506,000 to 646,000
Secretary of the State	GF - Savings	70,000 to 150,000	60,000 to 125,000	70,000 to 150,000
Elections Enforcement Commission	GF - Cost	68,000	87,500	87,500
State Comptroller - Fringe Benefits ¹	GF - Cost	27,000	36,000	36,000

Note: GF=General Fund

Municipal Impact:

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$	FY 29 \$
All Municipalities	STATE MANDATE ² - Cost	824,000 to 2.5 million	650,000 to 1.9 million	820,000 to 2.35 million
Various Municipalities	Potential Savings	See Below	See Below	See Below
All Municipalities	STATE MANDATE - Cost	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal

Explanation

The bill authorizes all eligible voters to apply for and participate in

¹The fringe benefit costs for most state employees are budgeted centrally in accounts administered by the Comptroller. The estimated active employee fringe benefit cost associated with most personnel changes is 41.82% of payroll in FY 27.

² State mandate is defined in Sec. 2-32b(2) of the Connecticut General Statutes, "state mandate" means any state initiated constitutional, statutory or executive action that requires a local government to establish, expand or modify its activities in such a way as to necessitate additional expenditures from local revenues.

elections via absentee voting, alters existing absentee ballot provisions, and establishes risk-limiting audits, among other changes. The bill results in General Fund costs of approximately \$2 million to \$2.15 million in FY 27, \$464,500 to \$582,500 in FY 28, and \$629,500 to \$769,500 in FY 29. There are additionally General Fund savings anticipated of approximately \$60,000 to \$150,000 annually beginning in FY 27.

The bill also results in a total cost to municipalities of \$824,000 to \$2.5 million in FY 27, \$650,000 to \$1.9 million in FY 28, and \$820,000 to \$2.35 million in FY 29. Costs continue in the out years.

State Fiscal Impacts

The bill's state costs are primarily to the Secretary of the State (SOTS), totaling approximately \$1.9 million to \$2.05 million in FY 27, \$341,000 to \$459,000 in FY 28, and \$506,000 to \$646,000 in FY 29, with costs continuing into the out years. These costs are associated with supporting the anticipated increase in absentee voting,³ reprinting current forms, updating the current ballot tracking system, and implementing risk-limiting audits, as described below.

The bill additionally results in aggregate savings to the state of \$70,000 to \$150,000 in FY 27, \$60,000 to \$125,000 in FY 28, and \$70,000 to \$150,000 in FY 29, with ongoing savings in the out years. This savings is associated with the elimination of the absentee ballot outer envelope.

The total state costs and savings may vary from the ranges provided above if absentee voting participation is significantly higher or lower than projected.

Expanded Absentee Voting. The bill's expanded absentee voting provisions (Sections 1 and 26-28) result in a cost to the state of \$292,000 to \$433,000 in FY 27, \$184,500 to \$302,500 in FY 28, and \$194,500 to \$334,500 in FY 29, with costs continuing in the out years. The majority

³ This estimate assumes: (1) on the lower end, an increase of 10% of the participating electorate shifting to absentee voting in each town in response to the legislation; and (2) on the higher end, a shift in line with Massachusetts patterns (ranging from 24.7% to 30.9%) depending on a town's number of registered voters.

of these costs are to SOTS, associated with providing additional forms.⁴

SOTS will need to print additional absentee ballot materials to support the expected increase in absentee voting participation, resulting in a cost of \$72,000 to \$213,000 in FY 27, \$61,000 to \$179,000 in FY 28, and \$71,000 to \$211,000 in FY 29, with costs continuing in the out years. This cost is expected to vary annually depending on the number of electors who choose to participate via absentee ballot and the types of elections held.

The bill additionally allows an elector to choose to permanently participate via absentee voting (Section 9), beginning in FY 27. This provision may increase the SOTS absentee ballot materials costs beyond the estimates described above. The extent of the cost increase depends on the number of electors who choose this option but in the absence of the provision, would not have opted for absentee voting for every election.

Additionally, in FY 27, there is a one-time cost of \$125,000 to SOTS to reprint approximately 1.35 million forms. Reprinting is necessary to remove existing references to the requirement to provide an excuse to participate via absentee voting.

The expansion of absentee voting also results in a cost to the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) of \$68,000⁵ and one position⁶ in FY 27, with an associated fringe cost of \$27,000, before increasing to an annual salary of \$86,000 beginning in FY 28, with ongoing other expenses of \$1,500 and an associated fringe cost of \$36,000. The position is necessary because the bill's expansion of absentee voting is anticipated to result in an increase in SEEC investigations.

⁴ Expanded absentee voting, excluding the public information campaign, results in costs to SOTS of \$197,000 to \$338,000 in FY 27, \$61,000 to \$179,000 in FY 28, and \$71,000 to \$211,000 in FY 29.

⁵ This represents 0.75 FTE in FY 27. Costs include a salary of \$64,500 and other expenses of \$3,500.

⁶ The position is a Legal Investigator.

Absentee Voting Ballot Tracking. The bill requires SOTS to develop and install ballot-tracking software (Section 8), resulting in an annual cost of approximately \$75,000 beginning in FY 27. This estimate is based on a private vendor cost from another state. If SOTS chooses to integrate the United States Postal Service (USPS) tracking into the state's Centralized Voter Registration System (CVRS), costs may vary.

Absentee Voting and the Elimination of the Outer Envelope. The bill eliminates the requirement for a second envelope to be used by electors participating via absentee voting (Section 2), resulting in savings to SOTS of \$70,000 to \$150,000⁷ in FY 27, \$60,000 to \$125,000 in FY 28, and \$70,000 to \$150,000 in FY 29, with savings continued into the out years. The exact savings will depend on the number of electors who choose to participate via absentee voting.

Public Awareness Mailing. The bill's changes to election law and processes, primarily the absentee voting expansion, result in a one-time cost to SOTS of \$1.3 million⁸ in FY 27 to conduct a statewide voter mailing.

Risk-Limiting Audits. The bill's establishment of risk-limiting audits (Sections 45 and 57) results in a cost to SOTS of \$340,000 in FY 27, \$205,000 in FY 28, and \$360,000 annually beginning in FY 29.

SOTS costs in FY 27 consist of two one-time costs and annual costs. One-time FY 27 costs are: (1) \$200,000 to support program development; and (2) \$15,000 for licensing to support the pilot program. The program development costs, which are paid for by SOTS but ultimately borne by the University of Connecticut Center for Voting Technology and Research, are associated with developing and testing auditing software and processes and conducting the initial audits created by the pilot

⁷ This estimate assumes: (1) on the lower end, an increase of 10% of the participating electorate shifting to absentee voting in each town in response to the legislation; and (2) on the higher end, a shift in line with Massachusetts patterns (ranging from 24.7% to 30.9%) depending on a town's number of registered voters.

⁸ This is based on the USPS standard media mail rate. This cost also includes the initial printing of the mailing, postage, and printing additional copies of that mailing to town clerks to include with absentee ballot applications.

program.

Annual costs are expected to be: (1) \$125,000 beginning in FY 27 for the program's ongoing maintenance and upkeep; (2) \$80,000 beginning in FY 28 to support risk-limiting audit software licensing; and (3) \$155,000 beginning in FY 29 for equipment replacement costs.

Attorney General Action on Federal Election Interference. The bill authorizes the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) to seek relief to prevent election interference, resulting in no fiscal impact to the state. The OAG has the resources and expertise to meet the requirements of the bill.

Municipal Fiscal Impacts

The bill results in an estimated total cost⁹ to municipalities of \$824,000 to \$2.5 million in FY 27,¹⁰ \$650,000 to \$1.9 million in FY 28,¹¹ and \$820,000 to \$2.35 million in FY 29,¹² with costs continuing in the out years. These costs are associated with: (1) the additional labor and materials required to support the expected increase in absentee voting; and (2) labor needed to carry out risk-limiting audits beginning in FY 27. The statewide total municipal costs may vary from the ranges provided above if absentee voting participation is significantly higher or lower than projected.

Expanded Absentee Voting. The bill's expanded absentee voting provisions (Sections 1, 2, and 26-28) result in a cost to municipalities of \$800,000 to \$2.5 million in FY 27, \$650,000 to \$1.9 million in FY 28, and \$770,000 to \$2.3 million in FY 29, with costs continuing in the out years. This cost is associated with the additional labor, storage, printing, and

⁹ This estimate was calculated using vote by mail town costs from the [Massachusetts certified cost data](#). The Massachusetts cost data comes from the 2024 election and has been adjusted to account for size, participation, and voting patterns within each town in Connecticut.

¹⁰ FY 27 includes the 2026 State Election Primary and the 2026 State Election.

¹¹ FY 28 includes the 2027 Municipal Primary, 2027 Municipal Election and the 2028 Presidential Preference Primary.

¹² FY 29 includes the 2028 State Election Primary and the 2028 Presidential Election.

postage needed to facilitate and process additional absentee ballots.¹³ The estimate is based on municipal costs incurred in Massachusetts under a similar policy, applied to Connecticut towns with comparable electorates.

The exact cost will vary substantially by town, depending on the number of registered voters, as well as on election participation and absentee-voting rates. Towns with smaller numbers¹⁴ of registered voters will generally see a significantly lower cost than towns with higher numbers¹⁵ of registered voters.

Absentee Voting and the Help America Vote Act (HAVA). As part of the absentee voting changes, the bill additionally requires municipalities to provide a secondary envelope, and, optionally, prepaid postage to support ballot access for certain electors (Section 5), resulting in a statewide cost of up to \$22,000 in FY 27 (if municipalities choose to prepay postage). Connecticut has an estimated 31,570 electors who have not previously complied with HAVA requirements to provide required identification to participate in federal elections. The exact cost will vary by town and depend on the number of such voters who choose to participate by absentee ballot.

Expand Absentee and Early Voting to Certain Electors. The bill allows eligible 17-year-olds who will be 18 by election day to participate via absentee and early voting (Section 41), resulting in a minimal cost beginning in FY 27. The exact cost will vary by town and depend on the number of qualified electors who participate via the above methods, which is expected to be minimal.

¹³ This estimate assumes: (1) on the lower end, an increase of 10% of the participating electorate shifting to absentee voting in each town in response to the legislation; and (2) on the higher end, a shift in line with Massachusetts patterns (ranging from 24.7% to 30.9%) depending on a town's number of registered voters.

¹⁴ Towns with fewer than 5,000 registered voters are expected to see a cost increase of \$500 to \$1,300 in FY 27, \$500 to \$1,100 in FY 28, and \$500 to \$1,200 in FY 29.

¹⁵ Towns with greater than 50,000 registered voters are expected to see a cost increase of \$21,000 to \$59,000 in FY 27, \$15,000 to \$43,000 in FY 28, and \$22,000 to \$63,000 in FY 29.

Optional Shift to Quadrennial Elections. The bill allows municipalities to shift to quadrennial elections beginning in FY 27 (Section 29), so that municipal elections coincide with existing state and federal elections, resulting in savings to municipalities. The exact savings will depend on the number of municipalities that choose to shift their municipal election dates and the amount those municipalities would have otherwise spent on municipal elections. The timing of the savings depends on when (if at all) a municipality adopts the shift.

Risk-Limiting Audits. Municipalities will incur additional labor costs statewide of approximately \$2,000¹⁶ in FY 27 and up to \$50,000¹⁷ for applicable races in FY 29 and beyond to complete risk-limiting audits (Sections 45 and 57). The bill establishes a limited pilot program in FY 27 for three municipalities, before expanding the applicability of RLA in FY 29. The exact cost will depend on whether a statewide race qualifies for risk-limiting audits and on the number of other races subject to them.

The Out Years

State Impact:

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact above will continue into the future subject to inflation, the number of electors who participate via absentee, and the number of risk-limiting audits conducted.

Municipal Impact:

Costs in the out years will vary depending on: (1) the annual number and types of elections conducted; (2) the proportion of the electorate who newly decide to participate via absentee voting; and (3) inflation in postage and labor costs.

Savings will depend on the number of municipalities that switch to quadrennial elections.

¹⁶ This cost is the estimated maximum cost for three municipalities to complete the pilot program for State Elections in FY 27.

¹⁷ This figure represents the anticipated cost if at least one statewide/federal office in each applicable election is subject to risk-limiting audits. The actual cost is expected to be lower and will vary based on the number of races subject to risk-limiting audits.

OLR Bill Analysis**sHB 5001****AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING FOR ALL AND VARIOUS OTHER REFORMS TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS.**

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BACKGROUND

SUMMARY

This bill makes various changes to the state's election laws. It also makes technical and conforming changes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Various; see below.

§§ 1, 2 & 26-28 — NO EXCUSE ABSENTEE VOTING

Expands absentee voting to all eligible voters, instead of requiring voters to have a specified excuse to vote

Under current law, in order to apply for and cast an absentee ballot, a voter must be unable to appear at his or her designated polling place on election day due to (1) active service in the U.S. armed forces; (2) absence from their city or town; (3) sickness or physical disability; (4) their religious beliefs prohibiting secular activity on that day; or (5) service as an election, primary, or referendum official at a polling place other than his or her own during all voting hours. The bill eliminates these requirements and instead allows any eligible voter who completes and submits an absentee ballot application to attain permanent absentee ballot status.

Correspondingly, the bill eliminates the prohibition on misrepresenting absentee ballot eligibility requirements to any elector or prospective applicant.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage, except that certain related technical and conforming changes are effective July 1, 2026.

§§ 2-7, 11-13, 18-25 & 58 — ABSENTEE BALLOT MATERIALS

Makes various changes to absentee balloting sets and related materials including (1) consolidating the inner and outer envelopes into one "return envelope," (2) expanding the information included on the envelope, and (3) switching from serial numbers to unique ballot ID numbers

The bill makes various changes to the absentee balloting sets and related materials, including (1) consolidating the inner and outer envelopes into one “return envelope,” (2) expanding the information included on the envelope, and (3) switching from serial numbers to unique ballot identification (ID) numbers.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

Absentee Ballot Applications

The bill requires an absentee ballot application to display a unique ballot ID number instead of being consecutively numbered.

Return Envelopes

Under current law, absentee ballot sets consist of a ballot, an outer envelope with information about the elector (such as their name and address), and an inner envelope with a statement signed by the elector under penalty of false statement in absentee balloting. Once the elector has filled out the ballot, he or she must insert the ballot into the inner envelope, seal it inside, and then insert the inner envelope into the outer one.

The bill instead consolidates the information on the inner and outer envelopes into one absentee balloting envelope (a return envelope). Further, the bill modifies the information that must be on the return envelope by removing language regarding excuses to vote absentee from the statement the voter signs, and by requiring:

1. the voter to also print their name on the face of the envelope, which, under existing law and the bill, must be signed and capable of being sealed;
2. the envelope be endorsed with the words “OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT”;
3. a label with specified information generated by the Centralized Voter Registration System (CVRS; see below)
4. a return label displaying a unique ballot identification number

(see below);

5. a notice regarding certain state absentee ballot handling laws (see below); and
6. the clerk's official address to be inscribed before the absentee ballot set is issued.

Additionally, the bill requires town clerks to provide an additional envelope that is pre-addressed to the clerk if the voter is required by federal law to mail back their identification (see BACKGROUND). Currently, any required identification must be placed in the outer envelope.

Required Labels. The CVRS label must include (1) the sender's name and return address; (2) the applicant's name, address, and voting district; (3) the ballot style; (4) a unique ballot identification number; (5) the date of the election contest; and (6) if for a primary, the name of the political party holding that primary.

The bill requires the ballot ID number on the return labels to be in a text format and as a scannable barcode (instead of requiring all outer envelopes to be serially and consecutively numbered as under current law).

Absentee Ballot Restrictions Notice. The return envelope's notice must warn anyone handling the absentee ballot about state law's (1) restrictions on who may possess and return absentee ballots and (2) restrictions and penalties regarding completing or executing absentee ballots.

Ballot Identification Numbers

Regarding the change from serial numbers to unique ID numbers, the bill correspondingly requires clerks to ensure the unique ballot ID number that appears on the return envelope matches the one on the application form. As under current law, clerks must keep a list of unique ballot ID numbers and the name of the applicant receiving the

corresponding absentee ballot set. They must also do so for any additional absentee voting sets they issue (for example, replacements) and ballots of presidential voters and overseas electors.

Relatedly, the bill eliminates the requirement for the clerk to issue absentee ballot sets in consecutive ascending numerical order based on the envelope's serial numbers.

Other Materials

State law generally prohibits including anything else with an absentee voting set except (1) for alternate applications for certain military personnel and overseas voters and (2) when necessary to correct errors and omissions as allowed by state law. The bill additionally allows any voting information the secretary of the state (SOTS) requires to be included, but explicitly prohibits including voting information promoting a question's success or defeat.

§§ 3, 6 & 58 — RETURN OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Deems an absentee ballot as cast when properly signed by the voter and accepted by the town clerk; requires town clerks to retrieve ballots from absentee ballot drop boxes on each business day instead of each weekday

The bill deems an absentee ballot cast when it is (1) received, (2) signed by the voter on the return envelope's affirmation, and (3) accepted by the town clerk. Correspondingly, the bill repeals a provision allowing a voter to withdraw their absentee ballot.

The bill also requires town clerks to retrieve ballots from absentee ballot drop boxes on each business day instead of each weekday as under current law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 4 — ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION DISTRIBUTION

Modifies requirements for distributing unsolicited absentee ballot applications by certain entities and their agents; modifies prohibition on distributing applications without the applicable year noted on them

State law generally requires individuals requesting or distributing absentee ballot applications for other people to (1) register with the town

clerk if distributing five or more applications, excluding those for family members, for a specific election contest and (2) keep a log of who received their applications, including specified details, and file it with the town clerk.

The bill eliminates a prohibition against distributing absentee ballot applications unless the application specifies the year in which the application may be used. However, the bill maintains the provision in current law that prohibits clerks from accepting and people from using ballot applications without the correct year noted.

Similarly, current law allows a candidate, party, or political committee (or candidates' or committees' agents) to mail unsolicited applications to voters if they include a written (1) explanation of the eligibility requirements for voting absentee (including the reasons needed) and (2) warning about the penalties for violating these requirements.

The bill expands these requirements by (1) applying them to delivered ballots, in addition to mailed ballots, and (2) requiring a disclaimer noting the individual or committee that paid for the mailing or delivery. If the mailing or delivery was paid for by a candidate, the disclaimer must also note that the candidate approved it. Additionally, the bill eliminates the requirement under current law for the mailing to explain the eligibility criteria and warn the person that voting by absentee ballot without being eligible may result in civil or criminal penalties. Instead, it requires a written explanation of the options for returning absentee ballots under state law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 4 — ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS FOR INCARCERATED VOTERS

Allows DOC employees assisting incarcerated voters with their absentee ballots to provide the employing facility's contact information instead of their personal contact information

By law, anyone assisting a voter in completing their absentee ballot must sign the application and print their name, residential address, and

telephone number on it. Additionally, the law outlines procedures for Department of Correction (DOC) employees to distribute, collect, and return absentee ballots for incarcerated voters who have retained their voting rights.

The bill specifies that DOC employees who assist these voters with their absentee ballot applications must instead provide the address and telephone number of the facility where they are employed and provided the assistance, instead of their residential address and personal telephone number.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 4 & 14-17 — ISSUING ABSENTEE BALLOTS ELECTRONICALLY FOR VOTERS CASTING PRESIDENTIAL BALLOTS

Specifies town clerks, when required by federal law, must provide absentee ballots electronically or by mail as requested by a voter, including for presidential ballots

Under federal law, states are generally required to provide absentee ballots electronically to overseas voters and members of the armed forces and their spouses and dependents who live with them. States are not required to receive them electronically.

Relatedly, the bill explicitly requires town clerks to issue absentee ballots electronically to these voters, as well as former residents and overseas electors requesting “presidential ballots” to vote for the president and vice president only.

(Separately, the bill requires voters casting presidential ballots to print their name on the return envelope in addition to signing it.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 7 — ABSENTEE BALLOT CURING

Establishes procedures for voters to cure their absentee ballots if they failed to sign the return envelope

The bill establishes procedures for voters to “cure” their absentee ballots if they failed to sign the required statement on the return envelope. Under the bill, voters may cure their ballots from the

beginning of the absentee voting period until the close of the polls on election day.

The bill requires town clerks to make their best efforts to contact a voter who failed to sign the envelope, but generally not later than 24 hours after receiving the voter’s ballot. For ballots received within 24 hours before the polls close, the town clerk must start using best efforts immediately after receiving the ballot.

Under the bill, “best efforts” must at least include contacting voters through the phone numbers and email addresses they provide on the absentee ballot application and voter registration. If this information was not provided, the clerk may exercise discretion in contacting the voter through other means.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 7 & 10 — ABSENTEE BALLOT PROCESSING DEADLINES

Modifies deadlines for sorting and processing absentee ballots

Town Clerk’s Sorting and Delivery of Absentee Ballots to Registrars (§ 7)

The bill allows town clerks to begin sorting absentee ballots into voting districts on the first day absentee ballot sets are issued, instead of starting seven days before the election as under current law.

By law, the clerk must then deliver the absentee ballots to the registrars to be checked. Once the checking is complete, the registrars return the unopened ballots to the clerk, who must seal and hold them until the election day. The clerk follows this procedure for all ballots received by 11:00 a.m. on the weekday before the election.

For ballots received before this time, the law establishes deadlines by which the clerk must deliver the stored absentee ballots to the registrars. The bill changes these deadlines as described in the table below.

Table: Deadlines for Delivering Absentee Ballots on Election Day

Type of Election Contest	Current Law’s Deadline	The Bill’s Deadline
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Election	10:00 am – 12:00 pm or a mutually agreed upon time before 8:00 pm	7:00 am
Primary		
Referendum	12:00 pm or a mutually agreed upon time before 8:00 pm	
Special election or referendum	As above for regular contests	7:00 am or a mutually agreed upon time before 4:00 pm

State law also, unchanged by the bill, sets deadlines for delivering absentee ballots to the registrars that are received by the town clerk after 11:00 a.m. on the weekday before the election.

Absentee Ballot Counting (§ 10)

The bill requires absentee ballot counters to go to the counting location immediately when the polls open on election day, instead of at the time the registrar designates as under current law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 8 — ABSENTEE BALLOT TRACKING SOFTWARE

Requires SOTS to develop and install absentee ballot tracking software

The bill also requires SOTS to develop and install absentee ballot-tracking software that is integrated with CVRS. At a minimum, the software must track (1) when an absentee ballot application is received and accepted by the town clerk; (2) when the ballot is (a) mailed out by the clerk, (b) delivered to the applicant, or (c) delivered to the clerk; and (3) whether the ballot was accepted, requires curing, or is rejected.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 9 — STATEWIDE MAILING ON ABSENTEE BALLOTING LAWS

Requires SOTS to create and conduct a statewide mailing on changes to the state’s absentee voting laws, including changes to permanent absentee voting

The bill also requires SOTS to create and conduct a statewide mailing, as soon as possible after the bill is enacted, to inform all voters of the changes to the state’s absentee balloting and permanent absentee ballot status eligibility laws. SOTS must also make the mailing materials

available to town clerks and, once provided, the clerks must include them with all absentee ballot applications that they distribute in 2026.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 9 — PERMANENT ABSENTEE VOTING

Expands permanent absentee voting to all eligible voters; allows voters with this status to request an absentee ballot be delivered electronically; changes procedures for verifying and removing voters from this status

State law allows certain voters to request that registrars automatically send an absentee ballot to them for each election they are eligible for. The bill allows any eligible voter to request permanent absentee ballot status, instead of just voters who are permanently physically disabled or suffering from a long-term illness. It also allows a voter on this list to receive an absentee ballot electronically if they request it. Current law generally only authorizes issuing paper absentee ballots (see above).

Current law also requires that registrars annually verify that each permanent absentee ballot voter still resides at their address by sending them a written notice. Electors may lose permanent absentee ballot status if (1) they are removed from the municipality's registration list, (2) the notice is returned undeliverable, or (3) the voter requests removal.

The bill eliminates the notice requirement and the related reason for removal and instead additionally requires a voter be removed for other specified reasons, including if the ballot is returned as undeliverable.

Removal is also required if the voter is placed on the inactive registry list. Voters may be placed on the list for a variety of reasons under state law, including if registrars are notified of a person's death or disenfranchisement. A voter may also be placed on the inactive list if the registrar (1) has reason to believe that the voter moved, (2) sent notice as required by state law, and (3) did not receive a return card within 30 days of mailing it or it was returned undeliverable. State law establishes procedures for reactivating a person's registration if he or she has been placed on the inactive registry list.

Under the bill, the voter must also be removed from the permanent absentee ballot list if he or she submits a change of address form to the U.S. Postal Service's National Change of Address System indicating a new out-of-state address. The bill also requires removal if SOTS or the applicable registrar receives information from an out-of-state admitting official that the voter has registered to vote there.

Similarly, a voter may also be removed if the applicable registrar receives certain information that the voter moved out of state. Specifically, the information must come from another state or the federal government as part of an agreement to share information to help mutually update voter registration systems.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 22 — SEEC INVESTIGATORY AUTHORITY

Authorizes SEEC to investigate and resolve alleged violations concerning election regulations

Under existing law, the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC) is authorized to investigate and act on alleged violations of state statute concerning elections, primaries, or referendums. The bill explicitly authorizes SEEC to investigate and act on violations of regulations adopted under these statutes.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 29 — MUNICIPAL ELECTION FREQUENCY

Allow municipalities to hold municipal elections every four years if authorized by their charter

The bill authorizes, starting January 1, 2027, municipalities to hold municipal elections every four years if the municipal charter allows it, regardless of any other law. Under current law, municipalities must hold elections every two years.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 30 — VOTER REGISTRATION

Narrows when registrars and their deputies or assistants may examine voter qualifications for voter registration purposes at a non-public place to a time agreed upon between the registrar and the applicant

State law outlines when voters may register to vote in person and have their voter qualifications examined, including submitting applications to the registrars, or their assistants or deputies, at any time at a non-public place in town. The bill specifies that this must be mutually agreed upon between the applicant and the registrar.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§§ 31 & 33 – ASSISTANT TOWN CLERKS

Adds assistant town clerks to (1) an existing exemption for serving at a polling place even if on the ballot and (2) existing election worker protection provisions

Election Day Duties (§ 31)

State law generally prohibits candidates from serving as election officials or at the polls on election day. However, town clerks and registrars of voters may perform their official duties, even if they are on the ballot for the office they are already holding. Further, deputy registrars of voters may also do so even if running to be a registrar of voters. The bill similarly allows assistant town clerks running for town clerk to perform their official duties.

Election Worker Protection (§ 33)

Under current law, it is a class A misdemeanor (punishable by up to 364 days in prison, up to a \$2,000 fine, or both) to publicly disclose an election worker's personal identifying information (such as name, birthdate, and Social Security number) with the intent to harass, terrorize, or alarm the worker or influence them in performing their election administration duties.

The bill expands the definition of "election worker" to include assistant municipal clerks, in addition to municipal clerks; registrars of voters; deputy registrars; and election, primary, and recanvass officials as under current law. In doing so, the bill:

1. extends the above penalties to anyone who publicly discloses an assistant municipal clerk's personal identifying information as

described above;

2. makes it a class C felony to influence (or attempt to influence) an assistant municipal clerk performing election administration duties, as is the case for other election workers under current law (this includes influencing the election worker by force, threat, or harassment); and
3. gives assistant municipal clerks a civil cause of action against violators of the above provisions, as is the case for other election workers under current law.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026, except that the provisions regarding election day duties are effective January 1, 2027

§ 32 — RELIEVING REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

Specifies SOTS may temporarily relieve multiple registrars of voters within a municipality of their duties

Existing law allows SOTS to temporarily relieve a registrar of voters from duty, following certain procedures, if the registrar (1) failed to obtain or maintain their registrar certification or (2) is subject to a SEEC investigation because SOTS filed a statement with SEEC. The bill specifies that SOTS may temporarily relieve one or more of a municipality's registrars of voters for these reasons.

Correspondingly, the bill explicitly authorizes SOTS to direct multiple deputy registrars of voters to oversee registrar operations until the certification issue or investigation is resolved.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

§ 34 — NOTIFICATION OF ELECTION-RELATED SUBPOENAS, WARRANTS, OR REQUESTS

Requires municipal officials and election workers to notify the AG and SOTS of a subpoena, warrant, or other request for or to inspect certain election records

The bill requires notification to certain state officials by all municipal officials and election workers that receive a subpoena, warrant, or other request for or to inspect any record or recording related to an election,

primary, or referendum (including requests related to tabulators, ballot boxes, or other devices used to conduct elections) (hereinafter “election records”). This includes all requests made by any private or governmental entity, individual, or official.

Municipal officials and election workers must provide a copy of the request to the attorney general (AG) and SOTS within 36 hours of receiving it. Both the AG and SOTS must post notice on their respective websites on how these copies may be provided to them. If SOTS directly receives the request, she must provide the AG’s office a copy.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§ 35 — ATTORNEY GENERAL ACTION ON FEDERAL ELECTION INTERFERENCE

Authorizes the AG to seek certain court relief to prevent or resolve interference in elections for federal offices

The bill authorizes the AG to seek preliminary or permanent injunctive, declaratory, or other appropriate equitable relief (hereinafter “relief”) to prevent or resolve interference in elections for presidential electors and congressional offices. He may do so by filing (1) a complaint alleging the interference with the Connecticut Supreme Court and (2) an attached certification that a copy of the complaint was sent by first-class mail or delivered to SOTS, SEEC, and all other interested parties. (The bill does not specify how other interested parties are determined at this point in the complaint process.)

If the AG makes the complaint after the election, it must be brought within 14 days of the election; if he makes it before the election, the judge must quickly proceed to render judgment and provide notice to SOTS and SEEC of the scheduled hearing.

The court, once it has received the complaint, must order any injunctive or declaratory relief necessary to preserve or restore the current situation (including ordering election workers to retain custody of certain election records).

Further, if exigent circumstances are shown, the court may make an

immediate ex parte order (an order without a hearing) granting relief it deems appropriate. If it does so, three to five days after making the order, the court must hold a complaint hearing. It must provide three to five days' notice of the hearing's time and place to any affected candidates and election workers, SOTS, SEEC, and any parties the judge deems proper.

The hearing must be conducted without unnecessary delay by the issuing judge and two other Supreme Court judges designated by the chief court administrator. If sufficient cause is shown, the judges may order (1) SEEC to maintain custody of any election records and (2) permanent relief in connection with an election worker's or SEEC's custody of election records.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§§ 36-38 — VOTING TABULATOR USE IN RECANVASSES

Allows moderators, under certain circumstances, to use different tabulators for conducting recounts than the ones used in the election

Under existing law, a moderator must initiate a recanvass (a recount) if it appears there are discrepancies in a voting district's returns. If so, the returns of all voting tabulators and absentee and write-in ballots in the municipality must be recanvassed, not just the returns within the voting district where the discrepancy occurred. Similarly, a recount is generally conducted in the case of a close or tie vote. The bill explicitly specifies that recanvasses due to a tie vote must be held in the same manner as voting discrepancy recanvasses.

Currently, the recanvass of voting tabulators is generally conducted with the tabulators used at the election site. The bill instead allows a recanvass to use different voting tabulators or high-speed voting tabulators if the recanvass is conducted (1) at SOTS' office or (2) within the municipality if SOTS agrees to the moderator's requests to borrow these tabulators.

The bill correspondingly authorizes (1) recanvasses to be conducted at SOTS' office and (2) SOTS to adopt related regulations.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§§ 39 & 40 — MAIL VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS

Specifies which federal voter registration forms SOTS must distribute and registrars must accept

Current law requires SOTS to provide the Federal Election Commission's mail voter registration application form and registrars to accept applications that use it. The bill instead requires they provide and accept applications that use the Election Assistance Commission's form.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

§ 41 — ABSENTEE VOTING AND EARLY VOTING FOR CERTAIN 17-YEAR-OLD VOTERS

Allows citizens who are 17 years old and will be 18 years old before election day to vote by absentee ballot or use early voting for that election

The state constitution allows citizens who are 17 years old and will be 18 years old before election day to register to vote (and vote in a related primary). The bill specifies these voters, if registered and otherwise qualified as an elector, may vote by absentee ballot or use early voting. (It is unclear whether a 17-year-old citizen voting by absentee ballot or early voting under this provision constitutionally qualifies as an elector.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§ 42 — POLITICAL PARTY RULES

Requires political party rules to ensure the party's compliance with the ADA; requires disputes under party rules to be referred to the party's state central committee; specifies what minor party rules apply in a municipality if no local party exists

State law generally requires political parties to file their party rules with SOTS. These rules describe various aspects of the political party's operations, such as selecting or nominating individuals for political office. The bill additionally requires that these rules, and any amendments to them, ensure the party complies with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA; 42 U.S.C. § 12101 et seq.). Additionally, the bill requires that any disputes arising under a party's rules be referred to the party's state central committee.

Relatedly, by law, minor party candidates may not be placed on a primary ballot unless the party files a copy of their party rules for nominating candidates with SOTS at least 180 days before nominating candidates. Similarly, the minor party must file its rules for selecting town committee members and convention delegations at least 60 days before any selection. The minor party must also file a copy of the local party rules with the town clerks in the affected municipalities.

The bill specifies that if a minor party does not have a local party, the minor party rules that are filed with SOTS are deemed the rules for the enrolled members and candidates of that minor party for the applicable municipalities. State law has a similar requirement if a local party (major or minor) exists, but has not provided SOTS its rules.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 43 — PROVIDING MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORMS

Modifies the deadline by which registrars must make petition forms for municipal candidates or town committee members available

Under current law, registrars must make petition forms for municipal candidates or town committee members available beginning on the day following (1) the party's endorsement of candidates for that position or (2) the final day for endorsements under state law, whichever comes first. The bill eliminates the first deadline and just maintains the second.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2026

§ 44 — INVESTIGATIONS INTO COMPLAINTS REGARDING TOWN CLERKS

Narrows the circumstances under which the AG investigates referred complaints concerning town clerks

Under current law, if a written complaint is made to the AG that a town clerk is guilty of misconduct, willful and material neglect of duty, or incompetence in conducting any of their duties, the AG must investigate as he determines is proper and prepare a written statement of charges against the clerk.

The bill eliminates these provisions and instead allows the AG to

investigate if SEEC consults with him concerning SEEC's investigations into election law violations. The bill also requires the written statement to detail the allegations against the clerk instead of the charges. As under existing law, the AG has the power to, among other things, summon witnesses, require the production of necessary documents, and represent the state in removal hearings.

If after the investigation and a court hearing the court finds that the evidence warrants the clerk's removal, the court must order removal and the office is deemed vacant once the clerk is served with the order. The bill specifies the vacancy occurs regardless of any pending appeals of the court's order.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

§§ 45-57 — RISK-LIMITING AUDITS

Implements RLAs for state elections; establishes a RLA pilot program for municipal elections

The bill implements risk-limiting audits (RLAs) for state elections but, generally, maintains the existing post-election audit process for federal and state primaries and municipal elections. RLAs are publicly verifiable auditing procedures that manually examine a statistical sample of paper ballots and guarantee a specified risk limit, which the bill caps at 5%.

To accomplish this, the bill establishes the general scope and procedures for RLAs, such as by (1) outlining election officials' duties and the affected public offices, (2) requiring the creation of ballot manifests, and (3) applying existing provisions for post-election audits to RLAs (such as those on using electronic equipment and voting tabulators and how to address election contests). The bill requires SOTS to set instructions and procedures for the audits. It also allows her to adopt related regulations.

The bill establishes a pilot program to do RLAs of state elections in 2026. It requires SOTS to randomly select three municipalities for the program, with one for each of the following population ranges, as

estimated in the most recent State Register and Manual: (1) less than 20,000; (2) 20,000-89,999; and (3) 90,000 or greater (§ 13).

Additionally, current law requires regular post-election audits for municipal elections and primaries to occur no earlier than five days after an election and no later than two business days before the town clerk's canvass for votes. Instead, under the bill, the audits for municipal elections must occur at least 15 days after the election or primary instead of five.

Lastly, the bill makes minor, technical, and conforming changes to existing election audit statutes, such as requiring a copy, rather than the original, of UConn's analysis to be submitted to SEEC.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027, except the pilot program is effective upon passage.

Definitions

The bill requires registrars of voters to do RLAs for state elections, instead of the current post-election audit process. Federal and state primaries, as well as municipal elections and primaries, remain subject to existing auditing requirements (see BACKGROUND).

Under the bill, an RLA is a publicly verifiable auditing procedure that (1) manually examines a statistical sample of paper ballots that reflect the intents of the voters who cast the ballots, (2) produces an outcome of either "ACCEPTABLE" or "INCONCLUSIVE," and (3) guarantees a specified risk limit.

The "risk limit" is the maximum probability that an audit would produce an outcome of "ACCEPTABLE" when there is a disagreement between the person declared elected and the person who got the most votes as determined by the paper ballots (in other words, the percentage chance an RLA will fail to catch that the reported results are incorrect). The bill caps the risk limit for RLAs at 5% (presumably, SOTS will set the specific limit in her prescribed procedures or in regulation; see below).

Covered Offices

Under the bill, an RLA must be done on the election outcomes for the following offices:

1. presidential elector;
2. all state offices for which all electors of the state may vote, including governor, lieutenant governor, SOTS, treasurer, comptroller, attorney general, and senator in Congress;
3. at least one representative in Congress, selected by random draw;
4. at least 5% of the General Assembly, selected by random draw; and
5. any other office for which federal law requires an audit.

However, the bill excludes a contest from an RLA if (1) the candidate ran unopposed or (2) it is subject to recanvass because of a close or tie vote (in practice, close or tie votes already require a full recount). If an office for a Congressional representative or state legislator is subject to recanvass for a reason other than a close or tie vote, or to an election contest, SOTS must ensure that office is selected for an RLA. The bill requires the random draws to be open to the public.

Pre-Audit Ballot Manifests

The bill requires election officials to create ballot manifests for use at RLAs following procedures established by SOTS and open to public observation. Although undefined by the bill, a ballot manifest is generally a detailed description of how ballots are stored and organized, listing, at minimum, the physical location of every ballot cast in the election so that individual ballots or batches of ballot cards can be found, retrieved, and examined manually.

Under the bill, a ballot manifest must be created as outlined in procedures SOTS provides. The manifests must be created by:

1. election officials in each polling place within 72 hours after the polls close;

2. ballot counters in each central counting location for absentee, early voting, and same-day election registration ballots within 72 hours after the polls close; and
3. recanvass officials within 24 hours after completing any recanvass in a voting district for a state election.

Under the bill, the moderator must submit a ballot manifest to the registrars of voters immediately after creating it. The registrars must then submit it to SOTS before the designated day to begin an RLA.

Designated Day

Like post-election audits for federal and state races, the bill requires SOTS to designate a day for an RLA to begin, which must be at least 15 days after a state election but at least two business days before the canvass of votes. Each audit must have advance notice and be open to the public.

Conducting an Audit

Under the bill, registrars of voters do the RLAs. SOTS must set instructions and procedures for doing them by January 1, 2027, that are consistent for all offices subject to these audits. The bill also allows her to adopt associated regulations and set guidelines for expanded audits when audit results cannot be reconciled with the outcome of the person declared elected by having the greatest number of votes, as determined by the paper ballots (the “reported results”).

If an RLA for a particular office is “INCONCLUSIVE,” the secretary must order a manual recount of all ballots cast for that office. She may also issue an order, as under current law, to correct any irregularity or impropriety in an RLA’s conduct.

Reporting Results

As under current law, all audit results, including RLAs, must be filed with SOTS on a form she sets. SOTS must immediately forward the results to UConn, which must analyze them and submit a written report describing any identified concerns to SOTS. She must then send SEEC a

copy of UConn's written report.

Electronic Equipment and Voting Tabulators

The bill extends several of existing law's provisions on using electronic equipment and voting tabulators in post-election audits to also cover RLAs (CGS §§ 9-320f & 9-320g). Principally, it:

1. allows SOTS, after consulting with UConn, to authorize the use of electronic equipment;
2. requires her to have access to the code in any voting machine whenever there is a problem due to an RLA;
3. directs her or her designee to examine and recertify a tabulator if UConn's analysis indicates that it failed to record votes accurately and as required by state law;
4. requires carefully preserving and returning paper ballots used in an RLA in their designated receptacle (such as returned to the ballot box, securely sealed, and locked);
5. requires SOTS, if audit officials cannot reconcile the audit results with the reported results, to investigate voting tabulators as needed to determine if they must be (a) decertified or (b) examined and recertified; and
6. authorizes SOTS, SEEC, or a court with competent jurisdiction to issue an order after a state election to keep a voting tabulator locked for longer than law requires.

The bill allows either the court or SOTS to order an audit of the voting tabulator by people they designate, but SEEC may order an audit if SOTS is the office in question. If SOTS produces a report on an investigation of a voting tabulator, it must be filed with SEEC, which may investigate further to determine if there was an election law violation.

Under the bill, if the machine in question is an optical scan voting

system, an order to lock it must include the tabulator, memory card, and all other parts and processes used in its programming.

Town Clerk Reporting to SOTS

By law, each municipal clerk must give SOTS a statement with the names, post office addresses, and terms of each person elected to office in a municipal election. The bill requires this statement to be filed by the last day of the month in which the election was held, instead of within 10 days after the election as under current law.

Election Official Compensation

Under the bill, municipalities must compensate election officials who participate in implementing an RLA at the municipality's standard rate of pay for elections.

Regional Election Advisors

As with post-election audits, the bill requires regional election advisors to consult and coordinate with SOTS in the preparation for and operation of RLAs, including communicating with and helping registrars of voters.

Election Complaints and Evidence

Like post-election audit results, the bill requires RLA-reported results to be open to public inspection and allows them to be used as prima facie evidence of an irregularity in a contested election or for any other cause of action from a contested election.

The bill also specifies that (1) an action or complaint may be brought in response to any state election audit, not just the manual tabulations of paper ballots, and (2) its RLA provisions do not preclude a candidate or elector from seeking other existing remedies for contested elections.

§ 58 — REGISTRAR TRAINING REQUIREMENT

Repeals a duplicative registrar training requirement

The bill repeals a duplicative requirement that each registrar of voters annually designate themselves, a deputy registrar, or an assistant registrar to receive at least 10 hours of instruction in a registrar

certification course created by SOTS. Existing law, unchanged by the bill, still requires these officers to (1) be certified by SOTS and (2) annually complete eight hours of continuing education to retain their certification.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

BACKGROUND

Identification Under Federal Law

By law, if a voter registers to vote by mail and does not meet federal identification requirements at the time of registration, the voter must give sufficient identification the first time they seek to vote absentee. If a voter fails to do so, the absentee ballot cannot be counted. Acceptable forms of identification include certain documents with the voter's name and address (such as bank statements or utility bills) or valid photo identification with the voter's name and address (CGS § 9-23r).

Post-Election Audit Procedure

Under current law, SOTS must audit at least 5% of the state's voting districts (meaning polling locations), selected at random after a federal, state, or municipal regular election or primary. Audits must be noticed in advance and open for public observation. Registrars of voters must do the audits by hand unless SOTS, in consultation with UConn, authorizes them to be done electronically (CGS § 9-320f).

During the audit, registrars tally the paper ballots cast by voters and counted by each optical scan voting tabulator subject to the audit. They compare their results to the reported results. Registrars must report the audit results on a SOTS-prescribed form with the total number of ballots counted and the total votes for each audited candidate, broken down by whether the ballot was properly or improperly completed.

After a post-election audit, SOTS must order a recount (a recanvass) for an office if there is a discrepancy that could affect its outcome. (If SOTS is a candidate on the ballot that is subject to an audit, SEEC orders the recount.) For this purpose, a "discrepancy" is a difference between the voting tabulator and audit vote counts that exceeds 0.5% of the lower

total, where the difference cannot be resolved through an accounting of ballots that were improperly marked (CGS § 9-320f(f) & (o)).

Related Bills

sSB 394, reported favorably by the Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee, contains substantially identical provisions concerning RLAs.

sSB 463 and sHB 5533, reported favorably by the GAE Committee, among other things, contains substantially identical provisions on (1) expanding election worker protections to assistant town clerks, (2) municipal official and election worker notification to certain state officials of election-related requests, and (3) AG authority regarding certain election interference claims.

sSB 491, reported favorably by the GAE Committee, among other things, contains substantially identical absentee balloting provisions.

sSB 459, reported favorably by the GAE Committee, generally prohibits acquiring absentee ballot applications for others or giving them to others, with certain exceptions.

HB 5530, reported favorably by the GAE Committee, requires a study of absentee ballot access in unconsolidated cities and boroughs within a town.

sHB 5544, reported favorably by the GAE Committee, allows towns to move municipal election dates to align with state elections.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/20/2026)