



# House of Representatives

**File No. 725**

General Assembly

February Session, 2026

**(Reprint of File No. 528)**

Substitute House Bill No. 5001  
As Amended by House Amendment  
Schedules "A" and "E"

Approved by the Legislative Commissioner  
April 27, 2026

**AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING FOR ALL AND VARIOUS  
OTHER REFORMS RELATED 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 Section 9-135 of the general statutes is repealed and the  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 Section 9-137 of the general statutes is repealed and the  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 privacy sleeve, the [inner envelope, the outer] envelope  
65 provided for [the return of] returning the ballot with the privacy sleeve  
66 to the municipal clerk, the instructions for [the use of] using the absentee  
67 ballot and privacy sleeve and the envelope for mailing of such forms by  
68 the clerk to the absentee ballot applicant.

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

76 applicant, and (3) a clear and conspicuous notation of the year for which  
77 such application's use is authorized.

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

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

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

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

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

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

140 (2) A municipal clerk may transmit an application to a person under  
141 this subsection by facsimile machine or other electronic means, if so

142 requested by the applicant. If a municipal clerk has a facsimile machine  
143 or other electronic means, an applicant may return a completed  
144 application to the clerk by such a machine or device, provided the  
145 applicant shall also mail the original of the completed application to the  
146 clerk, either separately or with the absentee ballot that is issued to the  
147 applicant. If the clerk does not receive such original application by the  
148 close of the polls on the day of the election, primary or referendum, the  
149 absentee ballot shall not be counted.

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

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

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

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

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

174 for such eligibility, and (C) mark a box associated with the following  
175 statement:

176 "By clicking on the box below, I swear or affirm all of the following  
177 under penalty of false statement in absentee balloting:

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

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

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

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

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

204 (d) (1) An absentee voting set shall consist of (A) the mailing envelope  
205 containing all other items of such set and used to issue such set to the  
206 applicant, (B) an absentee ballot, [inner and outer envelopes] (C) a  
207 privacy sleeve for the ballot, (D) an envelope for [its return] returning  
208 the ballot with the privacy sleeve, (E) instructions for [its use] using the  
209 ballot and privacy sleeve, and (F) if applicable, explanatory texts  
210 concerning ballot questions, as provided for in sections 2-30a and 9-  
211 369b, as amended by this act.

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

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

236 (f) Absentee voting sets shall be issued beginning on the thirty-first

237 day before an election and the twenty-first day before a primary or, if  
238 such day is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, beginning on the next  
239 preceding business day.

240 (g) (1) On the first day of issuance of absentee voting sets, the  
241 municipal clerk shall mail an absentee voting set to each applicant  
242 whose application was received by the clerk prior to that day. When the  
243 clerk receives an application during the time period in which absentee  
244 voting sets are to be issued, [he] the clerk shall mail an absentee voting  
245 set to the applicant [,] within twenty-four hours, unless the applicant  
246 submits [his] such applicant's application in person at the office of the  
247 clerk and [asks] requests to be given [his] such applicant's absentee  
248 voting set immediately, in which case the clerk shall comply with the  
249 request. Any absentee voting set to be mailed to an applicant shall be  
250 mailed to the bona fide personal mailing address shown on the  
251 application. If an applicant has provided a mailing address at a  
252 Department of Correction facility and such applicant is subsequently  
253 transferred to another Department of Correction facility, the  
254 Commissioner of Correction shall ensure delivery of the absentee voting  
255 set to such applicant. Issuance of absentee voting sets shall also be  
256 subject to the provisions of subsection (c) of this section, section 9-150c  
257 [and section 9-159q] concerning persons designated to deliver or return  
258 ballots in cases involving unforeseen illness or disability and section 9-  
259 159q, as amended by this act, concerning supervised voting at certain  
260 health care institutions.

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

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

270 overseas ballots as provided in sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive.

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

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

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

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

299 (3) Any person who distributes absentee ballot applications shall  
300 maintain a list of the names and addresses of prospective absentee ballot  
301 applicants who receive such applications, and shall file such list with

302 the municipal clerk prior to the date of the primary, election or  
303 referendum for which the applications were so distributed, except that  
304 such requirements shall not apply to any employee of the Department  
305 of Correction who provides the application for absentee ballot form  
306 prescribed under subsection (c) of section 9-139a, as amended by this  
307 act, to incarcerated absentee ballot applicants. Any person who  
308 distributes absentee ballot applications and receives an executed  
309 application shall forthwith file the application with the municipal clerk.

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

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

332 (n) The State Elections Enforcement Commission, in consultation  
333 with the Secretary of the State, shall prepare a summary of the  
334 requirements and prohibitions of the absentee voting laws, which shall

335 be posted on said agencies' web sites. Candidates and political party  
336 chairpersons shall provide such summary to campaign and party  
337 employees and volunteers.

338 (o) As used in this section, (1) "immediate family" has the same  
339 meaning as provided in subsection (a) of section 9-140b, as amended by  
340 this act, and (2) "designee" has the same meaning as provided in  
341 subsection (b) of section 9-140b, as amended by this act.

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

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

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

367 (a) An absentee ballot shall be cast at a primary, election or  
368 referendum only if: (1) [It] Such ballot is mailed by (A) the ballot  
369 applicant, (B) a designee of a person who applies for an absentee ballot  
370 because of illness or physical disability, or (C) a member of the  
371 immediate family of an applicant who is a student, so that [it] the ballot  
372 is received by the clerk of the municipality in which the applicant is  
373 qualified to vote not later than the close of the polls; (2) [it] such ballot  
374 is returned by the applicant in person to [the] such clerk by the day  
375 before the election or primary or prior to the opening of the polls on the  
376 day of the referendum; (3) [it] such ballot is returned by a designee of  
377 an ill or physically disabled ballot applicant, in person, to [said] such  
378 clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the election,  
379 primary or referendum; (4) [it] such ballot is returned by a member of  
380 the immediate family of the [absentee voter] applicant, in person, to  
381 [said] such clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the  
382 election, primary or referendum; (5) in the case of a presidential or  
383 overseas ballot, [it] such ballot is mailed or otherwise returned pursuant  
384 to the provisions of section 9-158g, as amended by this act; or (6) [it] such  
385 ballot is returned with the proper identification as required by the Help  
386 America Vote Act, P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time, if  
387 applicable, [inserted in the outer envelope so such identification can be  
388 viewed without opening the inner envelope] in accordance with the  
389 provisions of section 9-140a, as amended by this act. A person returning  
390 an absentee ballot to the municipal clerk pursuant to subdivision (3) or  
391 (4) of this subsection shall present identification and, on the [outer]  
392 return envelope of the absentee ballot, sign [his] such person's name in  
393 the presence of the municipal clerk [,] and indicate [his] such person's  
394 address [, his] and relationship to the voter or [his] position [,] and the  
395 date and time of such return. An absentee ballot shall be deemed cast  
396 when it is received and accepted by the municipal clerk in accordance  
397 with the provisions of this subsection, provided the statement on the  
398 return envelope for such absentee ballot is signed by the applicant. As  
399 used in this section, "immediate family" means a dependent relative  
400 who resides in the individual's household or any spouse, child, parent  
401 or sibling of the individual.

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

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

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

425 (B) On and after July 1, 2025, each municipality shall provide a video  
426 recording device for each secure drop box described in subparagraph  
427 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection within such municipality, which  
428 device's recordings shall capture the location of such drop box and  
429 evidence the date and time of each such recording beginning on the first  
430 day of issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of  
431 section 9-140, as amended by this act, and until the last retrieval of  
432 absentee ballots from such drop box at the close of the polls at the  
433 election or primary. Each such recording shall, as soon as practicable, be  
434 made publicly available from the date of recording, but in no case later

435 than five days after such last retrieval. Each such recording shall be  
436 retained by the municipality for a period of twelve months and may be  
437 destroyed at the end of such period, except that the State Elections  
438 Enforcement Commission or a court of competent jurisdiction may  
439 order that such period be extended until the conclusion of any  
440 investigation related to such recording.

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

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

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

466 Sec. 7. Section 9-140c of the general statutes is repealed and the

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

468 (a) (1) The municipal clerk shall retain the return envelopes  
469 containing absentee ballots received by [him] such clerk under section  
470 9-140b, as amended by this act, and shall not open such return  
471 envelopes. [The] As the municipal clerk receives each absentee ballot,  
472 such clerk shall first make a record, for the purposes of subdivision (3)  
473 of this subsection, of each return envelope on which the applicant did  
474 not sign the statement and shall then endorse over [his] such clerk's  
475 signature [,] upon each [outer] return envelope [as he receives it,] (A)  
476 the date and precise time of its receipt, and (B) the method of its receipt,  
477 in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection.  
478 The clerk shall make an affidavit attesting to the accuracy of all such  
479 endorsements [, and at the close of the polls] and shall deliver such  
480 affidavit at the close of the polls to the head moderator, who shall  
481 endorse the time of its receipt and return it to the clerk after all counting  
482 is complete. The clerk shall preserve the affidavit for one hundred eighty  
483 days in accordance with the requirements of section 9-150b, as amended  
484 by this act. The clerk shall keep a list of the names of the applicants who  
485 return absentee ballots to the clerk under section 9-140b, as amended by  
486 this act. The list shall be preserved as a public record as required by  
487 section 9-150b, as amended by this act.

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

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

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

525       (b) (1) Beginning [not earlier than the seventh day before the election,  
526 primary or referendum] the day after the first day of issuance of  
527 absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-140, as  
528 amended by this act, and on any weekday thereafter, all absentee ballots  
529 received by the municipal clerk at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. of [such  
530 day] the day of the election, primary or referendum may be sorted into  
531 voting districts by the municipal clerk and checked as provided in this  
532 subsection. On any such day, beginning as soon as the ballots have been  
533 sorted, the registrars of voters, without opening the [outer] return  
534 envelopes, may check the names of the applicants returning ballots on

535 the official checklist to be used at the election, primary or referendum  
536 by indicating "absentee" or "A" preceding each such name and, if  
537 unaffiliated electors are authorized under section 9-431 to vote in the  
538 primary of either of two parties, the designation of the party in which  
539 the applicants are voting preceding each such name. Unless absentee  
540 ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places, pursuant to  
541 subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the registrars shall also place such  
542 indication on a duplicate checklist to be retained by the municipal clerk  
543 until the municipal clerk delivers such duplicate checklist to the  
544 registrars, in accordance with subsection (e) of this section, for the use  
545 of the absentee ballot counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

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

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

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

560 (e) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, ballots  
561 received at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. on the last day before the  
562 election, primary or referendum shall be delivered by the municipal  
563 clerk to the registrars [between ten o'clock a.m. and twelve o'clock noon]  
564 not later than eight o'clock a.m. on the day of the election, [or] primary  
565 [and at twelve o'clock noon on the day of a] or referendum. Unless  
566 absentee ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places,

567 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the municipal clerk shall  
568 also deliver to the registrars at this time the duplicate checklist provided  
569 for in subsection (b) of this section, for the use of the absentee ballot  
570 counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

571 (2) [The] In the case of a special election or referendum, the municipal  
572 clerk may deliver [the] such ballots at a time that is later than [the time  
573 provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection] eight o'clock a.m. on the  
574 day of such special election or referendum, provided such time is  
575 mutually agreed upon by the municipal clerk and registrars and is not  
576 later than [eight] four o'clock p.m. on the day of [the election, primary]  
577 such special election or referendum.

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

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

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

598 (i) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the absentee

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

605 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,  
606 the names of applicants whose ballots were delivered at six o'clock p.m.  
607 on the day of the election, primary or referendum shall be called in to  
608 the appropriate polling places where they shall be checked by the  
609 checkers on the official checklists, and they shall also be checked by the  
610 absentee ballot counters on the duplicate checklist required under  
611 subsection (b) of this section.

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

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

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

629 (4) If the name of an applicant returning a ballot has been checked on  
630 the official checklist as having voted in person, the absentee ballot

631 counters shall, in checking the ballots, endorse on the face of the [outer]  
632 return envelope the word "rejected" followed by a statement of the  
633 reason for rejection, and [the outer] such return envelope shall not be  
634 opened [or the ballot] nor shall such ballot be counted.

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

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

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

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

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

658 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) The office of the Secretary of the  
659 State shall develop and install integrated ballot-tracking software with  
660 the state-wide centralized voter registration system described in section  
661 9-50b of the general statutes, for use by electors who vote by absentee

662 ballot. Such software shall, at a minimum, permit the elector to track (1)  
663 when the municipal clerk has received and accepted the elector's  
664 absentee ballot application, (2) when the municipal clerk's office has  
665 mailed the absentee ballot set to the elector, (3) when the absentee ballot  
666 set has been delivered to the elector, (4) when the absentee ballot being  
667 returned by the elector has been delivered to the municipal clerk, and  
668 (5) whether the elector's returned absentee ballot has been accepted,  
669 requires curing pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection (a) of section  
670 9-140c of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or has been  
671 rejected.

672 Sec. 9. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) Any elector may submit a  
673 request, in a form and manner prescribed by the Secretary of the State,  
674 to the registrars of voters of the municipality of such elector's voting  
675 residence to automatically receive an application for an absentee ballot  
676 for each election and referendum, and primary if applicable, conducted  
677 in such municipality. Each elector whose request is approved shall be  
678 issued an absentee ballot application, as soon as practicable, in advance  
679 of each such election, primary or referendum for which such elector is  
680 eligible to vote. Such elector's automatic absentee ballot application  
681 status shall remain in effect until such elector: (1) Is removed from the  
682 official registry list of the municipality, (2) is removed from automatic  
683 absentee ballot application status in accordance with the provisions of  
684 subsection (b) of this section, or (3) requests in writing to the registrar of  
685 voters that such elector no longer receive such automatic absentee ballot  
686 application status.

687 (b) An elector approved for automatic absentee ballot application  
688 status shall be removed from such status whenever (1) such elector's  
689 absentee ballot application is returned as undeliverable, (2) such elector  
690 submits a change of address form for a move outside the state with the  
691 National Change of Address System of the United States Postal Service,  
692 (3) a registrar of voters of the municipality in which such elector  
693 previously resided receives information or data, used to maintain the  
694 state-wide centralized voter registration system under section 9-50c of  
695 the general statutes, that such elector has moved outside the state, (4)

696 the Secretary of the State or a registrar of voters of the municipality in  
697 which such elector previously resided receives information under  
698 section 9-21 of the general statutes that such elector has registered to  
699 vote outside the state, or (5) such elector's name is placed on the inactive  
700 registry list compiled under section 9-35 of the general statutes.

701 Sec. 10. Section 9-150a of the general statutes, as amended by section  
702 90 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
703 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

704 (a) [The] Not later than fifteen minutes prior to the time specified or  
705 agreed to, as applicable, under subsection (e) of section 9-140c, as  
706 amended by this act, the absentee ballot counters shall proceed to the  
707 central counting location or to the respective polling places when  
708 counting is to take place pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a. [at  
709 the times designated by the registrars of voters.]

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

714 (c) Except with respect to ballots marked "Rejected" pursuant to  
715 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, or other applicable law, the  
716 counters shall remove the [inner envelopes] absentee ballots from the  
717 [outer] return envelopes, shall note the total number of absentee ballots  
718 received and shall report such total to the moderator. They shall  
719 similarly note and separately so report the total numbers of presidential  
720 ballots and overseas ballots received pursuant to sections 9-158a to 9-  
721 158m, inclusive.

722 (d) (1) (A) If the statement on the [inner] return envelope has not been  
723 signed as required by section 9-140a, as amended by this act, such  
724 [inner] return envelope shall not be opened [or] nor shall the ballot be  
725 removed therefrom. [, and such inner envelope shall be replaced in the  
726 opened outer envelope which shall be marked "Rejected" and the reason  
727 therefor endorsed thereon by the counters.] The return envelope shall

728 be marked "Rejected" and the reason for such rejection shall be endorsed  
729 on such return envelope by the counters.

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

737 (2) (A) If such statement is signed but the individual completing the  
738 ballot is an individual described in subsection (a) of section 9-23r and  
739 has not met the requirements of subsection (e) of section 9-23r, as  
740 amended by this act, the counters shall replace the ballot in the opened  
741 [inner envelope, replace the inner envelope in the opened outer] return  
742 envelope and shall mark "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot" and endorse  
743 the reason for such rejection on [the outer] such return envelope, and  
744 the ballot shall be treated as a provisional ballot for federal offices only,  
745 pursuant to sections 9-232i to 9-232o, inclusive.

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

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

755 [(f)] (e) Before the ballots are counted, all opened [outer and inner]  
756 envelopes from which such ballots have been removed, and all [outer]  
757 envelopes marked "Rejected" as required by law, shall be placed and  
758 sealed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository  
759 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the

760 municipal clerk. The counters shall seal such depository envelopes by  
761 wrapping them lengthwise and sideways with nonreusable tape,  
762 endorse on each such envelope their names, the voting district and the  
763 time of the count, and deliver such envelopes to the moderator.

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

766 [(h)] (g) The Secretary of the State shall provide a procedure manual  
767 for counting absentee ballots. The manual shall include a description of  
768 the steps to be followed in receiving, handling, counting and preserving  
769 absentee ballots. Facsimile ballots shall be printed in the manual,  
770 illustrating potential variations in ballot markings along with the correct  
771 interpretation to be given in each situation illustrated.

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

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

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

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

789 [(j)] (i) In the counting of absentee ballots the intent of the voter shall

790 govern, provided the following conclusive presumptions, where  
791 applicable, shall prevail in determining such intent:

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

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

797 (3) On an absentee ballot on which candidates' names are printed, a  
798 vote shall be deemed cast only for each candidate whose name is  
799 individually checked or validly written in, except as otherwise provided  
800 in this subsection. If a party designation is circled, checked, underscored  
801 or similarly marked in any manner, or written in, no vote shall be  
802 deemed cast or cancelled for any candidate by virtue of such marking  
803 or writing.

804 ~~[(k)]~~ (j) If the intent of an absentee voter is difficult to ascertain due to  
805 uncertain, conflicting or incorrect ballot markings which are not clearly  
806 addressed in this section or in the procedure manual for counting  
807 absentee ballots provided by the Secretary of the State, the absentee  
808 ballot counters shall submit the ballot and their question to the  
809 moderator. They shall then count the ballot in accordance with the  
810 moderator's decision as to the voter's intent, if such intent is  
811 ascertainable. A ballot or part of a ballot on which the intent is  
812 determined by the moderator to be not ascertainable, shall not be  
813 counted. The moderator shall endorse on the ballot the question and  
814 ~~[his]~~ such moderator's decision.

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

818 ~~[(m)]~~ (l) After the absentee ballots have been so counted they shall be  
819 placed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository  
820 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the

821 municipal clerk. Any notes, worksheets, or other written materials used  
822 by the counters in counting such ballots shall be endorsed by them with  
823 their names, the date and the time of the count and shall also be placed  
824 in such depository envelopes together with the ballots, and with the  
825 separate record of the number of votes cast on such ballots for each  
826 candidate as required by section 9-150b, as amended by this act. Such  
827 depository envelopes shall then be sealed, endorsed and delivered to  
828 the moderator by the counters in the same manner as provided in  
829 subsection [(f)] (e) of this section.

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

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

837 (f) The municipal clerk shall preserve for sixty days after the election,  
838 primary or referendum the depository envelopes containing opened  
839 envelopes and rejected ballots required by subsection [(f)] (e) of section  
840 9-150a, as amended by this act, and shall so preserve for one hundred  
841 eighty days the depository envelopes containing counted ballots and  
842 related materials required by subsection [(m)] (l) of section 9-150a, as  
843 amended by this act.

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

852 (h) For sixty days after the election, primary or referendum the

853 following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a public record  
854 open to public inspection: (1) All executed absentee ballot application  
855 forms and direction by registrar forms, as required by subsection (i) of  
856 section 9-140, as amended by this act; (2) the list and index of applicants  
857 for presidential or overseas ballots as required by section 9-158h, as  
858 amended by this act; (3) the [numerical] list of unique ballot  
859 identification numbers corresponding to absentee voting sets issued as  
860 required by subsection (e) of section 9-140, as amended by this act; (4)  
861 the list of the names of persons whose absentee ballots are received by  
862 the municipal clerk, as required by subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of  
863 section 9-140c, as amended by this act; (5) all unused absentee ballots;  
864 and (6) all envelopes containing ballots received by the municipal clerk  
865 after the close of the polls, which shall remain unopened.

866 (i) For one hundred eighty days after the election, primary or  
867 referendum the following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a  
868 public record open to public inspection: (1) The affidavit regarding the  
869 municipal clerk's endorsement of [inner] return envelopes, as required  
870 by subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-140c, as amended by this  
871 act; and (2) the affidavit regarding delivery and receipt of ballots, as  
872 required by subsection (j) of [said] section 9-140c, as amended by this  
873 act.

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

876 (a) If any absentee ballot applicant applies for an additional absentee  
877 ballot, such applicant shall note on the application the reason for  
878 applying for an additional absentee ballot and shall return the absentee  
879 voting set formerly issued to such applicant before another set is issued,  
880 provided, if such applicant is unable to return such formerly issued set,  
881 such application for an additional ballot shall be accompanied by a  
882 statement signed under the penalties of false statement in absentee  
883 balloting in which such applicant shall note the reason for such  
884 applicant's inability to return such formerly issued set. If such applicant  
885 fails to file such a statement, no additional set shall be issued to such

886 applicant. An application for an additional absentee ballot shall only be  
887 made by an absentee ballot applicant. Any additional absentee voting  
888 set issued under this subsection shall only be either provided in person  
889 to the applicant or mailed directly to the applicant at the bona fide  
890 mailing address designated by such applicant.

891 (b) For all absentee voting sets or portions thereof returned under  
892 subsection (a) of this section, the municipal clerk shall mark the [serially-  
893 numbered outer] return envelope "rejected" and note the reasons for  
894 rejection on all absentee ballots and envelopes so returned and shall seal  
895 all such absentee voting sets or portions thereof in a package and retain  
896 them in a safe place until delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as  
897 amended by this act. The municipal clerk shall keep a list of the names  
898 of each absentee ballot applicant who has applied for more than one  
899 absentee ballot, as provided in section 9-140, as amended by this act,  
900 together with the [serial] unique ballot identification number appearing  
901 on the [outer] return envelope of each absentee voting set issued to each  
902 such applicant.

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

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

912 (a) If a municipal clerk has omitted the name of a candidate, party or  
913 office designation, inserted an incorrect or misspelled name of a  
914 candidate, party or office designation, provided an absentee ballot  
915 applicant with a ballot which is not the correct ballot for [his] such  
916 applicant's voting district, or incorrectly imprinted or failed to imprint  
917 the designation of a state or local question on an absentee ballot in the

918 appropriate space, and if any such omission or error is likely to mislead  
919 any voter, [he] the clerk shall, as soon as [he] such clerk becomes aware  
920 of such omission or error, promptly mail to each applicant to whom  
921 such an absentee ballot has been issued, a correct absentee ballot, the  
922 necessary envelopes for its return and instructions, a statement  
923 explaining the error or omission including the correct name or question  
924 and a copy of this section. The municipal clerk shall inform the Secretary  
925 of the State when [he] such clerk proceeds under this subsection.

926 (b) Any additional absentee voting sets issued to applicants under  
927 this section shall be issued [in consecutive ascending numerical order  
928 based upon the serial number appearing on the outer] bearing a unique  
929 ballot identification number on the envelope for return of ballots to the  
930 municipal clerk, and the clerk shall keep a record of such unique ballot  
931 identification numbers by making a notation on, or attaching a  
932 memorandum to, the applicant's original application for an absentee  
933 ballot.

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

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

949 Sec. 14. Section 9-153e of the general statutes is repealed and the

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

951 A member of the armed forces who is an elector or an applicant for  
952 admission as an elector, or the member's spouse or dependent if living  
953 where such member is stationed, may apply before a regular election for  
954 a blank absentee ballot to vote for all offices being contested at the  
955 election. The municipal clerk shall make such ballots available for this  
956 purpose beginning not earlier than ninety days before the election.  
957 Application shall be made upon a form prescribed by the Secretary of  
958 the State or on the federal postcard application form provided pursuant  
959 to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 100 Stat.  
960 924, 42 USC 1973ff et seq., as amended from time to time, or any other  
961 applicable law and shall be issued only if the applicant states that due  
962 to military contingencies the regular application procedure, as set forth  
963 in section 9-140, as amended by this act, cannot be followed. Upon  
964 receipt of the application, the municipal clerk shall issue [the ballot] in  
965 the manner requested by the elector, either by mail or by electronic  
966 means, [as requested by the elector,] the ballot which shall be prescribed  
967 and provided by the Secretary of the State [,] and a list of the offices to  
968 be voted upon indicating the number of individuals for which each  
969 elector may vote. As soon as a complete list of nominated candidates,  
970 including the party designations of such candidates, and questions is  
971 available, the municipal clerk shall send such list to each applicant. If  
972 the list of candidates and questions is not available when the ballot is  
973 issued, the municipal clerk shall include a statement indicating that such  
974 list shall be [mailed] sent as soon as it becomes available. The ballot shall  
975 permit the elector to vote by writing in the names of specific candidates  
976 and offices for which [he] such elector is voting. The elector may also  
977 vote on the questions in a manner prescribed by the Secretary of the  
978 State. If such ballot is issued by electronic means, the municipal clerk at  
979 the time of such issuance shall include a certification, prescribed by the  
980 Secretary of the State, [that] which the elector shall be required to  
981 complete, sign and return with the completed ballot in order for such  
982 ballot to be counted. If the military contingency no longer exists,  
983 application for an additional ballot for all offices may be made pursuant

984 to the provisions of section 9-153b, as amended by this act.

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

987 Notwithstanding the provisions of section 9-140, as amended by this  
988 act, any elector who is living, or expects to be living or traveling before  
989 and on [election] the day of an election or primary, outside the territorial  
990 limits of the several states of the United States and the District of  
991 Columbia and any member of the armed forces who is an elector or an  
992 applicant for admission as an elector, or the member's spouse or  
993 dependent if living where such member is stationed, may apply for a  
994 blank absentee ballot to vote for all offices being contested at [an] such  
995 election or primary. Application shall be made upon a form prescribed  
996 by the Secretary of the State or on the federal postcard application form  
997 provided pursuant to the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee  
998 Voting Act, 100 Stat. 924, 42 USC 1973ff et seq., as amended from time  
999 to time, or any other applicable law. The municipal clerk receiving such  
1000 an application shall, as soon as a complete list of candidates and  
1001 questions to be voted upon at such election or primary becomes  
1002 available, issue [the ballot] in the manner requested by the elector, either  
1003 by mail or by electronic means, [as requested by the elector,] the ballot  
1004 which shall be the blank ballot prescribed and provided by the Secretary  
1005 of the State under section 9-153e, as amended by this act. The municipal  
1006 clerk shall include with the ballot a complete list of the offices to be  
1007 voted upon, the number of individuals for which each elector may vote,  
1008 the candidates, and, in the case of an election, the party designation of  
1009 each candidate and questions to be voted upon. If such ballot is issued  
1010 by electronic means, the municipal clerk at the time of such issuance  
1011 shall include a certification, prescribed by the Secretary of the State,  
1012 [that] which the elector shall be required to complete, sign and return  
1013 with the completed ballot in order for such ballot to be counted. [If  
1014 application for an absentee ballot is made at the time of availability of  
1015 regular absentee ballots as provided in section 9-140, the provisions of  
1016 section 9-140 shall prevail.] Except as otherwise provided in this section,  
1017 the procedures governing the issuance of ballots under this section shall

1018 conform as nearly as may be to the procedures provided in section 9-  
1019 140, as amended by this act.

1020 Sec. 16. Section 9-158e of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1021 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1022 (a) (1) A person applying for a presidential ballot in person shall  
1023 present: [(1)] (A) A current and valid photo identification, or [(2)] (B) a  
1024 copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check,  
1025 paycheck or other government document that shows the name and  
1026 address of the voter. [The application]

1027 (2) A person applying for a presidential ballot by mail shall [be  
1028 accompanied by] include with such application: (A) A copy of a current  
1029 and valid photo identification, or (B) a copy of a current utility bill, bank  
1030 statement, government check, paycheck or government document that  
1031 shows the name and address of the voter.

1032 (3) Upon receipt of an application for a presidential ballot under  
1033 sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive, the municipal clerk, if satisfied that  
1034 the application is proper and that the applicant is qualified to vote under  
1035 said sections, shall forthwith [give or mail to the applicant, as the case  
1036 may be] issue in the manner requested by the applicant, either by mail  
1037 or by electronic means, a ballot for presidential and vice-presidential  
1038 electors for use at the election and instructions and envelopes for [its]  
1039 the return of such ballot.

1040 (b) Upon receipt of an application for an overseas ballot, the  
1041 municipal clerk, if satisfied that the application is proper and that the  
1042 applicant is qualified to vote at the federal election for which the  
1043 application is made, pursuant to the provisions of sections 9-158b to 9-  
1044 158m, inclusive, shall forthwith [mail] issue in the manner requested by  
1045 the applicant, either by mail or by electronic means, a ballot containing  
1046 the names and offices of the candidates for federal office and  
1047 instructions and envelopes for [its return to the applicant] the return of  
1048 such ballot.

1049 Sec. 17. Section 9-158f of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1050 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1051 (a) The voter, after marking [his] such voter's presidential ballot so as  
1052 to express [his] such voter's choice, shall fold it so as to conceal the  
1053 markings, and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope furnished by the  
1054 town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have imprinted upon  
1055 its back a statement which shall be signed by the voter. The failure of  
1056 the voter to date the statement shall not invalidate the ballot. Such  
1057 statement shall be substantially as follows:

1058 Certification of Presidential Voter

1059 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false  
1060 statement in absentee balloting that:

1061 (1) I am qualified to vote for Presidential and Vice-Presidential  
1062 electors in the town of .... Connecticut, at the presidential election to be  
1063 held on November ....., 20...

1064 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for  
1065 Presidential and Vice-Presidential electors at said election from any  
1066 other town, city, county or state, and

1067 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot  
1068 in said presidential election.

1069 Dated at ....., this .... day of .... 20...

1070 .... (Signature of voter)

1071 .... (Printed name of voter)

1072 (b) The overseas elector, after marking [his] such elector's overseas  
1073 ballot so as to express [his] such elector's choice, shall fold it so as to  
1074 conceal the markings and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope  
1075 furnished by the town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have  
1076 imprinted upon its back a statement which shall be signed by the elector.

1077 The failure of the elector to date the statement shall not invalidate the  
1078 ballot. The statement shall be substantially as follows:

1079 Certification of Overseas Elector

1080 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false  
1081 statement in absentee balloting that:

1082 (1) I am qualified to vote for candidates for federal office in the town  
1083 of ..., Connecticut, at the federal election to be held on ..., 20...

1084 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for  
1085 candidates for federal office at said election from any other town, city or  
1086 county in Connecticut or in any other state or election district of any  
1087 state or territory or any territory or possession of the United States.

1088 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot  
1089 in said federal election.

1090 Dated at ..., this ... day of ..., 20...

1091 .... (Signature of overseas elector)

1092 .... (Printed name of overseas elector)

1093 Sec. 18. Section 9-158g of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1094 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1095 The voter shall sign the certification upon the [inner] return envelope,  
1096 [securely seal it, enclose it in an outer serially-numbered envelope]  
1097 insert the completed ballot in such return envelope, which shall bear a  
1098 return label displaying the unique ballot identification number both in  
1099 text format and as a scannable barcode, and return it to the municipal  
1100 clerk of the town in which [he] such voter is qualified to vote. The clerk  
1101 shall keep it in [his] the clerk's office until delivered by [him] such clerk  
1102 to the registrars of voters at the same time and in the same manner as [is  
1103 provided for absentee ballots] provided in section 9-140c, as amended  
1104 by this act. If the ballot is returned by a person other than the voter or

1105 the United States Postal Service, the person delivering the ballot shall  
1106 sign [his] such person's name and address and indicate the date and  
1107 time of [its] such ballot's delivery on the [outer] return envelope in the  
1108 clerk's presence. The ballot, to be cast, shall be returned so that [it] such  
1109 ballot is received by the [town] clerk not later than the close of the polls  
1110 on the day of the election.

1111 Sec. 19. Section 9-158h of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1112 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1113 The clerk shall prepare and keep open to public inspection a list of all  
1114 persons who have applied under sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive, to  
1115 vote as presidential voters or overseas electors with their names, voting  
1116 addresses and application dates together with the [serial number]  
1117 unique ballot identification numbers of the return envelopes issued, and  
1118 shall maintain an alphabetical index of the list for a period of one  
1119 hundred eighty days after the election or primary.

1120 Sec. 20. Section 9-159p of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1121 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1122 (a) Any elector may challenge the right of any person offering to vote  
1123 by absentee ballot based upon false identity, disenfranchisement for  
1124 conviction of a felony or lack of bona fide residence. The failure of an  
1125 elector to challenge, pursuant to this section, the right of a person to vote  
1126 by absentee ballot shall not bar such elector from bringing an action to  
1127 contest the primary or election under section 9-323, as amended by this  
1128 act, 9-324, as amended by this act, 9-328, as amended by this act, or 9-  
1129 329a, as amended by this act, based on the alleged invalidity of the  
1130 absentee ballot cast at such primary or election.

1131 (b) Challenges shall not be made indiscriminately and may only be  
1132 made if the challenger knows or reasonably believes that the right of the  
1133 person offering to vote by absentee ballot should be denied on one or  
1134 more of the grounds specified in subsection (a) of this section.

1135 (c) Challenges made concerning ballots that the municipal clerk has

1136 not delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections  
1137 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be made in writing to  
1138 the municipal clerk. Challenges made concerning ballots that the  
1139 municipal clerk has delivered to the registrars of voters for counting  
1140 pursuant to sections 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be  
1141 made in writing to the central counting moderator or the moderator of  
1142 the polling place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to  
1143 subsection (b) of section 9-147a. All challenges shall be made under oath.

1144 (d) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the municipal clerk shall  
1145 send copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters and to the person  
1146 offering to vote by absentee ballot. The municipal clerk shall send the  
1147 copy of the challenge to the person offering to vote by first class certified  
1148 mail to the mailing address shown on the application for the absentee  
1149 ballot. The municipal clerk shall furnish copies of any written response  
1150 to the challenge to each registrar of voters. The municipal clerk shall  
1151 deliver the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall not be  
1152 opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other evidence  
1153 relevant to the challenge, to the registrars, who shall sign a receipt for  
1154 the same.

1155 (e) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the moderator shall  
1156 deliver copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters. The moderator  
1157 shall also deliver, or designate another election, primary or referendum  
1158 official to deliver, the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall  
1159 not be opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other  
1160 evidence relevant to the challenge to the registrars, who shall sign a  
1161 receipt for the same.

1162 (f) The registrars of voters shall examine the challenge, any written  
1163 response to the challenge and any other evidence or information they  
1164 deem relevant to the challenge, including the [inner] return envelope,  
1165 which shall not be opened, and shall determine whether the challenge  
1166 should be upheld. If the registrars fail to agree that the challenge should  
1167 be upheld, it shall be deemed to have been denied.

1168 (g) The registrars of voters shall make the determination not earlier  
1169 than noon of the day of the election, primary or referendum at which  
1170 the ballot is submitted and not later than the time when the counting of  
1171 all other absentee ballots at the election, primary or referendum has  
1172 been completed.

1173 (h) The registrars of voters shall notify, in writing, the municipal clerk  
1174 and the central counting moderator, or the moderator of the polling  
1175 place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to subsection (b) of  
1176 section 9-147a, of their determination. If the challenge is denied, the  
1177 absentee ballot shall be delivered by the registrars to the appropriate  
1178 location for counting pursuant to law. If the challenge is upheld, the  
1179 registrars shall mark the word "rejected" on the [serially-numbered  
1180 outer] return envelope and note the reasons for rejection, and shall  
1181 return it together with all other evidence received in connection with the  
1182 challenge to the municipal clerk who shall retain the same until  
1183 delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act,  
1184 except that a challenge to a ballot which the municipal clerk has  
1185 delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections 9-  
1186 140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be returned to the  
1187 moderator to whom the challenge was made.

1188 (i) Within five days after the election, primary or referendum the  
1189 municipal clerk shall send to the person whose offer to vote was  
1190 challenged a copy of the written determination of the registrars and a  
1191 statement as to the disposition of the absentee ballot.

1192 Sec. 21. Subsections (g) to (l), inclusive, of section 9-159q of the  
1193 general statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
1194 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1195 (g) The registrars or their designees, as the case may be, shall jointly  
1196 deliver the ballots to the respective applicants at the institution and shall  
1197 jointly supervise the voting of such ballots. The ballots shall be returned  
1198 to the registrars or their designees by the electors in the envelopes  
1199 provided and in accordance with the provisions of sections 9-137, as

1200 amended by this act, [9-139] and 9-140a, as amended by this act. If any  
1201 elector asks for assistance in voting [his] such elector's ballot, two  
1202 registrars or their designees of different political parties or, for a  
1203 primary, their designees of different candidates, shall render such  
1204 assistance as they deem necessary and appropriate to enable such  
1205 elector to vote [his] the ballot. The registrars or their designees may  
1206 reject a ballot when (1) the elector declines to vote a ballot, or (2) the  
1207 registrars or their designees are unable to determine how the elector  
1208 who has requested their assistance desires to vote the ballot. When the  
1209 registrars or their designees reject a ballot, they shall mark the [serially-  
1210 numbered outer] return envelope "rejected" and note the reasons for  
1211 rejection. Nothing in this section shall limit the right of an elector to vote  
1212 [his] the ballot in secret.

1213 (h) After all ballots have been voted or marked "rejected" in  
1214 accordance with subsection (g) of this section, the registrars or their  
1215 designees shall jointly deliver or mail them in the envelopes, which shall  
1216 be sealed, to the appropriate town clerk, who shall retain them until  
1217 delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act.

1218 (i) When an institution is located in a town having a primary, the  
1219 registrar in that town of the party holding the primary shall appoint for  
1220 each such institution, one designee of the party-endorsed candidates  
1221 and one designee of the contestants from the lists, if any, submitted by  
1222 the party-endorsed candidates and contestants. Such registrar shall  
1223 notify all party-endorsed candidates and all contestants of their right to  
1224 submit a list of potential designees under this section. Each party-  
1225 endorsed candidate and each contestant may submit to such registrar in  
1226 writing a list of names of potential designees, provided any such list  
1227 shall be submitted not later than ten days before the primary. If no such  
1228 lists are submitted within said period, such registrar shall appoint one  
1229 designee of the party-endorsed candidates and one designee of the  
1230 contestants. Each designee appointed pursuant to this section shall be  
1231 sworn to the faithful performance of [his] such designee's duties, and  
1232 the registrar shall file a certificate of each designation with [his] the town  
1233 clerk.

1234 (j) Any registrar of voters who has filed a request that the absentee  
1235 balloting at an institution be supervised and any registrar required to  
1236 conduct a supervision of voting under this section, who neglects to  
1237 perform any of the duties required of [him] such registrar by this section  
1238 so as to cause any elector to lose [his] such elector's vote shall be guilty  
1239 of a class A misdemeanor. Any registrar from the same town as a  
1240 registrar who has filed such a request may waive [his] the right to  
1241 participate in the supervision of absentee balloting.

1242 (k) Notwithstanding any provision of this section, if the spouse or a  
1243 child of a registrar of voters or a dependent relative residing in the  
1244 registrar's household is a candidate in the election or primary for which  
1245 supervised absentee voting is to occur, such registrar shall not supervise  
1246 such absentee voting but may designate the deputy registrar of voters  
1247 or an assistant registrar of voters, appointed by the registrar pursuant to  
1248 section 9-192, to supervise the absentee voting in [his] such registrar's  
1249 place.

1250 (l) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the  
1251 Secretary of the State may suspend the supervision of absentee balloting  
1252 under this section and section 9-159r, provided the Secretary (1)  
1253 suspends such supervision of absentee balloting in recognition of a  
1254 declaration by the Governor of a civil preparedness emergency,  
1255 pursuant to section 28-9, or a public health emergency, pursuant to  
1256 section 19-131a, and (2) submits a report, in accordance with section 11-  
1257 4a, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having  
1258 cognizance of matters relating to elections advising of such suspension  
1259 and specifying alternative actions to be taken to provide opportunities  
1260 for absentee voting by electors described in this section and section 9-  
1261 159r.

1262 Sec. 22. Subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the 2026  
1263 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
1264 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1265 (1) To make investigations on its own initiative or with respect to

1266 statements filed with the commission by the Secretary of the State, any  
1267 town clerk or any registrar of voters or upon written complaint under  
1268 oath by any individual, with respect to alleged violations of any  
1269 provision of the general statutes relating to any election or referendum,  
1270 any primary held pursuant to section 9-423, 9-425 or 9-464 or any  
1271 primary held pursuant to a special act, or alleged violations of any  
1272 regulation adopted under any such provision, and to hold hearings  
1273 when the commission deems necessary to investigate violations of any  
1274 provisions of the general statutes relating to any such election, primary  
1275 or referendum, or violations of any regulation adopted under any such  
1276 provisions, and for the purpose of such hearings the commission may  
1277 administer oaths, examine witnesses and receive oral and documentary  
1278 evidence, and shall have the power to subpoena witnesses under  
1279 procedural rules the commission shall adopt, to compel their attendance  
1280 and to require the production for examination of any books and papers  
1281 which the commission deems relevant to any matter under investigation  
1282 or in question. Until the commission determines that it is necessary to  
1283 investigate a violation, commission members and staff shall keep  
1284 confidential any information concerning a complaint or preliminary  
1285 investigation, except upon request of the treasurer, deputy treasurer,  
1286 chairperson or candidate affiliated with a committee that is the subject  
1287 of the complaint or preliminary investigation. In connection with its  
1288 investigation of any alleged violation of any provision of chapter 145, or  
1289 of any provision of section 9-359 or section 9-359a, as amended by this  
1290 act, the commission shall also have the power to subpoena any  
1291 municipal clerk and to require the production for examination of any  
1292 absentee ballot, [inner and outer] return envelope from which any such  
1293 ballot has been removed, depository envelope containing any such  
1294 ballot or [inner or outer] return envelope as provided in sections 9-150a,  
1295 as amended by this act, and 9-150b, as amended by this act, and any  
1296 other record, form or document as provided in section 9-150b, as  
1297 amended by this act, in connection with the election, primary or  
1298 referendum to which the investigation relates. In case of a refusal to  
1299 comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this subsection or to  
1300 testify with respect to any matter upon which that person may be

1301 lawfully interrogated, the superior court for the judicial district of  
1302 Hartford, on application of the commission, may issue an order  
1303 requiring such person to comply with such subpoena and to testify;  
1304 failure to obey any such order of the court may be punished by the court  
1305 as a contempt thereof. In any matter under investigation which concerns  
1306 the operation or inspection of or outcome recorded on any voting  
1307 tabulator, the commission may issue an order to the registrars of voters  
1308 to impound such tabulator until the investigation is completed;

1309 Sec. 23. Subsection (e) of section 9-23r of the general statutes is  
1310 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
1311 *passage*):

1312 (e) If an individual described in subsection (a) of this section does not  
1313 submit the identification described in subsection (a) of this section as  
1314 part of the individual's application for admission as an elector, and if the  
1315 individual votes by absentee ballot in an election for federal office, the  
1316 individual shall enclose in the [outer absentee ballot envelope, and not  
1317 in the inner envelope with the ballot] additional envelope provided by  
1318 the municipal clerk pursuant to section 9-140a, as amended by this act,  
1319 for the return of such applicant's identification: (1) A copy of a current  
1320 and valid photo identification, or (2) a copy of a current utility bill, bank  
1321 statement, government check, paycheck, or other government  
1322 document that shows the name and address of the voter. If an individual  
1323 does not meet the requirements of this subsection in an election for  
1324 federal office, such [individual's] individual's absentee ballot shall be  
1325 processed in accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (A) of  
1326 subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of section 9-150a, as amended by this  
1327 act, and treated as a provisional ballot for federal office only, pursuant  
1328 to sections 9-232i to 9-232o, inclusive.

1329 Sec. 24. Section 9-359a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1330 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1331 (a) A person is guilty of false statement in absentee balloting when  
1332 [he] such person intentionally makes a false written statement in or on,

1333 or signs the name of another person to, the application for an absentee  
1334 ballot or the [inner] return envelope accompanying any such ballot,  
1335 which [he] such person does not believe to be true and which statement  
1336 or signature is intended to mislead a public servant in the performance  
1337 of [his] such public servant's official function.

1338 (b) False statement in absentee balloting is a class D felony.

1339 Sec. 25. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of  
1340 section 9-369b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
1341 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1342 (B) Each such explanatory text shall be prepared by the municipal  
1343 clerk and shall specify the intent and purpose of each such proposal or  
1344 question. Such explanatory text shall not advocate either the approval  
1345 or disapproval of the proposal or question. The municipal clerk shall  
1346 cause such question or proposal and such explanatory text to be printed  
1347 in sufficient supply for public dissemination and shall also provide for  
1348 the printing of such explanations of proposals or questions on posters  
1349 of a size to be determined by said clerk. At least three such posters shall  
1350 be posted at each polling place at which electors will be voting on such  
1351 proposals or questions. Any posters printed in excess of the number  
1352 required by this section to be posted may be displayed by said clerk at  
1353 the clerk's discretion at locations which are frequented by the public.  
1354 The explanatory text shall also be furnished to each absentee ballot  
1355 applicant pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of section 9-140,  
1356 as amended by this act. Each such explanatory text shall be subject to  
1357 the approval of the municipal attorney.

1358 Sec. 26. Section 9-369a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1359 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1360 Whenever by law it is provided that a question may be submitted to  
1361 a vote of the electors of a municipality at an election, as that term is  
1362 defined in section 9-1:

1363 (a) The electors of the municipality [entitled to vote] voting by

1364 absentee ballot at the election under the provisions of section 9-135, as  
1365 amended by this act, [shall be entitled to] may vote upon any such  
1366 question.

1367 (b) When the clerk of the municipality determines that the necessary  
1368 action has been taken for submission of the question, [he] the clerk shall,  
1369 at least forty-five days prior to the election, file in the office of the  
1370 Secretary of the State a statement setting forth the designation of the  
1371 question as it is to appear on the ballot at the election, the date upon  
1372 which the submitting action was taken and the reference to the law  
1373 under which the action was taken. Such designation shall be in the form  
1374 of a question, as provided in section 9-369. Whenever it is specifically  
1375 provided in the general statutes that any such question may be  
1376 approved for such submission within the period of forty-five days prior  
1377 to such an election, and action is taken to submit a question within such  
1378 period, the clerk of the municipality shall file the statement required by  
1379 this subsection with the Secretary of the State immediately upon the  
1380 taking of such action.

1381 (c) When action is taken for submission of a question, from the time  
1382 of such action through the day of the election, the clerk of the  
1383 municipality shall make the full text of the question and the designation  
1384 which is to appear upon the ballot available for public inspection. If the  
1385 designation is not prescribed by law, the clerk shall phrase the  
1386 designation of the question in a form suitable for printing on the ballot.  
1387 The warning of the election shall include a statement that the question  
1388 is to be voted upon, the designation of the question to appear on the  
1389 ballot, and a statement that the full text of the question is available for  
1390 public inspection in the clerk's office.

1391 (d) The moderator or head moderator of the election shall file the  
1392 results of the vote on each such question and the returns of the election  
1393 with the Secretary of the State in the manner prescribed under the  
1394 provisions of section 9-314 or other applicable law.

1395 Sec. 27. Subsection (b) of section 9-369c of the general statutes is

1396 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1,*  
1397 *2026*):

1398 (b) At any such referendum, any person who [would be] is eligible to  
1399 vote on the question or proposal [if he appeared in person and is unable  
1400 to] and who will not appear in person [for one or more of the reasons  
1401 set forth in section 9-135,] may cast [his] such person's vote by absentee  
1402 ballot, in accordance with the requirements of this section.

1403 Sec. 28. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (4) of subsection (a) of  
1404 section 9-163aa of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes, as  
1405 amended by section 69 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following  
1406 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1407 (B) Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent an individual  
1408 who enrolls in a political party during a period of early voting at a  
1409 primary from voting by absentee ballot [, if eligible,] or in person on the  
1410 day of such primary.

1411 Sec. 29. Subparagraph (A) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of  
1412 section 9-164 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is  
1413 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

1414 (a) (1) (A) On and after January 1, [~~2022~~] 2027, and notwithstanding  
1415 any contrary provision of law, there shall be held in each municipality  
1416 [~~]~~ biennially, or quadrennially if the charter of such municipality so  
1417 provides, a municipal election on the Tuesday after the first Monday of  
1418 November of the odd-numbered years, except that such municipal  
1419 election may be held on the first Monday of May of the odd-numbered  
1420 years if the legislative body of such municipality so determines by a  
1421 three-fourths vote.

1422 Sec. 30. Subsection (b) of section 9-19b of the general statutes is  
1423 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*  
1424 *passage*):

1425 (b) Except during the period between the last session for the

1426 admission of electors prior to an election and the day following that  
1427 election, either registrar of voters, or a deputy registrar or assistant  
1428 registrar appointed in accordance with the provisions of section 9-192  
1429 may examine the qualifications of any person applying to be admitted  
1430 as an elector in the town and, except for applications submitted  
1431 pursuant to subdivision (4) of this subsection, approve such application  
1432 submitted in person (1) at the office of such official; (2) at any enrollment  
1433 session of the registrars of voters; (3) at any public place; (4) at any time  
1434 and at any place in the town, other than a public place, that is mutually  
1435 agreed upon by such official and the person applying to be admitted as  
1436 an elector in the town; or (5) at any public office of the Department of  
1437 Motor Vehicles, Labor Department or Department of Social Services  
1438 which is located in the town in which the registrar, deputy registrar or  
1439 assistant registrar serves, if written notice of the date and time is given  
1440 seven days in advance thereof to the commissioner of such department.  
1441 Upon receipt of a written notice under subdivision (5) of this subsection,  
1442 the commissioner of the department may designate a portion of the  
1443 public office which shall be used for the admission of electors. The other  
1444 registrar, or any deputy or assistant registrar, shall be permitted to be  
1445 present during the admission of any person pursuant to subdivisions (4)  
1446 and (5) of this subsection. Applications accepted and examined prior to  
1447 the last session for admission of electors prior to an election pursuant to  
1448 subdivision (4) of this subsection may be approved after such last  
1449 session. The admission of any person pursuant to subdivision (4) shall  
1450 be effective on the date when both registrars approve such application.  
1451 The registrar who receives such application from the applicant shall  
1452 give written notice to the other registrar within one business day after  
1453 such receipt and the registrars shall forthwith act on such applications.  
1454 No rejection of any application under subdivision (4) of this subsection  
1455 shall be effective until the registrar has mailed to the other registrar and  
1456 the applicant a notice stating any reason for the rejection. Any applicant  
1457 whose application is rejected may appeal under the provisions of section  
1458 9-31l.

1459 Sec. 31. Section 9-258 of the general statutes is repealed and the

1460 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

1461 (a) (1) For municipalities with more than one voting district, the  
1462 election officials of each polling place shall be electors of the state and  
1463 shall consist of [(1)] (A) one moderator, [(2)] (B) at least one but not more  
1464 than two official checkers, [(3)] (C) two assistant registrars of voters of  
1465 opposite political parties, each of whom shall be residents of the town,  
1466 [(4)] (D) at least one but not more than two ballot clerks, and [(5)] (E) at  
1467 least one but not more than two voting tabulator tenders for each voting  
1468 tabulator in use at the polling place. Head moderators, central counting  
1469 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law  
1470 shall also be deemed election officials.

1471 (2) A known candidate for any office shall not serve as an election  
1472 official on election day or serve at the polls in any capacity, except that  
1473 (A) a municipal clerk or a registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the  
1474 same office, may perform his or her official duties, [and] (B) a deputy  
1475 registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the office of registrar of voters,  
1476 may perform his or her official duties, and (C) an assistant municipal  
1477 clerk, who is a candidate for the office of municipal clerk, may perform  
1478 his or her official duties.

1479 (3) If, in the opinion of the registrar of voters, the public convenience  
1480 of the electors in any voting district so requires, provision shall be made  
1481 for an additional line or lines of electors at the polling place and, if more  
1482 than one line of electors is established, at least one but not more than  
1483 two additional official checkers and at least one but not more than two  
1484 ballot clerks for each line of electors shall be appointed and, if more than  
1485 one tabulator is used in a polling place, at least one but not more than  
1486 two additional voting tabulator tenders shall be appointed for each  
1487 additional machine so used. [Head moderators, central counting  
1488 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law  
1489 shall also be deemed election officials.]

1490 (b) (1) For municipalities with one voting district, the election officials  
1491 of such polling place shall be electors of the state and shall consist of

1492 [(1)] (A) one moderator, [(2)] (B) at least one but not more than two  
1493 official checkers, [(3)] (C) at least one but not more than two voting  
1494 tabulator tenders for each voting tabulator in use at the polling place,  
1495 and [(4)] (D) at least one but not more than two ballot clerks.  
1496 Additionally, such election officials may consist of two registrars of  
1497 voters of opposite political parties, or two assistant registrars of voters  
1498 of opposite political parties, as the case may be, subject to the  
1499 requirements of sections 9-259 and 9-439, provided if the registrars of  
1500 voters are present in the polling place, they shall appoint at least one  
1501 designee to be present in their office. Head moderators, central counting  
1502 moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed pursuant to law  
1503 shall also be deemed election officials.

1504 (2) A known candidate for any office shall not serve as an election  
1505 official on election day or serve at the polls in any capacity, except that  
1506 (A) a municipal clerk or a registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the  
1507 same office, may perform his or her official duties, [and] (B) a deputy  
1508 registrar of voters, who is a candidate for the office of registrar of voters,  
1509 may perform his or her official duties, and (C) an assistant municipal  
1510 clerk, who is a candidate for the office of municipal clerk, may perform  
1511 his or her official duties.

1512 (3) If, in the opinion of the registrar of voters, the public convenience  
1513 of the electors in any voting district so requires, provision shall be made  
1514 for an additional line or lines of electors at the polling place and, if more  
1515 than one line of electors is established, at least one but not more than  
1516 two additional official checkers for each line of electors shall be  
1517 appointed and, if more than one tabulator is used in a polling place, at  
1518 least one but not more than two additional voting tabulator tenders shall  
1519 be appointed for each additional tabulator so used. [Head moderators,  
1520 central counting moderators and absentee ballot counters appointed  
1521 pursuant to law shall be deemed to be election officials.]

1522 (c) No election official shall perform services for any party or  
1523 candidate on election day nor appear at any political party headquarters  
1524 prior to eight o'clock p.m. on election day.

1525 Sec. 32. Section 9-190b of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1526 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

1527 If [a registrar of voters fails] one or more registrars of voters or deputy  
1528 registrars of voters of a municipality fail to attain or maintain,  
1529 whichever is applicable, certification required under subsection (a) of  
1530 section 9-192a, as amended by this act, or [is the subject] are the subjects  
1531 of an investigation of any matter related to the duties of [such registrar's  
1532 office] the office of the registrars of voters of such municipality resulting  
1533 from a statement filed with the State Elections Enforcement Commission  
1534 by the Secretary of the State, the Secretary may issue a written  
1535 instruction, pursuant to section 9-3, as amended by this act, to [such  
1536 registrar] any or all such registrars or deputy registrars to appear before  
1537 the Secretary on the date and at such time as provided in such  
1538 instruction. The Secretary shall cite the reasons for such instruction and  
1539 inform each such registrar or deputy registrar so appearing that such  
1540 appearance is for the purpose of determining whether to temporarily  
1541 relieve such registrar or deputy registrar of his or her duties as provided  
1542 in this section. [The registrar shall appear before the Secretary and] Each  
1543 such registrar or deputy registrar so appearing shall be given a fair  
1544 opportunity to show cause, if any, why such registrar or deputy  
1545 registrar should not be temporarily relieved of his or her duties. If, after  
1546 such opportunity, the Secretary determines that the public interest in the  
1547 orderly conduct of elections would be so served, the Secretary may  
1548 temporarily relieve any such registrar or deputy registrar of his or her  
1549 duties and, in the case of a registrar so temporarily relieved, require the  
1550 deputy registrar [of voters] appointed by such registrar to administer  
1551 the operations of such office until such certification has been attained or  
1552 maintained or until the State Elections Enforcement Commission has  
1553 completed such investigation and taken final action on such matter. The  
1554 proceeding described in this section shall not be considered a contested  
1555 case under chapter 54. Nothing in this section shall prohibit a  
1556 municipality from paying the salary of any such registrar of voters or  
1557 deputy registrar of voters while such resolution is pending.

1558 Sec. 33. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) If any municipal official,

1559 including any election worker, as defined in section 9-364a of the  
1560 general statutes, as amended by this act, receives from any private or  
1561 governmental entity, individual or official a subpoena, warrant or other  
1562 request for or to inspect any record or recording of or produced at, or  
1563 any tabulator, ballot box or other device used in the conduct of, any  
1564 election, primary or referendum, such municipal official shall, not later  
1565 than thirty-six hours after the receipt of such subpoena, warrant or other  
1566 request, provide a copy of such subpoena, warrant or other request to  
1567 the offices of the Attorney General and the Secretary of the State. The  
1568 offices of the Attorney General and the Secretary of the State shall post  
1569 notice, on each of said offices' Internet web sites, of the methods by  
1570 which a municipal official may provide such copy to said offices. In the  
1571 case of the Secretary of the State receiving such a subpoena, warrant or  
1572 other request, the Secretary shall immediately provide a copy of such  
1573 subpoena, warrant or other request to the office of the Attorney General.

1574 Sec. 34. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section,  
1575 "election worker" means any municipal clerk, assistant municipal clerk,  
1576 registrar of voters, deputy registrar of voters or election official  
1577 described in section 9-258 of the general statutes, as amended by this act.

1578 (b) The Attorney General may seek preliminary or permanent  
1579 injunctive, declaratory or other appropriate equitable relief to prevent  
1580 or redress interference in connection with any election for presidential  
1581 electors, a senator in Congress or representative in Congress by bringing  
1582 a complaint to any judge of the Supreme Court, in which the Attorney  
1583 General shall set out the claimed interference. The Attorney General  
1584 shall file a certification attached to the complaint indicating that a copy  
1585 of the complaint has been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the  
1586 Secretary of the State, the State Elections Enforcement Commission and  
1587 any other interested party. If such complaint is made prior to such  
1588 election, such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render judgment on  
1589 the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be given to the  
1590 Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement Commission.  
1591 If such complaint is made subsequent to the election, it shall be brought  
1592 not later than fourteen days after the election. Upon receipt of such

1593 complaint, such judge shall forthwith order any injunctive or  
1594 declaratory relief necessary to preserve or restore the status quo,  
1595 including, but not limited to, ordering that an election worker retain  
1596 custody of any record or recording of or produced at, or any tabulator,  
1597 ballot box or other device used in the conduct of, such election. Upon a  
1598 showing of exigent circumstances, such judge may issue an immediate  
1599 ex parte order granting such relief as such judge deems appropriate.  
1600 Such judge shall forthwith order a hearing to be had upon such  
1601 complaint, upon a day not more than five or less than three days from  
1602 the making of such order, and shall cause notice of not less than three or  
1603 more than five days to be given to any candidate or candidates whose  
1604 election may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to any  
1605 election worker who may be affected by the decision upon such hearing,  
1606 to the Secretary of the State, to the State Elections Enforcement  
1607 Commission and to any other party or parties whom such judge deems  
1608 proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing upon such  
1609 complaint. Such judge, with two other judges of the Supreme Court to  
1610 be designated by the Chief Court Administrator, shall, on the day fixed  
1611 for such hearing and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the  
1612 parties. If sufficient reason is shown, such judges may order that the  
1613 State Elections Enforcement Commission maintain custody of any  
1614 record or recording of or produced at, or any tabulator, ballot box or  
1615 other device used in the conduct of, such election. If sufficient reason is  
1616 shown, such judges may order permanent injunctive, declaratory or  
1617 other appropriate equitable relief in connection with the State Elections  
1618 Enforcement Commission or election worker custody of any record or  
1619 recording of or produced at, or any tabulator, ballot box or other device  
1620 used in the conduct of, such election.

1621 Sec. 35. Section 9-311 of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes,  
1622 as amended by sections 91 and 92 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the  
1623 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1624 (a) If, within three days after an election, it appears to the moderator  
1625 that there is a discrepancy in the returns of any voting district, such  
1626 moderator shall forthwith within said period summon, by written

1627 notice delivered personally, the recanvass officials, consisting of at least  
1628 two checkers of different political parties and at least two absentee ballot  
1629 counters of different political parties who served at such election, and  
1630 the registrars of voters of the municipality in which the election was  
1631 held and such other officials as may be required to conduct such  
1632 recanvass. Such written notice shall require the clerk or registrars of  
1633 voters, as the case may be, to bring with them the depository envelopes  
1634 required by section 9-150a, as amended by [this act] public act 26-1, the  
1635 package of write-in ballots provided for in section 9-310, the absentee  
1636 ballot applications, the list of absentee ballot applications, the registry  
1637 list and the moderators' returns and shall require such recanvass  
1638 officials to meet at a specified time not later than the fifth business day  
1639 after such election to recanvass the returns of each voting tabulator,  
1640 except as provided in subsection (e) of this section, and all absentee  
1641 ballots and write-in ballots used in the municipality in such election. If  
1642 any of such recanvass officials are unavailable at the time of the  
1643 recanvass, the registrar of voters of the same political party as that of the  
1644 recanvass official unable to attend shall designate another elector  
1645 having previous training and experience in the conduct of elections to  
1646 take such recanvass official's place. Before such recanvass is made, such  
1647 moderator shall give notice, in writing, to the chairperson of the town  
1648 committee of each political party which nominated candidates for the  
1649 election, and, in the case of a state election, not later than twenty-four  
1650 hours after a determination is made regarding the need for a recanvass  
1651 to the Secretary of the State, of the time and place where such recanvass  
1652 is to be made; and each such chairperson may send party  
1653 representatives to be present at such recanvass. Such party  
1654 representatives may observe, but no one other than a recanvass official  
1655 may take part in the recanvass. If a party representative notes any  
1656 irregularity in the recanvass procedure, such party representative shall  
1657 be permitted to present evidence of such irregularity in any contest  
1658 relating to the election.

1659 (b) The moderator shall determine the place or places, which may  
1660 include the office of the Secretary of the State, where the recanvass shall

1661 be conducted and, if such recanvass is held before the tabulators are  
1662 boxed and collected in the manner required by section 9-266, the  
1663 moderator may require that such recanvass of such tabulators be  
1664 conducted in each place where the tabulators are located, or the  
1665 moderator may require that such tabulators be removed to one central  
1666 place where such recanvass shall be conducted. All recanvassing  
1667 procedures shall be open to public observation, subject to the provisions  
1668 of subsection (d) of this section. Such recanvass officials shall, in the  
1669 presence of such moderator and registrars of voters, make a record of  
1670 the number on the seal and the number on the protective counter, if one  
1671 is provided, on each voting tabulator specified by such moderator. Such  
1672 registrars of voters in the presence of such moderator shall turn over the  
1673 keys of each such tabulator to such recanvass officials, and such  
1674 recanvass officials, in the presence of such registrars of voters and  
1675 moderator, shall immediately proceed to recanvass the vote cast  
1676 thereon, and shall then open the package of absentee ballots and  
1677 recanvass the vote cast thereon. In the course of the recanvass of the  
1678 absentee ballot vote the recanvass officials shall check all [outer] return  
1679 envelopes for absentee ballots [against the inner envelopes for such  
1680 ballots and] against the registry list to verify postmarks, addresses and  
1681 registry list markings and also to determine whether the number of  
1682 envelopes from which absentee ballots have been removed is the same  
1683 as the number of persons checked as having voted by absentee ballot.  
1684 The write-in ballots shall also be recanvassed at this time. Any party  
1685 representative present shall have a right to view each ballot as it is being  
1686 recanvassed by the recanvass officials, so as to be able to discern the  
1687 markings on such ballot. All of the recanvass officials shall use the same  
1688 forms for tallies and returns as were used at the original canvass and the  
1689 absentee ballot counters shall also sign the tallies.

1690 (c) The votes shall be announced and recorded in the manner  
1691 prescribed in section 9-309 on return forms provided by the registrars of  
1692 voters and appended thereto shall be a statement signed by the  
1693 moderator indicating the time and place of the recanvass and the names,  
1694 addresses, titles and party affiliations of the recanvass officials. The

1695 write-in ballots shall be replaced in a properly secured sealed package.  
1696 Upon the completion of such recanvass, any tabulator used in such  
1697 recanvass shall be locked and sealed, the keys thereof shall immediately  
1698 be returned to such registrars of voters and such tabulator shall remain  
1699 so locked until the expiration of fourteen days after such election or for  
1700 such longer period as is ordered by a court of competent jurisdiction.  
1701 The absentee ballots shall be replaced in their wrappers and be resealed  
1702 by the moderator in the presence of the recanvass officials. Upon the  
1703 completion of such recanvass, such moderator and at least two of the  
1704 recanvass officials of different political parties shall forthwith prepare  
1705 and sign such return forms which shall contain a written statement  
1706 giving the result of such recanvass for each tabulator and each package  
1707 of absentee ballots whose returns were so recanvassed, setting forth  
1708 whether or not the original canvass was correctly made and stating  
1709 whether or not the discrepancy still remains unaccounted for. Such  
1710 return forms containing such statement shall forthwith be filed by the  
1711 moderator in the office of such clerk. If such recanvass reveals that the  
1712 original canvass of returns was not correctly made, such return forms  
1713 containing such statement so filed with the clerk shall constitute a  
1714 corrected return. In the case of a state election, a recanvass return shall  
1715 be made in duplicate on a form prescribed and provided by the  
1716 Secretary of the State, and the moderator shall file one copy with the  
1717 Secretary of the State and one copy with the town clerk not later than  
1718 ten days after the election. Such recanvass return shall be substituted for  
1719 the original return and shall have the same force and effect as an original  
1720 return.

1721 (d) (1) The moderator may, when any disorder arises that interferes  
1722 with the conduct of a recanvass, including any attempt by a person other  
1723 than a recanvass official to take part in such recanvass or by such a  
1724 person to communicate with a recanvass official, and the offender  
1725 refuses to submit to the moderator's lawful authority, order that the  
1726 offender be removed by the recanvass officials from such recanvass until  
1727 the offender conforms to order or, if need be, until such recanvass is  
1728 completed.

1729 (2) Each political party or, in the case of an office subject to recanvass  
1730 for which there is more than one candidate from a political party, each  
1731 candidate may appoint one representative to communicate directly with  
1732 the moderator during a recanvass.

1733 (e) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) to (c),  
1734 inclusive, of this section, a recanvass under this section may be  
1735 conducted with, instead of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators  
1736 used at the election, either a different voting tabulator or a high-speed  
1737 voting tabulator whenever (A) such recanvass is conducted at the office  
1738 of the Secretary of the State, or (B) such recanvass is conducted in the  
1739 municipality in which such election was held and both (i) the moderator  
1740 requests to borrow from the Secretary of the State either a different  
1741 voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and  
1742 (ii) the Secretary agrees to such request.

1743 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance  
1744 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this  
1745 subsection.

1746 [(e)] (f) As used in this section, (1) "moderator" means, in the case of  
1747 municipalities not divided into voting districts, the moderator of the  
1748 election and, in the case of municipalities divided into voting districts,  
1749 the head moderator of the election, and (2) "registrars of voters", in a  
1750 municipality where there are different registrars of voters for different  
1751 voting districts, means the registrars of voters in the voting district in  
1752 which, at the last-preceding election, the presiding officer for the  
1753 purpose of declaring the result of the vote of the whole municipality was  
1754 moderator.

1755 Sec. 36. Section 9-311a of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes,  
1756 as amended by section 93 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the  
1757 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1758 (a) For purposes of this section, state, district and municipal offices  
1759 shall be as defined in section 9-372 except that the office of presidential  
1760 elector shall be deemed a state office. Forthwith after a regular or special

1761 election for municipal office, or forthwith upon tabulation of the vote  
1762 for state and district offices by the Secretary of the State, when at any  
1763 such election the plurality of an elected candidate for an office over the  
1764 vote for a defeated candidate receiving the next highest number of votes  
1765 was either (1) less than a vote equivalent to one-half of one per cent of  
1766 the total number of votes cast for the office but not more than two  
1767 thousand votes, or (2) less than twenty votes, there shall be a recanvass  
1768 of the returns of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators and absentee  
1769 ballots used in such election for such office unless such defeated  
1770 candidate or defeated candidates, as the case may be, for such office file  
1771 a written statement waiving this right to such canvass with the  
1772 municipal clerk in the case of a municipal office, or with the Secretary of  
1773 the State in the case of a state or district office. In the case of state and  
1774 district offices, the Secretary of the State upon tabulation of the votes for  
1775 such offices shall notify the town clerks in the state or district, as the case  
1776 may be, of the state and district offices which qualify for an automatic  
1777 recanvass and shall also notify each candidate for any such office. When  
1778 a recanvass is to be held, the municipal clerk shall promptly notify the  
1779 moderator, as defined in section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public  
1780 act 26-1, who shall proceed forthwith to cause a recanvass of such  
1781 returns of the office in question in the same manner as is provided in  
1782 section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public act 26-1. In addition to the  
1783 notice required under section 9-311, as amended by [this act] public act  
1784 26-1, the moderator shall, before such recanvass is [made] conducted,  
1785 give notice in writing to each candidate for a municipal office that  
1786 qualifies for an automatic recanvass under this section of the time when  
1787 [.] and place, which may include the office of the Secretary of the State,  
1788 where [.] such recanvass is to be [made to each candidate for a municipal  
1789 office which qualifies for an automatic recanvass under this section]  
1790 conducted. Nothing in this section shall preclude the right to judicial  
1791 proceedings on behalf of a candidate under any provision of chapter  
1792 149. For the purposes of this section, "the total number of votes cast for  
1793 the office" means, in the case of multiple openings for the same office,  
1794 the total number of electors checked as having voted in the state, district,  
1795 municipality or political subdivision, as the case may be. When a

1796 recanvass of the returns for an office for which there are multiple  
1797 openings is required by the provisions of this section, the returns for all  
1798 candidates for all openings for the office shall be recanvassed. If a  
1799 candidate notes any irregularity in the recanvass procedure, such  
1800 candidate shall be permitted to present evidence of such irregularity in  
1801 any contest relating to the election.

1802 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this  
1803 section, a recanvass under this section may be conducted with, instead  
1804 of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators used at the election, either a  
1805 different voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator whenever  
1806 (A) such recanvass is conducted at the office of the Secretary of the State,  
1807 or (B) such recanvass is conducted in the municipality in which such  
1808 election was held and both (i) the moderator requests to borrow from  
1809 the Secretary of the State either a different voting tabulator or a high-  
1810 speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and (ii) the Secretary agrees to  
1811 such request.

1812 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance  
1813 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this  
1814 subsection.

1815 Sec. 37. Section 9-311b of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1816 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1817 (a) If the electors fail to elect a candidate for any office by reason of  
1818 an equality of votes at any election, there shall be a recanvass of the  
1819 returns for such office, in the same manner as is provided in section 9-  
1820 311, as amended by this act, unless, prior to the time of such recanvass,  
1821 all but one of the candidates so receiving an equal number of votes dies,  
1822 withdraws his name or for any reason becomes disqualified to hold such  
1823 office.

1824 (b) (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this  
1825 section, a recanvass under this section may be conducted with, instead  
1826 of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators used at the election, a  
1827 different voting tabulator or a high-speed voting tabulator whenever

1828 (A) such recanvass is conducted at the office of the Secretary of the State,  
1829 or (B) such recanvass is conducted in the municipality in which such  
1830 election was held and both (i) the moderator requests to borrow from  
1831 the Secretary of the State either a different voting tabulator or a high-  
1832 speed voting tabulator for such purpose, and (ii) the Secretary agrees to  
1833 such request.

1834 (2) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance  
1835 with the provisions of chapter 54, to implement the provisions of this  
1836 subsection.

1837 Sec. 38. Section 9-23l of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1838 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1839 Registrars of voters shall accept the mail voter registration  
1840 application form prescribed by the [Federal] Election Assistance  
1841 Commission pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993,  
1842 P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time, as an application for  
1843 admission as an elector for all elections in Connecticut. The procedures  
1844 in subsections (c), (d), (f) and (g) of section 9-23g which are not  
1845 inconsistent with the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, P.L. 103-  
1846 31, as amended from time to time, shall apply to applications made  
1847 under this section.

1848 Sec. 39. Section 9-23m of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1849 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1850 The Secretary of the State shall make available for distribution the  
1851 mail voter registration application form prescribed by the [Federal]  
1852 Election Assistance Commission pursuant to the National Voter  
1853 Registration Act of 1993, P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time. The  
1854 secretary may make any changes in any forms required by this title  
1855 which, in the opinion of the secretary, are necessary to cause said forms  
1856 to conform to the provisions of applicable federal law.

1857 Sec. 40. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Any citizen who has not yet  
1858 attained the age of eighteen years but who will have attained the age of

1859 eighteen years on or before the day of an election, and who is otherwise  
1860 qualified to be an elector and has applied for admission as an elector,  
1861 may vote at such election during the period of early voting or by  
1862 absentee ballot.

1863 Sec. 41. Section 9-374 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1864 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2026*):

1865 (a) No authority of the state or any political subdivision thereof  
1866 having jurisdiction over the conduct of any primary shall permit the  
1867 name of a party-endorsed candidate for an office or position to be  
1868 printed on the official ballot to be used at any such primary unless a  
1869 copy of the party rules regulating such party and its method of selecting  
1870 party-endorsed candidates for nomination to such office or for election  
1871 as town committee members, as the case may be, has been filed in the  
1872 office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such  
1873 candidate is selected under such method of endorsement. The selection  
1874 of delegates to conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of  
1875 the party rules regulating the manner of making such selection has been  
1876 filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before  
1877 such selection is made. A duplicate copy of such rules shall also be filed  
1878 with the state central committee of such party. A copy of the local party  
1879 rules, relating to a party in a municipality, shall be filed forthwith by the  
1880 town chairman or the secretary of the town committee of such party in  
1881 such municipality with the Secretary of the State. The state party rules  
1882 shall be filed by the state chairman or the secretary of the state central  
1883 committee of such party.

1884 (b) In the case of a minor party, no authority of the state or any  
1885 subdivision thereof having jurisdiction over the conduct of any election  
1886 shall permit the name of a candidate of such party for any office to be  
1887 printed on the official ballot unless at least one copy of the party rules  
1888 regulating the manner of nominating a candidate for such office has  
1889 been filed in the office of the Secretary of the State at least one hundred  
1890 eighty days before the nomination of such candidate. In the case of a  
1891 minor party, the selection of town committee members and delegates to

1892 conventions shall not be valid unless at least one copy of the party rules  
1893 regulating the manner of making such selection has been filed in the  
1894 office of the Secretary of the State at least sixty days before such selection  
1895 is made. [A] In the case of a minor party, a copy of local party rules shall  
1896 forthwith be also filed with the town clerk of the municipality to which  
1897 they relate, except that for any municipality in which no town  
1898 committee of such minor party exists and no local party rules of such  
1899 minor party have been filed with the town clerk, the state party rules of  
1900 such minor party that have been filed with the office of the Secretary of  
1901 the State shall be deemed the party rules for purposes of enrolled  
1902 members and candidates of such minor party in such municipality.

1903 (c) Party rules shall not be effective until sixty days after the filing of  
1904 the same with the Secretary of the State. A party in any municipality for  
1905 which local party rules with respect to any office or position have not  
1906 been filed as provided in this section shall, as to such office or position,  
1907 be subject to the provisions of the effective state rules of such party  
1908 applicable in municipalities which do not have local party rules, until  
1909 such time as local party rules therefor are filed and become effective as  
1910 provided in this section. The town chairman of a party in any  
1911 municipality for which local party rules have not been adopted and filed  
1912 as provided in this section shall forthwith file a statement with the  
1913 Secretary of the State to the effect that such party in such municipality  
1914 does not have local party rules. Any dispute arising under the party  
1915 rules of any party shall be referred to the state central committee of such  
1916 party.

1917 (d) The term "party rules" as used in this section includes any  
1918 amendment to such party rules. When any amendment is to be filed as  
1919 required by this section, complete party rules incorporating such  
1920 amendment shall be filed, together with a separate copy of such  
1921 amendment. All party rules and all amendments to such party rules  
1922 shall ensure such party's compliance with the federal Americans with  
1923 Disabilities Act, 42 USC 12101, et seq., as amended from time to time.

1924 Sec. 42. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 9-409 of the general statutes

1925 are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective*  
1926 *October 1, 2026*):

1927 (a) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, petition forms  
1928 for candidacies for nomination to municipal office or for election as  
1929 members of town committees shall be available from the registrar  
1930 [beginning on the day following the making of the party's endorsement  
1931 of a candidate or candidates for such office or position, or] beginning on  
1932 the day following the final day for the making of [such endorsement]  
1933 the party's endorsement of a candidate or candidates for such office or  
1934 position under the provisions of section 9-391, as amended by this act.  
1935 [whichever comes first.]

1936 (b) Petition forms for candidacies for nomination to the municipal  
1937 offices of state senator and state representative shall be available from  
1938 the registrar beginning on the seventy-seventh day preceding the day of  
1939 the primary for such office.

1940 Sec. 43. Section 7-22 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
1941 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

1942 Whenever [complaint in writing is made to the Attorney General that  
1943 the town clerk of any town is guilty of misconduct, wilful and material  
1944 neglect of duty or incompetence in the conduct of such town clerk's  
1945 office, the Attorney General shall make such investigation of the  
1946 charges] the State Elections Enforcement Commission consults with the  
1947 Attorney General pursuant to subdivision (7) of subsection (a) of section  
1948 9-7b as the result of an investigation made pursuant to subdivision (1)  
1949 of subsection (a) of section 9-7b, as amended by this act, with respect to  
1950 an alleged violation by a municipal clerk of any provision of the general  
1951 statutes relating to any election, primary or referendum described in  
1952 subdivision (1) of said subsection, or of any regulation adopted under  
1953 any such provision, the Attorney General may make such investigation  
1954 of the alleged violation as the Attorney General deems proper and shall,  
1955 if the Attorney General is of the opinion that the evidence obtained  
1956 warrants such action, prepare a statement in writing of [the charges

1957 against such town clerk] such municipal clerk's alleged violations,  
1958 together with a citation in the name of the state, commanding such  
1959 [town] municipal clerk to appear before a judge of the Superior Court at  
1960 a date named in the citation and show cause, if any, why such [town]  
1961 municipal clerk should not be removed from office as provided in this  
1962 section. The Attorney General shall cause a copy of such statement and  
1963 citation to be served by some proper officer upon the defendant [town]  
1964 municipal clerk at least ten days before the date of appearance named  
1965 in such citation, and the original statement and citation, with the return  
1966 of the officer thereon, shall be returned to the clerk of the superior court  
1967 for the judicial district within which such [town] municipality is  
1968 situated. To carry into effect the proceedings authorized by this section,  
1969 the Attorney General shall have power to summon witnesses, require  
1970 the production of necessary books, papers and other documents and  
1971 administer oaths to witnesses; and upon the date named in such citation  
1972 for the appearance of such [town] municipal clerk, or upon any  
1973 adjourned date fixed by the judge before whom such proceedings are  
1974 pending, the Attorney General shall appear and conduct the hearing on  
1975 behalf of the state. If, after a full hearing of all the evidence offered by  
1976 the Attorney General and by and on behalf of the defendant, such judge  
1977 is of the opinion that the evidence presented warrants the removal of  
1978 such [town] municipal clerk from office, the judge shall cause to be  
1979 prepared a written order to that effect, which order shall be signed by  
1980 the judge and lodged with the clerk of the superior court for the judicial  
1981 district in which such defendant resides. Such clerk of the superior court  
1982 shall cause a certified copy of such order to be served forthwith upon  
1983 such [town] municipal clerk, and upon such service the office held by  
1984 such [town] municipal clerk shall become vacant, notwithstanding the  
1985 pendency of any appeal of such written order, and the vacancy thereby  
1986 created shall be filled at once in the manner provided in section 9-220.  
1987 Any witnesses summoned and any officer making service under the  
1988 provisions of this section shall be allowed and paid by the state the same  
1989 fees as are allowed by law in criminal prosecutions.

1990 Sec. 44. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) (a) Not earlier than the

1991 fifteenth day after any state election and not later than two business  
1992 days before the canvass of votes by the Secretary of the State, Treasurer  
1993 and Comptroller, commencing on a day designated by the Secretary, the  
1994 registrars of voters shall conduct a risk-limiting audit of such election.  
1995 Each such audit shall be noticed in advance and be open to public  
1996 observation. Any election official who participates in the administration  
1997 and conduct of an audit pursuant to this section shall be compensated  
1998 by the municipality at the standard rate of pay established by such  
1999 municipality for elections.

2000 (b) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, the  
2001 offices subject to a risk-limiting audit pursuant to this section shall be  
2002 (A) the office of presidential elector, if applicable, (B) all applicable state  
2003 offices, as defined in section 9-372 of the general statutes, (C) at least one  
2004 representative in Congress, selected in a random drawing by the  
2005 Secretary of the State, (D) at least five per cent, in the aggregate, of the  
2006 offices of state senator and state representative, selected in a random  
2007 drawing by the Secretary, and (E) any other office required to be audited  
2008 by federal law. Whenever an office is randomly selected by the Secretary  
2009 under this subsection, the selection process shall be open to the public.

2010 (2) (A) If an office of representative in Congress is subject to  
2011 recanvass, other than under section 9-311a, as amended by this act, or 9-  
2012 311b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or to an election  
2013 contest pursuant to any provision of the general statutes, the Secretary  
2014 of the State shall ensure such office is included in the office or offices  
2015 selected under subparagraph (C) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

2016 (B) If an office of state senator or state representative is subject to  
2017 recanvass, other than under section 9-311a, as amended by this act, or 9-  
2018 311b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, or to an election  
2019 contest pursuant to any provision of the general statutes, the Secretary  
2020 of the State shall ensure such office is included in the offices selected  
2021 under subparagraph (D) of subdivision (1) of this subsection.

2022 (C) If any office is subject to recanvass under section 9-311a, as

2023 amended by this act, or 9-311b of the general statutes, as amended by  
2024 this act, or if a candidate was elected to an office without opposition by  
2025 another candidate for such office, the Secretary of the State shall ensure  
2026 such office is excluded from the offices selected under subdivision (1) of  
2027 this subsection.

2028 (c) Prior to the day designated by the Secretary of the State for the  
2029 commencement of the risk-limiting audit described in subsection (a) of  
2030 this section, the registrars of voters shall submit to the Secretary the  
2031 ballot manifests created under section 47 of this act.

2032 (d) The risk-limiting audit described in subsection (a) of this section  
2033 shall be conducted in accordance with instructions and procedures  
2034 prescribed by the Secretary of the State not later than January 1, 2027,  
2035 which instructions and procedures shall be consistent across all offices  
2036 subject to such audit. The risk limit for each such audit shall be not more  
2037 than five per cent. The results of each audit conducted pursuant to this  
2038 section, including any such audit that produces an outcome of  
2039 "INCONCLUSIVE" as described in subsection (e) of this section, shall be  
2040 reported on a form and in a manner prescribed by the Secretary. Such  
2041 reported results shall be filed with the Secretary, who shall immediately  
2042 forward such reported results to The University of Connecticut for  
2043 analysis. The University of Connecticut shall submit to the Secretary a  
2044 written report regarding such analysis that describes any concerns  
2045 identified. After receipt of such written report, the Secretary shall  
2046 transmit a copy of such written report to the State Elections Enforcement  
2047 Commission.

2048 (e) In the event a risk-limiting audit conducted pursuant to this  
2049 section for a particular office produces an outcome of  
2050 "INCONCLUSIVE", the Secretary of the State shall order a manual  
2051 recount of all ballots cast for such office.

2052 (f) If the written report submitted by The University of Connecticut  
2053 under subsection (d) of this section indicates that a voting tabulator  
2054 failed to record votes accurately and in the manner provided by title 9

2055 of the general statutes, the Secretary of the State shall require that the  
2056 voting tabulator be examined and recertified by the Secretary or the  
2057 Secretary's designee. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to  
2058 prohibit the Secretary from requiring that a voting tabulator be  
2059 examined and recertified.

2060 (g) The audit results reported to the Secretary of the State pursuant to  
2061 subsection (d) of this section shall be open to public inspection and may  
2062 be used as prima facie evidence of an irregularity in any contest arising  
2063 pursuant to chapter 149 of the general statutes or for any other cause of  
2064 action arising from such election.

2065 (h) If the audit officials are unable to reconcile the results from an  
2066 audit described in subsection (a) of this section with the outcome of the  
2067 person declared elected by virtue of having received the greatest  
2068 number of votes, as determined by the paper ballots, the Secretary of the  
2069 State shall conduct such further investigation of the voting tabulator as  
2070 may be necessary for the purpose of reviewing whether or not to  
2071 decertify the voting tabulator or tabulators in question or to order the  
2072 voting tabulator to be examined and recertified in accordance with  
2073 subsection (f) of this section. Any report produced by the Secretary as a  
2074 result of such investigation shall be filed with the State Elections  
2075 Enforcement Commission, and the commission may initiate such  
2076 further investigation in accordance with subdivision (1) of subsection  
2077 (a) of section 9-7b of the general statutes, as amended by this act, as may  
2078 be required to determine if any violations of the general statutes  
2079 concerning election law have been committed.

2080 (i) The individual paper ballots used at an election shall be carefully  
2081 preserved and returned in their designated receptacle in accordance  
2082 with the requirements of section 9-266 or 9-310 of the general statutes,  
2083 as applicable.

2084 (j) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude any  
2085 candidate or elector from seeking additional remedies pursuant to  
2086 chapter 149 of the general statutes.

2087 (k) After a state election, any voting tabulator may be kept locked for  
2088 a period longer than that prescribed by sections 9-266, 9-310 and 9-447  
2089 of the general statutes, if such an extended period is ordered by a court  
2090 of competent jurisdiction, the Secretary of the State or the State Elections  
2091 Enforcement Commission. Such court or the Secretary of the State may  
2092 order an audit of such voting tabulator to be conducted by such persons  
2093 as the court or the Secretary may designate, provided the State Elections  
2094 Enforcement Commission may order such an audit where the particular  
2095 office in question is that of the Secretary of the State. If the machine  
2096 utilized in such election is an optical scan voting system, such order to  
2097 lock such machine shall include the tabulator, memory card and all  
2098 other components and processes utilized in the programming of such  
2099 machine.

2100 (l) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance  
2101 with the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, for the conduct  
2102 of risk-limiting audits described in subsection (a) of this section and to  
2103 establish guidelines for expanded audits when the results from such a  
2104 risk-limiting audit cannot be reconciled with the outcome of the person  
2105 declared elected by virtue of having received the greatest number of  
2106 votes, as determined by the paper ballots.

2107 (m) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the  
2108 Secretary of the State shall have access to the code in any voting machine  
2109 whenever any problem is discovered as a result of an audit described in  
2110 subsection (a) of this section.

2111 (n) As used in this section:

2112 (1) "Risk-limiting audit" means a publicly verifiable auditing  
2113 procedure that (A) manually examines a statistical sample of paper  
2114 ballots that reflect the intents of the voters having cast such ballots, (B)  
2115 produces an outcome of either "ACCEPTABLE" or "INCONCLUSIVE",  
2116 and (C) guarantees a specified risk limit;

2117 (2) "Risk limit" means the maximum probability that an audit would  
2118 produce an outcome of "ACCEPTABLE" when there is a disagreement

2119 between the person declared elected and the person who received the  
2120 greatest number of votes as determined by the paper ballots; and

2121 (3) "State election" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-1  
2122 of the general statutes.

2123 Sec. 45. Subsection (a) of section 9-320 of the general statutes is  
2124 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*  
2125 *1, 2027*):

2126 (a) The clerk of each municipality shall, [within ten days after the  
2127 municipal election] not later than the last day of the month in which the  
2128 municipal election was held, return to the Secretary of the State a  
2129 statement of the name, post-office address and term of each person  
2130 elected to office in such election. If an elected [town] municipal clerk is  
2131 registrar of vital statistics, ex officio, such return shall so indicate. Each  
2132 municipal clerk neglecting to make such return shall be fined not more  
2133 than twenty-five dollars.

2134 Sec. 46. Section 9-320f of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2135 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2136 (a) [(1)] Not earlier than the fifteenth day after any federal or state  
2137 [election or] primary or any municipal election or primary and not later  
2138 than two business days before the canvass of votes by the Secretary of  
2139 the State, Treasurer and Comptroller, [and (2) not earlier than the fifth  
2140 day after any municipal election or primary and not later than two  
2141 business days before the canvass of votes] or by the town clerk, as  
2142 applicable, the registrars of voters shall conduct a manual audit, or an  
2143 electronic audit authorized under section 9-320g, as amended by this  
2144 act, of the votes recorded in not less than five per cent of the voting  
2145 districts in the state, district or municipality, whichever is applicable.  
2146 For the purposes of this section, any central location used in a  
2147 municipality for the counting of absentee ballots, early voting ballots or  
2148 same-day election registration ballots shall be deemed a voting district.  
2149 Such manual or electronic audit shall be noticed in advance and be open  
2150 to public observation. Any election official who participates in the

2151 administration and conduct of an audit pursuant to this section shall be  
2152 compensated by the municipality at the standard rate of pay established  
2153 by such municipality for elections or primaries, as the case may be.

2154 (b) The voting districts subject to an audit described in subsection (a)  
2155 of this section shall be selected in a random drawing by the Secretary of  
2156 the State and such selection process shall be open to the public. The  
2157 offices subject to an audit pursuant to this section shall be, (1) [in the  
2158 case of an election where the office of presidential elector is on the ballot,  
2159 all offices required to be audited by federal law, plus one additional  
2160 office selected in a random drawing by the Secretary of the State, but in  
2161 no case less than three offices, (2) in the case of an election where the  
2162 office of Governor is on the ballot, all offices required to be audited by  
2163 federal law, plus one additional office selected in a random drawing by  
2164 the Secretary of the State, but in no case less than three offices, (3)] in the  
2165 case of a municipal election, three offices or twenty per cent of the  
2166 number of offices on the ballot, whichever is greater, selected at random  
2167 by the municipal clerk, and [(4)] (2) in the case of a primary, [election,]  
2168 all offices required to be audited by federal law, plus one additional  
2169 office, if any, but in no event less than twenty per cent of the offices on  
2170 the ballot, selected in a random drawing by the municipal clerk.

2171 (c) If a selected voting district has an office that is subject to recanvass  
2172 or an election or primary contest pursuant to any provision of the  
2173 general statutes, the Secretary of the State shall select an alternative  
2174 district, pursuant to the process described in subsection (b) of this  
2175 section.

2176 (d) The manual or electronic audit described in subsection (a) of this  
2177 section shall consist of the manual or electronic tabulation of the paper  
2178 ballots cast and counted by each voting tabulator subject to such audit.  
2179 Once complete, the vote totals established pursuant to such manual or  
2180 electronic tabulation shall be compared to the results reported by the  
2181 voting tabulator on the day of the election or primary. The results of  
2182 such manual or electronic tabulation shall be reported on a form  
2183 prescribed by the Secretary of the State which shall include the total

2184 number of ballots counted, the total votes received by each candidate in  
2185 question, the total votes received by each candidate in question on  
2186 ballots that were properly completed by each voter and the total votes  
2187 received by each candidate in question on ballots that were not properly  
2188 completed by each voter. Such [report] reported results shall be filed  
2189 with the Secretary, [of the State] who shall immediately forward such  
2190 [report] reported results to The University of Connecticut for analysis.  
2191 The University of Connecticut shall [file] submit to the Secretary a  
2192 written report [with the Secretary of the State] regarding such analysis  
2193 that describes any discrepancies identified. After receipt of such written  
2194 report, the Secretary [of the State shall file such report with] shall  
2195 transmit a copy of such written report to the State Elections Enforcement  
2196 Commission.

2197 (e) For the purposes of this section, a ballot that has not been properly  
2198 completed will be deemed to be a ballot on which (1) votes have been  
2199 marked by the voter outside the vote targets, (2) votes have been marked  
2200 by the voter using a manual marking device that cannot be read by the  
2201 voting tabulator, or (3) in the judgment of the registrars of voters, the  
2202 voter marked the ballot in such a manner that the voting tabulator may  
2203 not have read the marks as votes cast.

2204 (f) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 9-311, as amended by  
2205 this act, the Secretary of the State shall order a discrepancy recanvass of  
2206 the returns of an election or primary for any office if a discrepancy, as  
2207 defined in subsection (o) of this section, exists where the margin of  
2208 victory in the race for such office is less than the amount of the  
2209 discrepancy multiplied by the total number of voting districts where  
2210 such race appeared on the ballot, provided in a year in which the  
2211 Secretary of the State is a candidate for an office on the ballot and that  
2212 office is subject to an audit as provided by this section, the State  
2213 Elections Enforcement Commission shall order a discrepancy recanvass  
2214 if a discrepancy, as defined by subsection (o) of this section, has  
2215 occurred that could affect the outcome of the election or primary for  
2216 such office.

2217 (g) If the written report submitted by The University of Connecticut  
2218 [report described in] under subsection (d) of this section indicates that a  
2219 voting tabulator failed to record votes accurately and in the manner  
2220 provided by [the general statutes] this title, the Secretary of the State  
2221 shall require that the voting tabulator be examined and recertified by  
2222 the Secretary, [of the State,] or the Secretary's designee. Nothing in this  
2223 subsection shall be construed to prohibit the Secretary [of the State] from  
2224 requiring that a voting tabulator be examined and recertified.

2225 (h) The audit [report filed] results reported to the Secretary of the  
2226 State pursuant to subsection (d) of this section shall be open to public  
2227 inspection and may be used as prima facie evidence of a discrepancy in  
2228 any contest arising pursuant to chapter 149 or for any other cause of  
2229 action arising from such election or primary.

2230 (i) If the audit officials are unable to reconcile the manual or electronic  
2231 count from an audit described in subsection (a) of this section with the  
2232 electronic vote tabulation and discrepancies from the election or  
2233 primary, the Secretary of the State shall conduct such further  
2234 investigation of the voting tabulator malfunction as may be necessary  
2235 for the purpose of reviewing whether or not to decertify the voting  
2236 tabulator or tabulators in question or to order the voting tabulator to be  
2237 examined and recertified [pursuant to] in accordance with subsection  
2238 (g) of this section. Any report produced by the Secretary [of the State] as  
2239 a result of such investigation shall be filed with the State Elections  
2240 Enforcement Commission and the commission may initiate such further  
2241 investigation in accordance with subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of  
2242 section 9-7b, as amended by this act, as may be required to determine if  
2243 any violations of the general statutes concerning election law have been  
2244 committed.

2245 (j) The individual paper ballots used at an election or primary shall  
2246 be carefully preserved and returned in their designated receptacle in  
2247 accordance with the requirements of section 9-266 or 9-310, [whichever  
2248 is] as applicable.

2249 (k) Nothing in this section shall be construed to preclude any  
2250 candidate or elector from seeking additional remedies pursuant to  
2251 chapter 149.

2252 (l) After an election or primary, any voting tabulator may be kept  
2253 locked for a period longer than that prescribed by sections 9-266, 9-310  
2254 and 9-447, if such an extended period is ordered by [either] a court of  
2255 competent jurisdiction, the Secretary of the State or the State Elections  
2256 Enforcement Commission. [Either the] Such court or the Secretary of the  
2257 State may order an audit of such voting tabulator to be conducted by  
2258 such persons as the court or the Secretary [of the State] may designate,  
2259 provided the State Elections Enforcement Commission may order such  
2260 an audit under the circumstances prescribed in subsection (f) of this  
2261 section. If the machine utilized in such election or primary is an optical  
2262 scan voting system, such order to lock such machine shall include the  
2263 tabulator, memory card and all other components and processes utilized  
2264 in the programming of such machine.

2265 (m) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance  
2266 with the provisions of chapter 54, [as may be necessary] for the conduct  
2267 of the manual or electronic tabulation of the paper ballots described in  
2268 subsection (a) of this section and to establish guidelines for expanded  
2269 audits when there are differences between the manual or electronic  
2270 counts from the audit described in subsection (a) of this section and  
2271 tabulator counts from the election or primary.

2272 (n) Notwithstanding any provision of the general statutes, the  
2273 Secretary of the State shall have access to the code in any voting machine  
2274 whenever any problem is discovered as a result of an audit described in  
2275 subsection (a) of this section.

2276 (o) As used in this section: [, "discrepancy"]

2277 (1) "Discrepancy" means any difference in vote totals between  
2278 tabulator counts from an election or primary and manual or electronic  
2279 counts from an audit described in subsection (a) of this section in a  
2280 voting district that exceeds one-half of one per cent of the lesser amount

2281 of the vote totals between such tabulator counts and such manual or  
2282 electronic counts where such differences cannot be resolved through an  
2283 accounting of ballots that were not marked properly in accordance with  
2284 subsection (e) of this section; [, "state election" means "state election", as  
2285 defined in section 9-1, "municipal election"]

2286 (2) "Municipal election" means a municipal election held pursuant to  
2287 section 9-164, as amended by this act; [, "manual"]

2288 (3) "Manual" means by hand and without the assistance of electronic  
2289 equipment; and ["electronic"]

2290 (4) "Electronic" means through the use of equipment described in  
2291 section 9-320g, as amended by this act.

2292 Sec. 47. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) (a) Except in the case of a  
2293 recanvass subject to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, not  
2294 later than seventy-two hours after the close of the polls at each state  
2295 election, as defined in section 9-1 of the general statutes:

2296 (1) The election officials in each polling place shall create a ballot  
2297 manifest for such polling place in accordance with procedures  
2298 prescribed by the Secretary of the State; and

2299 (2) The absentee ballot counters in each central counting location shall  
2300 create a ballot manifest for such central counting location in accordance  
2301 with procedures prescribed by the Secretary of the State.

2302 (b) Not later than twenty-four hours after the completion of any  
2303 recanvass conducted at a state election in a voting district, the recanvass  
2304 officials shall create a ballot manifest for such district in accordance with  
2305 procedures prescribed by the Secretary of the State.

2306 (c) All ballot manifest creation procedures shall be open to public  
2307 observation.

2308 (d) Immediately after a ballot manifest has been created pursuant to  
2309 this section, the moderator shall submit such ballot manifest to the

2310 registrars of voters.

2311 Sec. 48. Section 9-323 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2312 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2313 Any elector or candidate who claims that he or she is aggrieved by  
2314 any ruling of any election official in connection with any election for  
2315 presidential electors and for a senator in Congress and for  
2316 representative in Congress or any of them, held in his or her town, or  
2317 that there was a mistake in the count of the votes cast at such election  
2318 for candidates for such electors, senator in Congress and representative  
2319 in Congress, or any of them, at any voting district in his or her town, or  
2320 any candidate for such an office who claims that he or she is aggrieved  
2321 by a violation of any provision of section 9-355, 9-357 to 9-361, inclusive,  
2322 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the casting of absentee  
2323 ballots at such election, may bring his or her complaint to any judge of  
2324 the Supreme Court, in which he or she shall set out the claimed errors  
2325 of such election official, the claimed errors in the count or the claimed  
2326 violations of said sections. In any action brought pursuant to the  
2327 provisions of this section, the complainant shall file a certification  
2328 attached to the complaint indicating that a copy of the complaint has  
2329 been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the State Elections  
2330 Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made prior to such  
2331 election, such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render judgment on  
2332 the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be given to the  
2333 Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement Commission.  
2334 If such complaint is made subsequent to the election, it shall be brought  
2335 not later than fourteen days after the election or, if such complaint is  
2336 brought in response to [the manual tabulation of paper ballots  
2337 authorized] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended  
2338 by this act, or section 44 of this act, such complaint shall be brought not  
2339 later than seven days after the close of any such [manual tabulation]  
2340 audit, and in either such circumstance, the judge shall forthwith order a  
2341 hearing to be had upon such complaint, upon a day not more than five  
2342 or less than three days from the making of such order, and shall cause  
2343 notice of not less than three or more than five days to be given to any

2344 candidate or candidates whose election may be affected by the decision  
2345 upon such hearing, to such election official, to the Secretary of the State,  
2346 to the State Elections Enforcement Commission and to any other party  
2347 or parties whom such judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time  
2348 and place for the hearing upon such complaint. Such judge, with two  
2349 other judges of the Supreme Court to be designated by the Chief Court  
2350 Administrator, shall, on the day fixed for such hearing and without  
2351 unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient reason is  
2352 shown, such judges may order any voting tabulators to be unlocked or  
2353 any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes cast, including  
2354 absentee ballots, to be made. Such judges shall thereupon, in the case  
2355 they, or any two of them, find any error in the rulings of the election  
2356 official, any mistake in the count of such votes or any violation of said  
2357 sections, certify the result of their finding or decision, or the finding or  
2358 decision of a majority of them, to the Secretary of the State before the  
2359 first Tuesday after the second Wednesday in December. Such judges  
2360 may order a new election or a change in the existing election schedule,  
2361 provided such order complies with Section 302 of the Help America  
2362 Vote Act, P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time. Such certificate of  
2363 such judges, or a majority of them, shall be final upon all questions  
2364 relating to the rulings of such election officials, to the correctness of such  
2365 count and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,  
2366 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding  
2367 officers so as to conform to such finding or decision.

2368 Sec. 49. Section 9-324 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2369 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2370 Any elector or candidate who claims that such elector or candidate is  
2371 aggrieved by any ruling of any election official in connection with any  
2372 election for Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State  
2373 Treasurer, Attorney General, State Comptroller or judge of probate, held  
2374 in such elector's or candidate's town, or that there has been a mistake in  
2375 the count of the votes cast at such election for candidates for said offices  
2376 or any of them, at any voting district in such elector's or candidate's  
2377 town, or any candidate for such an office who claims that such candidate

2378 is aggrieved by a violation of any provision of section 9-355, 9-357 to 9-  
2379 361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the  
2380 casting of absentee ballots at such election or any candidate for the office  
2381 of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of the State, State  
2382 Treasurer, Attorney General or State Comptroller, who claims that such  
2383 candidate is aggrieved by a violation of any provision of sections 9-700  
2384 to 9-716, inclusive, may bring such elector's or candidate's complaint to  
2385 any judge of the Superior Court, in which such elector or candidate shall  
2386 set out the claimed errors of such election official, the claimed errors in  
2387 the count or the claimed violations of said sections. In any action  
2388 brought pursuant to the provisions of this section, the complainant shall  
2389 send a copy of the complaint by first-class mail, or deliver a copy of the  
2390 complaint by hand, to the State Elections Enforcement Commission. If  
2391 such complaint is made prior to such election, such judge shall proceed  
2392 expeditiously to render judgment on the complaint and shall cause  
2393 notice of the hearing to be given to the Secretary of the State and the  
2394 State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made  
2395 subsequent to the election, it shall be brought not later than fourteen  
2396 days after the election or, if such complaint is brought in response to  
2397 [the manual tabulation of paper ballots authorized] an audit conducted  
2398 pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section 44 of this  
2399 act, such complaint shall be brought not later than seven days after the  
2400 close of any such [manual tabulation] audit and, in either such  
2401 circumstance, such judge shall forthwith order a hearing to be had upon  
2402 such complaint, upon a day not more than five nor less than three days  
2403 from the making of such order, and shall cause notice of not less than  
2404 three nor more than five days to be given to any candidate or candidates  
2405 whose election may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to  
2406 such election official, the Secretary of the State, the State Elections  
2407 Enforcement Commission and to any other party or parties whom such  
2408 judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing  
2409 upon such complaint. Such judge shall, on the day fixed for such hearing  
2410 and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient  
2411 reason is shown, such judge may order any voting tabulators to be  
2412 unlocked or any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes

2413 cast, including absentee ballots, to be made. Such judge shall thereupon,  
2414 in case such judge finds any error in the rulings of the election official,  
2415 any mistake in the count of the votes or any violation of said sections,  
2416 certify the result of such judge's finding or decision to the Secretary of  
2417 the State before the fifteenth day of the next succeeding December. Such  
2418 judge may order a new election or a change in the existing election  
2419 schedule. Such certificate of such judge of such judge's finding or  
2420 decision shall be final and conclusive upon all questions relating to  
2421 errors in the rulings of such election officials, to the correctness of such  
2422 count, and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,  
2423 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding  
2424 officers, so as to conform to such finding or decision, unless the same is  
2425 appealed from as provided in section 9-325.

2426 Sec. 50. Section 9-328 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2427 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2428 Any elector or candidate claiming to have been aggrieved by any  
2429 ruling of any election official in connection with an election for any  
2430 municipal office or a primary for justice of the peace, or any elector or  
2431 candidate claiming that there has been a mistake in the count of votes  
2432 cast for any such office at such election or primary, or any candidate in  
2433 such an election or primary claiming that he is aggrieved by a violation  
2434 of any provision of sections 9-355, 9-357 to 9-361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a,  
2435 as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the casting of absentee ballots at such  
2436 election or primary, may bring a complaint to any judge of the Superior  
2437 Court for relief therefrom. In any action brought pursuant to the  
2438 provisions of this section, the complainant shall send a copy of the  
2439 complaint by first-class mail, or deliver a copy of the complaint by hand,  
2440 to the State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is  
2441 made prior to such election or primary, such judge shall proceed  
2442 expeditiously to render judgment on the complaint and shall cause  
2443 notice of the hearing to be given to the Secretary of the State and the  
2444 State Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made  
2445 subsequent to such election or primary, it shall be brought not later than  
2446 fourteen days after such election or primary, except that if such

2447 complaint is brought in response to [the manual tabulation of paper  
2448 ballots, authorized] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as  
2449 amended by this act, or section 44 of this act, such complaint shall be  
2450 brought not later than seven days after the close of any such [manual  
2451 tabulation] audit, to any judge of the Superior Court, in which he shall  
2452 set out the claimed errors of the election official, the claimed errors in  
2453 the count or the claimed violations of said sections. Such judge shall  
2454 forthwith order a hearing to be had upon such complaint, upon a day  
2455 not more than five nor less than three days from the making of such  
2456 order, and shall cause notice of not less than three nor more than five  
2457 days to be given to any candidate or candidates whose election or  
2458 nomination may be affected by the decision upon such hearing, to such  
2459 election official, the Secretary of the State, the State Elections  
2460 Enforcement Commission and to any other party or parties whom such  
2461 judge deems proper parties thereto, of the time and place for the hearing  
2462 upon such complaint. Such judge shall, on the day fixed for such hearing  
2463 and without unnecessary delay, proceed to hear the parties. If sufficient  
2464 reason is shown, he may order any voting tabulators to be unlocked or  
2465 any ballot boxes to be opened and a recount of the votes cast, including  
2466 absentee ballots, to be made. Such judge shall thereupon, if he finds any  
2467 error in the rulings of the election official or any mistake in the count of  
2468 the votes, certify the result of his finding or decision to the Secretary of  
2469 the State before the tenth day succeeding the conclusion of the hearing.  
2470 Such judge may order a new election or primary or a change in the  
2471 existing election schedule. Such certificate of such judge of his finding  
2472 or decision shall be final and conclusive upon all questions relating to  
2473 errors in the ruling of such election officials, to the correctness of such  
2474 count, and, for the purposes of this section only, such claimed violations,  
2475 and shall operate to correct the returns of the moderators or presiding  
2476 officers, so as to conform to such finding or decision, except that this  
2477 section shall not affect the right of appeal to the Supreme Court and it  
2478 shall not prevent such judge from reserving such questions of law for  
2479 the advice of the Supreme Court as provided in section 9-325. Such  
2480 judge may, if necessary, issue his writ of mandamus, requiring the  
2481 adverse party and those under him to deliver to the complainant the

2482 appurtenances of such office, and shall cause his finding and decree to  
2483 be entered on the records of the Superior Court in the proper judicial  
2484 district.

2485 Sec. 51. Subsection (a) of section 9-329a of the general statutes is  
2486 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*  
2487 *1, 2027*):

2488 (a) Any (1) elector or candidate aggrieved by a ruling of an election  
2489 official in connection with any primary held pursuant to (A) section 9-  
2490 423, 9-425 or 9-464, or (B) a special act, (2) elector or candidate who  
2491 alleges that there has been a mistake in the count of the votes cast at such  
2492 primary, or (3) candidate in such a primary who alleges that he is  
2493 aggrieved by a violation of any provision of sections 9-355, 9-357 to 9-  
2494 361, inclusive, 9-364, 9-364a, as amended by this act, or 9-365 in the  
2495 casting of absentee ballots at such primary, may bring his complaint to  
2496 any judge of the Superior Court for appropriate action. In any action  
2497 brought pursuant to the provisions of this section, the complainant shall  
2498 file a certification attached to the complaint indicating that a copy of the  
2499 complaint has been sent by first-class mail or delivered to the State  
2500 Elections Enforcement Commission. If such complaint is made prior to  
2501 such primary such judge shall proceed expeditiously to render  
2502 judgment on the complaint and shall cause notice of the hearing to be  
2503 given to the Secretary of the State and the State Elections Enforcement  
2504 Commission. If such complaint is made subsequent to such primary it  
2505 shall be brought, not later than fourteen days after such primary, or if  
2506 such complaint is brought in response to [the manual tabulation of  
2507 paper ballots, described in] an audit conducted pursuant to section 9-  
2508 320f, as amended by this act, or section 44 of this act, such complaint  
2509 shall be brought, not later than seven days after the close of any such  
2510 [manual tabulation] audit, to any judge of the Superior Court.

2511 Sec. 52. Subsection (b) of section 9-3 of the general statutes, as  
2512 amended by section 89 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following  
2513 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2514 (b) During any municipal, state or federal election, primary or  
2515 recanvass, or any audit conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as  
2516 amended by this act, or section 44 of this act, the Secretary of the State  
2517 may issue an order, whether orally or in writing, to any registrar of  
2518 voters or moderator to correct any irregularity or impropriety in the  
2519 conduct of such election, primary or recanvass or audit. Any such order  
2520 shall be effective upon issuance. As soon as practicable after issuance of  
2521 an oral order pursuant to this subsection, the Secretary shall reduce such  
2522 order to writing, cite within such order any applicable provision of law  
2523 authorizing such order and cause a copy of such written order to be  
2524 delivered to the individual who is the subject of such order or, in the  
2525 case that such order was originally issued in writing, issue a subsequent  
2526 written order that conforms to such requirements. The Superior Court,  
2527 on application of the Secretary or the Attorney General, may enforce by  
2528 appropriate decree or process any such order issued pursuant to this  
2529 subsection.

2530 Sec. 53. Subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 9-229 of the general  
2531 statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof  
2532 (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2533 (3) The duties of each regional election advisor shall include, but not  
2534 be limited to: (A) Holding the instructional sessions described in  
2535 subdivision (2) of this subsection; (B) communicating with registrars of  
2536 voters to assist, to the extent permitted under law, in preparations for  
2537 and operations of any election, primary or recanvass, or any audit  
2538 conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section  
2539 44 of this act; and (C) transmitting any order issued by the Secretary of  
2540 the State, pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-3, as amended by this  
2541 act.

2542 Sec. 54. Subsection (a) of section 9-229b of the general statutes is  
2543 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January*  
2544 *1, 2027*):

2545 (a) Any regional council of governments organized under the

2546 provisions of sections 4-124i to 4-124p, inclusive, may appoint a regional  
2547 election advisor, who shall represent, consult with and act on behalf of  
2548 such regional council of governments and any combination of regional  
2549 councils of governments or member towns of regional councils of  
2550 governments that may seek the assistance of such regional election  
2551 advisor. A regional election advisor shall consult and coordinate with  
2552 the Secretary of the State to provide such assistance in preparations for  
2553 and operations of any election, primary or recanvass, or any audit  
2554 conducted pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended by this act, or section  
2555 44 of this act.

2556 Sec. 55. Section 9-320g of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2557 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2027*):

2558 Notwithstanding any provision of this title, the Secretary of the State,  
2559 in consultation and coordination with The University of Connecticut,  
2560 may authorize the use of electronic equipment for the purpose of  
2561 conducting any audit required pursuant to section 9-320f, as amended  
2562 by this act, [for any primary or general election held on or after January  
2563 1, 2016] or section 44 of this act, provided (1) the Secretary of the State  
2564 prescribes specifications for (A) the testing, set-up and operation of such  
2565 equipment, and (B) the training of election officials in the use of such  
2566 equipment; and (2) the Secretary of the State and The University of  
2567 Connecticut agree that such equipment is sufficient in quantity to  
2568 accommodate the total number of audits to be conducted. Nothing in  
2569 this section shall preclude any candidate or elector from seeking  
2570 additional remedies pursuant to chapter 149 as a result of any  
2571 information revealed by such process.

2572 Sec. 56. (*Effective from passage*) The Secretary of the State shall establish  
2573 a pilot program for the conduct of risk-limiting audits at state elections  
2574 in 2026. The Secretary shall randomly select three municipalities for  
2575 participation in such pilot program, provided the Secretary shall select:  
2576 (1) One municipality with a population of less than twenty thousand;  
2577 (2) one municipality with a population of twenty thousand or greater,  
2578 but less than ninety thousand; and (3) one municipality with a

2579 population of ninety thousand or greater. For the purposes of this  
2580 section, "risk-limiting audit" has the same meaning as provided in  
2581 section 44 of this act and "population" means the estimated number of  
2582 people according to the most recent version of the State Register and  
2583 Manual prepared pursuant to section 3-90 of the general statutes.

2584 Sec. 57. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) As used in this section:

2585 (1) "Election" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-1 of the  
2586 general statutes;

2587 (2) "Elections site" means any (A) polling place on the day of an  
2588 election, primary or referendum, (B) location designated for the conduct  
2589 of early voting during the period of early voting at an election or  
2590 primary, (C) location designated for same-day election registration  
2591 during the period of early voting at a regular election or on the day of a  
2592 regular election, (D) central location designated for the counting of  
2593 absentee ballots, early voting ballots or same-day election registration  
2594 ballots at an election, primary or referendum, as applicable, (E) place  
2595 where a recanvass is being conducted, or (F) drop box designated for  
2596 the deposit of absentee ballots during the period beginning on the first  
2597 day of issuance of absentee voting sets and ending at the close of the  
2598 polls at an election, primary or referendum;

2599 (3) "Primary" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-372 of  
2600 the general statutes; and

2601 (4) "Referendum" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-1 of  
2602 the general statutes.

2603 (b) (1) No officer or agent of any organization or entity authorized by  
2604 the federal government or by any state to use force against, search,  
2605 detain or arrest individuals, and no person authorized by the federal  
2606 government or by any state to order, bring, keep or have under such  
2607 person's authority or control any such officer or agent, shall:

2608 (A) Knowingly be within two hundred fifty feet of any elections site,

2609 unless (i) the Governor deems such force necessary to repel armed  
2610 enemies of the United States or of the state, (ii) in the case of any such  
2611 search, detention or arrest, such officer, agent or person (I) is acting in  
2612 an official capacity, (II) has given notice to the Secretary of the State and  
2613 the Attorney General not less than twenty-four hours prior to such  
2614 search, detention or arrest, and (III) is authorized by a judicial warrant  
2615 or judicial order of a court of competent jurisdiction to specifically  
2616 conduct such search, detention or arrest within two hundred fifty feet  
2617 of such elections site, and at the specific location at which such search,  
2618 detention or arrest is to be conducted, provided such officer, agent or  
2619 person is within such two hundred fifty feet only for as long as  
2620 reasonably necessary to conduct such search, detention or arrest, (iii)  
2621 exigent circumstances reasonably require the presence of any such  
2622 officer, agent or person to protect against a serious threat to life or  
2623 property, provided such officer, agent or person is within such two  
2624 hundred fifty feet only for as long as reasonably necessary to protect  
2625 against such threat, or (iv) the Secretary of the State or moderator (I)  
2626 requests such force to suppress disorder, or (II) has given permission for  
2627 such an officer, agent or person to be present and such permission has  
2628 not been withdrawn;

2629 (B) Knowingly be within two hundred fifty feet of an elections site for  
2630 the purpose of attempting to examine the qualifications to vote of any  
2631 individual at such elections site;

2632 (C) Knowingly loiter or remain within two hundred fifty feet of an  
2633 elections site; or

2634 (D) Engage in any conduct that would constitute a violation of 18  
2635 USC 592, 593 or 595, as amended from time to time.

2636 (2) Nothing in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be construed to  
2637 (A) prevent any officer, agent or person described in said subdivision,  
2638 when off duty, from voting in accordance with the provisions of title 9  
2639 of the general statutes or otherwise engaging in protected political  
2640 expression, or (B) prohibit any such officer, agent or person from (i)

2641 passing within two hundred fifty feet of an elections site only for as long  
2642 as necessary to be within such two hundred fifty feet while on the way  
2643 to a place or location other than such elections site, or (ii) residing within  
2644 such two hundred fifty feet.

2645 (3) Any person who violates any provision of subdivision (1) of this  
2646 subsection shall be guilty of a class C felony and shall be disfranchised.

2647 (c) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, no  
2648 person shall wear any mask or other covering that obscures the face,  
2649 head or identity of such person within two hundred fifty feet of any  
2650 elections site.

2651 (2) A person may wear such a mask or other covering within such  
2652 two hundred fifty feet if the wearing of such mask or other covering (A)  
2653 is reasonable given the weather conditions, provided such person  
2654 complies with any request from the moderator to remove such mask or  
2655 other covering, or (B) is medically necessary or of religious significance.

2656 (3) Any person who wilfully violates the provisions of subdivision (1)  
2657 of this subsection, or refuses to comply with a request from the  
2658 moderator to remove such person's mask or other covering, shall be  
2659 guilty of a class D felony.

2660 (d) (1) No person shall be required to present any form of  
2661 identification within two hundred fifty feet of any elections site, unless  
2662 otherwise required under state law.

2663 (2) Any person who violates the provisions of subdivision (1) of this  
2664 subsection shall be guilty of a class D felony.

2665 (3) Any action taken by an officer or agent described in subsection (b)  
2666 of this section, pursuant to subparagraph (A)(ii) of subdivision (1) of  
2667 said subsection, shall not constitute a violation of subdivision (1) of this  
2668 subsection.

2669 (4) Nothing in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be construed to  
2670 prevent any election, primary or referendum official from performing

2671 any duty under title 9 of the general statutes.

2672 Sec. 58. Section 9-364a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2673 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2674 (a) As used in this section, "election worker" means any municipal  
2675 clerk, assistant municipal clerk, registrar of voters, deputy registrar of  
2676 voters, election official described in section 9-258, as amended by this  
2677 act, primary official described in section 9-436 or recanvass official  
2678 described in section 9-311, as amended by this act, and "personal  
2679 identifying information" has the same meaning as provided in section  
2680 53a-129a.

2681 (b) Any person who influences or attempts to influence by force or  
2682 threat the vote, or by force, threat, bribery or corrupt means [,] the  
2683 speech, of any other person at a primary, caucus, referendum,  
2684 convention or election; any person who influences or attempts to  
2685 influence by force, threat or harassment any election worker in the  
2686 performance of any duty under the provisions of this title related to  
2687 election administration at a primary, referendum, election or recanvass;  
2688 any person who wilfully and fraudulently suppresses or destroys any  
2689 vote or ballot properly given or cast, whether so given or cast by mail,  
2690 by deposit in a secure drop box or in person at a polling place or  
2691 designated early voting or same-day election registration location, or  
2692 who, in counting such votes or ballots, wilfully miscounts or  
2693 misrepresents the number thereof; and any presiding or other officer of  
2694 a primary, caucus or convention who wilfully announces the result of a  
2695 ballot or vote of such primary, caucus or convention, untruly and  
2696 wrongfully, shall be guilty of a class C felony.

2697 (c) Any person who, with intent to harass, terrorize or alarm any  
2698 election worker, or to improperly influence any election worker in the  
2699 performance of any duty under this title related to election  
2700 administration at a primary, referendum, election or recanvass, publicly  
2701 discloses the personal identifying information of such election worker  
2702 shall be guilty of a (1) class A misdemeanor for a first offense, and (2)

2703 class C felony for any subsequent offense.

2704 (d) Any election worker described in subsection (b) or (c) of this  
2705 section, as applicable, shall have a civil cause of action against the  
2706 person who, with respect to such election worker, violated said  
2707 subsection.

2708 Sec. 59. Section 9-352 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2709 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2710 (a) Any election official who, with intent to cause or permit any  
2711 voting tabulator to fail to correctly register all votes cast thereon, (1)  
2712 tampers with or disarranges [such tabulator] in any way such tabulator  
2713 or any part or appliance thereof, or (2) causes such tabulator to be used  
2714 or consents to its being used for voting at any election with knowledge  
2715 of the fact that the same is (A) not in order, or (B) not perfectly set and  
2716 adjusted to correctly register all votes cast thereon, [or] shall be guilty of  
2717 a class D felony.

2718 (b) Any election official who, for the purpose of (1) defrauding or  
2719 deceiving any elector, or [of] (2) causing it to (A) be doubtful for what  
2720 candidate or candidates or proposition any vote is cast, or [causing it to]  
2721 (B) appear upon such tabulator that votes cast for one candidate or  
2722 proposition were cast for another candidate or proposition, removes,  
2723 changes or mutilates any ballot shall be guilty of a class D felony.

2724 (c) Any election official who provides to any third party that has not  
2725 been authorized by the Secretary of the State any tabulator or any part  
2726 or appliance thereof shall be guilty of a class D felony.

2727 Sec. 60. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Any person who knowingly (1)  
2728 tampers with, alters, destroys or unlawfully carries away a drop box  
2729 designated for the deposit of absentee ballots; (2) changes or destroys a  
2730 ballot after it has been deposited in such a drop box; (3) adds one or  
2731 more ballots to those which have been lawfully deposited in such a drop  
2732 box, whether before or after such ballots have been counted, by  
2733 fraudulently depositing such additional ballot or ballots into such drop

2734 box in a manner not authorized by law and falsely claiming that such  
2735 additional ballot or ballots were lawfully deposited into such drop box,  
2736 with the intent to interrupt or invalidate an election, primary or  
2737 referendum; or (4) adds one or more ballots to those which have been  
2738 retrieved from such a drop box by fraudulently introducing such  
2739 additional ballot or ballots while such ballots are being counted or  
2740 recanvassed, with intent to affect the result of an election, primary or  
2741 referendum or to enter any ballot into evidence at any hearing held  
2742 pursuant to chapter 149 or 152 of the general statutes for the contest of  
2743 such election, primary or referendum, shall be guilty of a class D felony.

2744 Sec. 61. Subsection (a) of section 3-129g of the 2026 supplement to the  
2745 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
2746 thereof (*Effective July 1, 2026*):

2747 (a) The Attorney General may investigate, intervene in or bring a civil  
2748 or administrative action in the name of the state, seeking injunctive or  
2749 declaratory relief, damages, and any other relief that may be available  
2750 under law, whenever any person is or has engaged in a practice or  
2751 pattern of conduct, or has established a policy, that:

2752 (1) Subjects, or causes to be subjected, other persons to the  
2753 deprivation of any rights, privileges or immunities secured by the  
2754 constitutions or laws of this state or the United States; or

2755 (2) Interferes, or attempts to interfere, by threats, intimidation, [or]  
2756 coercion or physical obstruction, with the exercise or enjoyment by other  
2757 persons of any rights, privileges or immunities secured by the  
2758 constitutions or laws of this state or the United States.

2759 Sec. 62. Section 9-247 of the general statutes, as amended by section  
2760 73 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
2761 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

2762 The registrars of voters shall, before the commencement of the period  
2763 of early voting at each election, cause test ballots to be inserted in each  
2764 voting tabulator to ensure that each voting tabulator is prepared and

2765 read and cause each other voting system approved by the Secretary of  
2766 the State for use in the election, including, but not limited to, voting  
2767 devices equipped for individuals with disabilities that comply with the  
2768 provisions of the Help America Vote Act, P.L. 107-25, as amended from  
2769 time to time, to be put in order in every way and set and adjust the same  
2770 so that it shall be ready for use in voting when delivered at the polling  
2771 place [ ] or location designated for the conduct of early voting, [or  
2772 location designated for the conduct of same-day election registration,]  
2773 as applicable. Such registrars of voters shall cause each voting system to  
2774 be in order and set and adjusted, to be delivered at the polling place [ ]  
2775 or location designated for the conduct of early voting, [or location  
2776 designated for the conduct of same-day election registration,] as  
2777 applicable, together with all necessary furniture and appliances that go  
2778 with the same, at the room where voting at such election is to take place,  
2779 and to be tested and operable not later than one hour prior to the  
2780 opening of the polling place [ ] or location designated for the conduct of  
2781 early voting, [or location designated for the conduct of same-day  
2782 election registration,] as applicable.

2783 Sec. 63. Section 9-192a of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2784 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

2785 (a) (1) The Secretary of the State shall, in consultation with the  
2786 advisory committee created pursuant to subsection (b) of this section,  
2787 establish a program and criteria for the certification of registrars of  
2788 voters and deputy registrars of voters.

2789 (2) (A) All registrars taking such office on or before July 1, 2015, shall  
2790 complete such program and satisfy such criteria for certification not  
2791 later than July 1, 2017. Any registrar taking such office after July 1, 2015,  
2792 shall complete such program and satisfy such criteria for certification  
2793 [(A)] (i) in the case of a two-year term, not later than the conclusion of  
2794 such term, and [(B)] (ii) in the case of a four-year term, not later than two  
2795 years after the date of first holding such office, except [as provided in  
2796 subdivision (2) of this subsection] that any such registrar who  
2797 completed the program and satisfied the criteria described in

2798 subparagraph (B) of this subdivision for deputy registrars, and who  
2799 subsequently became registrar in accordance with the provisions of  
2800 section 9-192, shall be deemed to have completed the program and  
2801 satisfied the criteria described in this subparagraph for the applicable  
2802 term.

2803 (B) All deputy registrars taking such office on or before July 1, 2026,  
2804 shall complete such program and satisfy such criteria for certification  
2805 not later than July 1, 2028. Any deputy registrar taking such office after  
2806 July 1, 2026, shall complete such program and satisfy such criteria for  
2807 certification (i) in the case of a two-year term, not later than the  
2808 conclusion of such term, and (ii) in the case of a four-year term, not later  
2809 than two years after the date of first holding such office.

2810 (C) Each municipality shall pay on behalf of such municipality's  
2811 [registrar of voters the cost of completing such program and satisfying  
2812 such] registrars of voters and deputy registrars of voters the costs of  
2813 completing the applicable programs and satisfying the applicable  
2814 criteria for certification under this subdivision.

2815 [(2) If a deputy registrar becomes registrar, in accordance with the  
2816 provisions of section 9-192, on or after the ninetieth day prior to a state  
2817 election, as defined in section 9-1, such new registrar shall complete an  
2818 abridged program prescribed by the Secretary of the State for a  
2819 provisional certification. Completion of such abridged program and  
2820 receipt of a provisional certification shall not be deemed to satisfy the  
2821 requirements for certification described in subdivision (1) of this  
2822 subsection.]

2823 (3) Once certified, pursuant to subdivision [(1)] (2) of this subsection,  
2824 each registrar and deputy registrar shall participate each year in not less  
2825 than eight hours of training, not including any training described under  
2826 subdivision (2) of subsection (d) of this section, in order to maintain such  
2827 certification. Such training shall be as prescribed by the Secretary of the  
2828 State and shall be conducted by [said] the Secretary or a third party  
2829 approved by [said] the Secretary to conduct such training. On and after

2830 January 1, 2024, such training shall include procedures for the conduct  
2831 of early voting at elections and primaries. Any registrar or deputy  
2832 registrar who fails to satisfy such annual training requirement shall be  
2833 directed by the Secretary of the State to take remedial measures  
2834 prescribed by said Secretary.

2835 (b) There is created an advisory committee for the purpose of  
2836 establishing programs and procedures for training, examining and  
2837 certifying registrars of voters, deputy registrars of voters and assistant  
2838 registrars of voters, as described in section 9-192. The committee shall  
2839 consist of six members, one of whom shall be from the office of the  
2840 Secretary of the State, one of whom shall be from the State Elections  
2841 Enforcement Commission, and four of whom shall be registrars of  
2842 voters. The Secretary of the State shall appoint the registrars of voters,  
2843 in consultation with the Registrars of Voters Association of Connecticut,  
2844 or its successor organization. The committee members shall serve  
2845 without pay. The Secretary of the State shall determine the length of the  
2846 terms of the initial members, in accordance with the following: Two of  
2847 such members shall serve for a one-year term; two of such members  
2848 shall serve for a two-year term; and two of such members shall serve for  
2849 a four-year term. Thereafter, all members shall serve for four-year terms.  
2850 The committee shall select a chairperson, who shall be one of the  
2851 registrars who is a member of the committee.

2852 (c) The Secretary of the State, in consultation with the advisory  
2853 committee created pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, shall adopt  
2854 criteria for the training, examination and certification requirements of  
2855 registrars and deputy registrars pursuant to subsection (a) of this  
2856 section. In advising the Secretary of the State on the adoption of such  
2857 criteria, the committee (1) shall consider whether the prescribed training  
2858 leading to certification may, in part, be satisfied through participation  
2859 in the required two conferences a year called by the Secretary of the  
2860 State, pursuant to section 9-6, as amended by this act, for purposes of  
2861 discussing the election laws, procedures or matters related to election  
2862 laws and procedures, and (2) may recommend programs at one or more  
2863 institutions of higher education that satisfy such criteria. Any [deputy

2864 or] assistant registrar of voters may participate in the course of training  
2865 prescribed by the Secretary for certification as a certified Connecticut  
2866 registrar of voters or deputy registrar of voters. The Secretary of the  
2867 State shall certify any individual who completes such training and  
2868 successfully completes any examination or examinations prescribed by  
2869 the Secretary as a certified Connecticut registrar of voters or deputy  
2870 registrar of voters, as applicable.

2871 (d) The advisory committee created pursuant to subsection (b) of this  
2872 section shall also (1) develop a training program in election procedures  
2873 for poll workers, and (2) develop an election law and procedures  
2874 training program and guide for registrars, deputy registrars and  
2875 assistant registrars. The training program developed under subdivision  
2876 (2) of this subsection shall provide for training to be conducted by  
2877 trained registrars or former registrars hired for such purpose by the  
2878 Secretary of the State. The committee shall submit such training  
2879 programs and training guide to the Secretary of the State, who shall  
2880 approve or modify the programs and guide.

2881 Sec. 64. Section 9-6 of the general statutes is repealed and the  
2882 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

2883 Each registrar of voters, [or, in the absence of a registrar, the] each  
2884 deputy registrar of voters [,] and each municipal clerk, [or, in the  
2885 absence of a municipal clerk,] or one of the assistant municipal clerks in  
2886 the absence of the municipal clerk, shall be compensated by the  
2887 municipality which [the clerk] such official represents [, as provided for  
2888 in this section,] for attending two conferences a year for [town clerks  
2889 and] registrars of voters, deputy registrars of voters and municipal  
2890 clerks which may be called by the Secretary of the State for the purpose  
2891 of discussing the election laws, procedures or matters related thereto.  
2892 Each such official shall be compensated by [the] such municipality at the  
2893 rate of thirty-five dollars per day for attending each such conference,  
2894 plus mileage to and from such conference at a rate per mile determined  
2895 by [the] such municipality, but not less than twenty cents per mile,  
2896 computed from the office of such official or, if [he] such official has no

2897 office, from [his] such official's home to the place where such conference  
2898 is being held.

2899 Sec. 65. Section 9-388 of the general statutes, as amended by section  
2900 79 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
2901 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

2902 (a) Whenever a convention of a political party is held for the  
2903 endorsement of candidates for nomination to state or district office, each  
2904 candidate endorsed at such convention shall file with the Secretary of  
2905 the State a certificate, signed by him, stating that he was endorsed by  
2906 such convention, his name as he authorizes it to appear on the ballot, his  
2907 full residence address and the title and district, if applicable, of the office  
2908 for which he was endorsed. Such certificate shall be attested by either  
2909 (1) the chairman or presiding officer, or (2) the secretary of such  
2910 convention and shall be received by the Secretary of the State not later  
2911 than four o'clock p.m. on the fourteenth day after the close of such  
2912 convention. Such certificate shall either be mailed to the Secretary of the  
2913 State by certified mail, return receipt requested, or delivered in person,  
2914 in which case a receipt indicating the date and time of delivery shall be  
2915 provided by the Secretary of the State to the person making delivery. If  
2916 a certificate of a party's endorsement for a particular state or district  
2917 office is not received by the Secretary of the State by such time, such  
2918 certificate shall be invalid and such party, for the purposes of sections  
2919 9-416 and 9-416a, shall be deemed to have made no endorsement of any  
2920 candidate for such office. If applicable, the chairman of a party's state  
2921 convention shall, forthwith upon the close of such convention, file with  
2922 the Secretary of the State the names and full residence addresses of  
2923 persons selected by such convention as the nominees of such party for  
2924 electors of President and Vice-President of the United States in  
2925 accordance with the provisions of section 9-175.

2926 (b) (1) In the case of a timely filed certificate of a party's endorsement  
2927 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, which contains an error or  
2928 omission that would operate to invalidate such endorsement, the  
2929 candidate so certified or an individual authorized to act on behalf of

2930 such candidate may correct such error or omission by appearing in  
2931 person at the office of the Secretary of the State, on a day other than a  
2932 Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, not later than four o'clock p.m. on  
2933 the nineteenth day after the close of the state or district convention, as  
2934 applicable, and amending such certificate to make such correction. If  
2935 such candidate or individual does not appear to so amend such  
2936 certificate by such time, such certificate shall be invalid and such party,  
2937 for the purposes of sections 9-416 and 9-416a, shall be deemed to have  
2938 made no such endorsement.

2939 (2) The Secretary of the State may, within the time period specified in  
2940 subdivision (1) of this subsection, amend a timely filed certificate of a  
2941 party's endorsement to correct any such error or omission, and shall  
2942 keep a record of any such amendment made pursuant to this  
2943 subdivision. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require  
2944 the Secretary to affirmatively attempt to identify any error or omission  
2945 in any such certificate, except that, if the Secretary identifies such an  
2946 error or omission, the Secretary shall use best efforts to notify the  
2947 candidate so certified, an individual authorized to act on behalf of such  
2948 candidate or the party that endorsed such candidate regarding such  
2949 error or omission.

2950 Sec. 66. Subsection (c) of section 9-391 of the general statutes, as  
2951 amended by section 80 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following  
2952 is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

2953 (c) (1) Each endorsement of a candidate to run in a primary for the  
2954 nomination of candidates for a municipal office to be voted upon at a  
2955 state election shall be made under the provisions of section 9-390 not  
2956 earlier than the eighty-fourth day or later than the seventy-seventh day  
2957 preceding the day of such primary. Each certification to be filed under  
2958 this subsection shall be received by the Secretary of the State not later  
2959 than four o'clock p.m. on the fourteenth day after the close of the town  
2960 committee meeting, caucus or convention, as the case may be. If such a  
2961 certificate of a party's endorsement is not received by the Secretary of  
2962 the State by such time, such certificate shall be invalid and such party,

2963 for the purposes of sections 9-417 and 9-418, shall be deemed to have  
2964 neither made nor certified any endorsement of any candidate for such  
2965 office. The candidate so endorsed for a municipal office to be voted upon  
2966 at a state election, other than the office of justice of the peace, shall file  
2967 with the Secretary of the State a certificate, signed by that candidate,  
2968 stating that such candidate was so endorsed, the candidate's name as  
2969 the candidate authorizes it to appear on the ballot, the candidate's full  
2970 street address and the title and district of the office for which the  
2971 candidate was endorsed. Such certificate may be filed by a candidate  
2972 whose name appears upon the last-completed enrollment list of such  
2973 party within the senatorial district within which the candidate is  
2974 endorsed to run for nomination in the case of the municipal office of  
2975 state senator, or the assembly district within which the candidate is  
2976 endorsed to run for nomination in the case of the municipal office of  
2977 state representative, or the municipality or political subdivision within  
2978 which the candidate is to run for nomination for other municipal offices  
2979 to be voted on at a state election. Such certificate shall be attested by  
2980 either the chairperson or presiding officer or the secretary of the town  
2981 committee, caucus or convention which made such endorsement. The  
2982 endorsement of any candidate for the office of justice of the peace shall  
2983 be certified to the clerk of the municipality by either the chairperson or  
2984 presiding officer or the secretary of the town committee, caucus or  
2985 convention, and shall contain the name and street address of each  
2986 candidate so endorsed and the title of the office for which each such  
2987 candidate is endorsed. Such certification shall be made on a form  
2988 prescribed by the Secretary of the State or on such other form as may  
2989 comply with the provisions of this subsection.

2990 (2) (A) In the case of a timely filed certificate of a party's endorsement  
2991 pursuant to subdivision (1) of this subsection, which contains an error  
2992 or omission that would operate to invalidate such endorsement, the  
2993 candidate so certified or an individual authorized to act on behalf of  
2994 such candidate may correct such error or omission by appearing in  
2995 person at the office of the Secretary of the State, on a day other than a  
2996 Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, not later than four o'clock p.m. on

2997 the nineteenth day after the close of the town committee meeting,  
2998 caucus or convention, as applicable, and amending such certificate to  
2999 make such correction. If such candidate or individual does not appear  
3000 to so amend such certificate by such time, such certificate shall be  
3001 invalid and such party, for the purposes of sections 9-417 and 9-418,  
3002 shall be deemed to have neither made nor certified such endorsement.

3003 (B) The Secretary of the State may, within the time period specified in  
3004 subparagraph (A) of this subdivision, amend a timely filed certificate of  
3005 a party's endorsement to correct any such error or omission, and shall  
3006 keep a record of any such amendment made pursuant to this  
3007 subparagraph. Nothing in this subparagraph shall be construed to  
3008 require the Secretary to affirmatively attempt to identify any error or  
3009 omission in any such certificate, except that, if the Secretary identifies  
3010 such an error or omission, the Secretary shall use best efforts to notify  
3011 the candidate so certified, an individual authorized to act on behalf of  
3012 such candidate or the party that endorsed such candidate regarding  
3013 such error or omission.

3014 Sec. 67. Section 9-400 of the general statutes, as amended by section  
3015 81 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3016 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3017 (a) A candidacy for nomination by a political party to a state office  
3018 may be filed by or on behalf of any person whose name appears upon  
3019 the last-completed enrollment list of such party in any municipality  
3020 within the state and who has either (1) received at least fifteen per cent  
3021 of the votes of the convention delegates present and voting on any roll-  
3022 call vote taken on the endorsement or proposed endorsement of a  
3023 candidate for such state office, whether or not the party-endorsed  
3024 candidate for such office received a unanimous vote on the last ballot,  
3025 or (2) circulated a petition and obtained the signatures of at least two  
3026 per cent of the enrolled members of such party in the state, in accordance  
3027 with the provisions of sections 9-404a to 9-404c, inclusive. Candidacies  
3028 described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be filed by  
3029 submitting to the Secretary of the State not later than four o'clock p.m.

3030 on the fourteenth day following the close of the state convention, a  
3031 certificate, signed by such candidate and attested by either (A) the  
3032 chairman or presiding officer, or (B) the secretary of the convention, that  
3033 such candidate received at least fifteen per cent of such votes, and that  
3034 such candidate consents to be a candidate in a primary of such party for  
3035 such state office. Such certificate shall specify the candidate's name as  
3036 the candidate authorizes it to appear on the ballot, the candidate's full  
3037 residence address and the title of the office for which the candidacy is  
3038 being filed. If such certificate for a state office is not received by the  
3039 Secretary of the State by such time, such certificate shall be invalid and  
3040 such person, for the purposes of sections 9-416 and 9-416a, shall be  
3041 deemed to have made no valid certification of candidacy for nomination  
3042 by a political party to such state office. A single such certificate or  
3043 petition for state office may be filed on behalf of two or more candidates  
3044 for different state offices who consent to have their names appear on a  
3045 single row of the primary ballot under subsection (b) of section 9-437.  
3046 Candidacies described in subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be filed  
3047 by submitting said petition not later than four o'clock p.m. on the sixty-  
3048 third day preceding the day of the primary for such office to the registrar  
3049 of voters of the towns in which the respective petition pages were  
3050 circulated. Each registrar shall file each page of such petition with the  
3051 Secretary of the State in accordance with the provisions of section 9-404c.  
3052 A petition filed by or on behalf of a candidate for state office shall be  
3053 invalid for such candidate if such candidate is certified as the party-  
3054 endorsed candidate pursuant to section 9-388, as amended by [this act]  
3055 public act 26-1 and this act, or as receiving at least fifteen per cent of the  
3056 convention vote for such office pursuant to this subsection. Except as  
3057 provided in section 9-416a, upon the expiration of the time period for  
3058 party endorsement and circulation and tabulation of petitions and  
3059 signatures, if any, if one or more candidacies for such state office have  
3060 been filed pursuant to the provisions of this section, the Secretary of the  
3061 State shall notify all town clerks and registrars of voters in accordance  
3062 with the provisions of section 9-433, that a primary for such state office  
3063 shall be held in each municipality in accordance with the provisions of  
3064 section 9-415.

3065 (b) A candidacy for nomination by a political party to a district office  
3066 may be filed by or on behalf of any person whose name appears upon  
3067 the last-completed enrollment list of such party within the district the  
3068 person seeks to represent that is in the office of the Secretary of the State  
3069 at the end of the last day prior to the convention for the party from  
3070 which the person seeks nomination and who has either (1) received at  
3071 least fifteen per cent of the votes of the convention delegates present and  
3072 voting on any roll-call vote taken on the endorsement or proposed  
3073 endorsement of a candidate for such district office, whether or not the  
3074 party-endorsed candidate for such office received a unanimous vote on  
3075 the last ballot, or (2) circulated a petition and obtained the signatures of  
3076 at least two per cent of the enrolled members of such party in the district  
3077 for the district office of representative in Congress, and at least five per  
3078 cent of the enrolled members of such party in the district for the district  
3079 offices of state senator, state representative and judge of probate, in  
3080 accordance with the provisions of sections 9-404a to 9-404c, inclusive.  
3081 Candidacies described in subdivision (1) of this subsection shall be filed  
3082 by submitting to the Secretary of the State not later than four o'clock  
3083 p.m. on the fourteenth day following the close of the district convention,  
3084 a certificate, signed by such candidate and attested by either (A) the  
3085 chairman or presiding officer, or (B) the secretary of the convention, that  
3086 such candidate received at least fifteen per cent of such votes, and that  
3087 the candidate consents to be a candidate in a primary of such party for  
3088 such district office. Such certificate shall specify the candidate's name as  
3089 the candidate authorizes it to appear on the ballot, the candidate's full  
3090 residence address and the title and district of the office for which the  
3091 candidacy is being filed. If such certificate for a district office is not  
3092 received by the Secretary of the State by such time, such certificate shall  
3093 be invalid and such person, for the purposes of sections 9-416 and 9-  
3094 416a, shall be deemed to have made no valid certification of candidacy  
3095 for nomination by a political party to such district office. Candidacies  
3096 described in subdivision (2) of this subsection shall be filed by  
3097 submitting said petition not later than four o'clock p.m. on the sixty-  
3098 third day preceding the day of the primary for such office to the registrar  
3099 of voters of the towns in which the respective petition pages were

3100 circulated. Each registrar shall file each page of such petition with the  
3101 Secretary in accordance with the provisions of section 9-404c. A petition  
3102 may only be filed by or on behalf of a candidate for the district office of  
3103 state senator, state representative or judge of probate who is not certified  
3104 as the party-endorsed candidate pursuant to section 9-388, as amended  
3105 by [this act] public act 26-1 and this act, or as receiving at least fifteen  
3106 per cent of the convention vote for such office pursuant to this  
3107 subsection. A petition filed by or on behalf of a candidate for the district  
3108 office of representative in Congress shall be invalid if said candidate is  
3109 certified as the party-endorsed candidate pursuant to section 9-388, as  
3110 amended by [this act] public act 26-1 and this act, or as receiving at least  
3111 fifteen per cent of the convention vote for such office pursuant to this  
3112 subsection. Except as provided in section 9-416a, upon the expiration of  
3113 the time period for party endorsement and circulation and tabulation of  
3114 petitions and signatures, if any, if one or more candidacies for such  
3115 district office have been filed pursuant to the provisions of this section,  
3116 the Secretary of the State shall notify all town clerks within the district,  
3117 in accordance with the provisions of section 9-433, that a primary for  
3118 such district office shall be held in each municipality and each part of a  
3119 municipality within the district in accordance with the provisions of  
3120 section 9-415.

3121 (c) (1) In the case of a timely filed certificate of candidacy for  
3122 nomination by a political party pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of this  
3123 section, which contains an error or omission that would operate to  
3124 invalidate such candidacy for nomination, the person so certified or an  
3125 agent of such person may correct such error or omission by appearing  
3126 in person at the office of the Secretary of the State, on a day other than a  
3127 Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, not later than four o'clock p.m. on  
3128 the nineteenth day after the close of the state or district convention, as  
3129 applicable, and amending such certificate to make such correction,  
3130 provided neither failure of such person to timely file such certificate  
3131 pursuant to subsection (a) or (b) of this section nor failure of the  
3132 chairperson, presiding officer or secretary of the convention to attest  
3133 such certificate shall be an error or omission that may be corrected

3134 pursuant to this subsection. If such person or agent does not appear to  
3135 so amend such certificate by such time, such certificate shall be invalid  
3136 and such person, for the purposes of sections 9-416 and 9-416a, shall be  
3137 deemed to have made no valid certification of candidacy for nomination  
3138 by a political party. As used in this subsection, "agent" means an  
3139 individual authorized to act on behalf of a person.

3140 (2) The Secretary of the State may, within the time period specified in  
3141 subdivision (1) of this subsection, amend a timely filed certificate of  
3142 candidacy for nomination to correct any such error or omission, and  
3143 shall keep a record of any such amendment made pursuant to this  
3144 subdivision. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require  
3145 the Secretary to affirmatively attempt to identify any error or omission  
3146 in any such certificate, except that, if the Secretary identifies such an  
3147 error or omission, the Secretary shall use best efforts to notify the person  
3148 so certified, an agent of such person or the party whose nomination is  
3149 being sought by such candidate regarding such error or omission.

3150 (d) For the purposes of this section, the number of enrolled members  
3151 of a party shall be determined by the latest enrollment records in the  
3152 office of the Secretary of the State prior to the earliest date that primary  
3153 petitions were available. The names of electors on the inactive registry  
3154 list compiled under section 9-35 shall not be counted for purposes of  
3155 computing the number of petition signatures required under this  
3156 section, as provided in section 9-35c.

3157 (e) On the last day for filing primary petition candidacies in  
3158 accordance with the provisions of this section, the office or office  
3159 facilities of the registrars of voters shall open not later than one o'clock  
3160 p.m., and remain open until at least four o'clock p.m., and such  
3161 registrars or the deputy or assistant registrars shall be present.

3162 Sec. 68. Section 9-452 of the general statutes, as amended by section  
3163 82 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
3164 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3165 (a) All minor parties nominating candidates for any elective office

3166 shall make such nominations and certify and file a list of such  
3167 nominations, as required by this section, not later than the sixty-second  
3168 day prior to the day of the election at which such candidates are to be  
3169 voted for. A list of nominees in printed or typewritten form that includes  
3170 each candidate's name as authorized by each candidate to appear on the  
3171 ballot, the signature of each candidate, the full street address of each  
3172 candidate and the title and district of the office for which each candidate  
3173 is nominated shall be certified by the presiding officer of the committee,  
3174 meeting or other authority making such nomination and shall be filed  
3175 by such presiding officer with the Secretary of the State, in the case of  
3176 any state, district or municipal office to be voted upon at a state election,  
3177 or with the clerk of the municipality, in the case of any municipal office  
3178 to be voted upon at a municipal election, not later than the sixty-second  
3179 day prior to the day of the election. The registrars of voters of such  
3180 municipality shall promptly verify and correct the names on any such  
3181 list filed with him, or the names of nominees forwarded to the clerk of  
3182 the municipality by the Secretary of the State, in accordance with the  
3183 registry list of such municipality and endorse the same as having been  
3184 so verified and corrected. For the purposes of this section, a list of  
3185 nominations shall be deemed to be filed when it is received by the  
3186 Secretary of the State or clerk of the municipality, as appropriate. If such  
3187 certificate of a party's nomination is not received by the Secretary of the  
3188 State or clerk of the municipality, as appropriate, by such time, such  
3189 certificate shall be invalid and such party, for purposes of sections 9-460,  
3190 9-461 and 9-462, shall be deemed to have neither made nor certified any  
3191 nomination of any candidate for such office. A candidacy for  
3192 nomination by a minor party to a district or municipal office may be  
3193 filed on behalf of any person whose name appears on the last-completed  
3194 registry list of the district or municipality represented by such office, as  
3195 the case may be. A candidacy for nomination by a minor party to a state  
3196 office may be filed on behalf of any person whose name appears on the  
3197 last-completed registry list of the state.

3198 (b) (1) In the case of a timely filed certificate of nomination for any  
3199 state, district or municipal office to be voted upon at a state election

3200 pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, which contains an error or  
3201 omission that would operate to invalidate such nomination, the  
3202 candidate so certified or an individual authorized to act on behalf of  
3203 such candidate may correct such error or omission by appearing in  
3204 person at the office of the Secretary of the State, on a day other than a  
3205 Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, not later than four o'clock p.m. on  
3206 the fifty-seventh day prior to the day of the election and amending such  
3207 certificate to make such correction, provided neither failure of the  
3208 presiding officer of the committee, meeting or other authority to timely  
3209 file such certificate pursuant to subsection (a) of this section nor failure  
3210 of the candidate to sign such certificate shall be an error or omission that  
3211 may be corrected pursuant to this subsection. If such candidate or  
3212 individual does not appear to so amend such certificate by such time,  
3213 such certificate shall be invalid and such party, for the purposes of  
3214 sections 9-460, 9-461 and 9-462, shall be deemed to have neither made  
3215 nor certified any such nomination.

3216 (2) The Secretary of the State may, within the time period specified in  
3217 subdivision (1) of this subsection, amend a timely filed certificate of  
3218 nomination to correct any such error or omission, and shall keep a  
3219 record of any such amendment made pursuant to this subdivision.  
3220 Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed to require the Secretary  
3221 to affirmatively attempt to identify any error or omission in any such  
3222 certificate, except that, if the Secretary identifies such an error or  
3223 omission, the Secretary shall use best efforts to notify the candidate so  
3224 certified, an individual authorized to act on behalf of such candidate or  
3225 the party that nominated such candidate regarding such error or  
3226 omission.

3227 Sec. 69. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) (a) As used in this section,  
3228 "municipality", "elector", "election" and "referendum" have the same  
3229 meanings as provided in section 9-1 of the general statutes; and  
3230 "primary" has the same meaning as provided in section 9-372 of the  
3231 general statutes.

3232 (b) Whenever the registrars of voters of a municipality plan to use an

3233 electronic list to check any elector appearing at the polling place or  
3234 location designated for the conduct of early voting at an election,  
3235 primary or referendum held in such municipality, such registrars shall  
3236 provide written notice of such planned use, not later than fourteen days  
3237 prior to the commencement of the period of early voting at such election  
3238 or primary and not later than fourteen days prior to such referendum,  
3239 in a place readily accessible to the public at the town hall or municipal  
3240 building of such municipality and in a conspicuous place on the Internet  
3241 web site of such municipality. Except in the case of a device approved  
3242 by the Secretary of the State pursuant to section 9-261c of the general  
3243 statutes, any such electronic list shall not be used in lieu of the paper-  
3244 based official checklist to be used at such election, primary or  
3245 referendum and may only be used in addition to and in conjunction  
3246 with such paper-based official checklist.

3247       Sec. 70. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force to  
3248 study absentee ballot access in certain cities and boroughs in the state  
3249 that are unconsolidated with the towns within which such cities or  
3250 boroughs are respectively located. The task force shall examine, for  
3251 elections, primaries and referenda held in such unconsolidated cities  
3252 and boroughs, (1) various forms and manners of application for  
3253 absentee ballots by voters, and (2) various forms and manners of  
3254 delivering absentee ballots to such voters, including, but not limited to,  
3255 providing the ability to cast votes on the same ballot for offices and  
3256 questions that pertain to both the unconsolidated city or borough and  
3257 the town within which such city or borough is located.

3258       (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

3259       (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
3260 who shall be the town clerk of a town within which all or part of an  
3261 unconsolidated city or borough is located;

3262       (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, who  
3263 shall be the clerk of an unconsolidated city or borough;

3264       (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of

3265 Representatives;

3266 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, who shall be  
3267 a registrar of voters of a town within which all or part of an  
3268 unconsolidated city or borough is located;

3269 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
3270 Representatives;

3271 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, who shall be  
3272 a registrar of voters of a town within which all or part of an  
3273 unconsolidated city or borough is located;

3274 (7) The Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee;

3275 (8) One appointed by the Secretary, who shall be an attorney with  
3276 expertise in the election laws of the state; and

3277 (9) The director of the Center for Voting Technology Research at The  
3278 University of Connecticut, or the director's designee.

3279 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (3) or  
3280 (5) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member of the General  
3281 Assembly.

3282 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
3283 than thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall  
3284 be filled by the appointing authority.

3285 (e) The Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee, shall be the  
3286 chairperson of the task force. Such chairperson shall schedule the first  
3287 meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than sixty days  
3288 after the effective date of this section.

3289 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
3290 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to elections  
3291 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

3292 (g) Not later than January 1, 2027, the task force shall submit a report  
3293 on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing committee of  
3294 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to  
3295 elections, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the  
3296 general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it  
3297 submits such report or January 1, 2027, whichever is later.

3298 Sec. 71. (*Effective July 1, 2026*) (a) There is established a task force to  
3299 study (1) efforts to achieve one hundred per cent voter participation in  
3300 this state by January 1, 2030, (2) means of enhancing civic engagement  
3301 generally in this state, (3) experiences of jurisdictions that have enacted  
3302 policies to require citizens to vote as a civic duty, (4) potential  
3303 implementation options in pursuit of achieving such one hundred per  
3304 cent voter participation goal, (5) needs of registrars of voters, town  
3305 clerks and other municipal officials in administering elections in which  
3306 one hundred per cent of voters participate, and (6) state and municipal  
3307 budgetary resources that may be required to achieve such one hundred  
3308 per cent voter participation goal.

3309 (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

3310 (1) One appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives;

3311 (2) One appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate;

3312 (3) One appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
3313 Representatives;

3314 (4) One appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

3315 (5) One appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
3316 Representatives;

3317 (6) One appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

3318 (7) The Secretary of the State, or the Secretary's designee; and

3319 (8) Two appointed by the Governor.

3320 (c) Any member of the task force appointed under subdivision (1),  
3321 (2), (3), (4), (5) or (6) of subsection (b) of this section may be a member  
3322 of the General Assembly.

3323 (d) All initial appointments to the task force shall be made not later  
3324 than August 1, 2026. Any vacancy shall be filled by the appointing  
3325 authority.

3326 (e) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president pro  
3327 tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force from  
3328 among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall schedule  
3329 the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not later than  
3330 September 1, 2026.

3331 (f) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
3332 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to elections  
3333 shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

3334 (g) Not later than February 1, 2027, the task force shall submit a report  
3335 on its findings and recommendations, including potential legislation to  
3336 appropriate funds or provide other resources to municipalities for the  
3337 purposes of increasing voter participation, to the joint standing  
3338 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
3339 relating to elections, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a  
3340 of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date that it  
3341 submits such report or February 1, 2027, whichever is later.

3342 Sec. 72. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2026*) Subject to the provisions of title  
3343 9 of the general statutes and section 7-192a of the general statutes, any  
3344 municipality may, within existing resources, establish a pilot program  
3345 to promote the goal of achieving one hundred per cent voter  
3346 participation in such municipality. Such pilot program may include  
3347 efforts to enhance civic engagement, including, but not limited to, the  
3348 development and conduct of a voter outreach and education campaign  
3349 within such municipality.

3350 Sec. 73. Sections 9-139, 9-159o and 9-192b of the general statutes are

3351 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>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
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) to (l)
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>	New section
Sec. 34	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	New section
Sec. 35	<i>July 1, 2026</i>	9-311

Sec. 36	July 1, 2026	9-311a
Sec. 37	July 1, 2026	9-311b
Sec. 38	from passage	9-23l
Sec. 39	from passage	9-23m
Sec. 40	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 41	October 1, 2026	9-374
Sec. 42	October 1, 2026	9-409(a) and (b)
Sec. 43	July 1, 2026	7-22
Sec. 44	January 1, 2027	New section
Sec. 45	January 1, 2027	9-320(a)
Sec. 46	January 1, 2027	9-320f
Sec. 47	January 1, 2027	New section
Sec. 48	January 1, 2027	9-323
Sec. 49	January 1, 2027	9-324
Sec. 50	January 1, 2027	9-328
Sec. 51	January 1, 2027	9-329a(a)
Sec. 52	January 1, 2027	9-3(b)
Sec. 53	January 1, 2027	9-229(b)(3)
Sec. 54	January 1, 2027	9-229b(a)
Sec. 55	January 1, 2027	9-320g
Sec. 56	from passage	New section
Sec. 57	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 58	July 1, 2026	9-364a
Sec. 59	July 1, 2026	9-352
Sec. 60	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 61	July 1, 2026	3-129g(a)
Sec. 62	from passage	9-247
Sec. 63	from passage	9-192a
Sec. 64	from passage	9-6
Sec. 65	from passage	9-388
Sec. 66	from passage	9-391(c)
Sec. 67	from passage	9-400
Sec. 68	from passage	9-452
Sec. 69	January 1, 2027	New section
Sec. 70	from passage	New section
Sec. 71	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 72	July 1, 2026	New section
Sec. 73	from passage	Repealer section

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	612,000 to 753,000	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 <sup>1</sup>	GF - Cost	27,000	36,000	36,000
UConn	GF - Revenue Gain	See Below	See Below	See Below
Correction, Dept.; Judicial Department	GF - Potential Cost	See Below	See Below	See Below
Resources of the General Fund	GF - Potential Revenue Gain	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:**

Municipalities	Effect	FY 27 \$	FY 28 \$	FY 29 \$
All Municipalities	STATE MANDATE <sup>2</sup> - Cost	824,000 to 2.5 million	650,000 to 1.9 million	820,000 to 2.35 million

<sup>1</sup>The 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

All Municipalities	STATE MANDATE - Cost	Minimal	Minimal	Minimal
Various Municipalities	Potential Cost	See Below	See Below	See Below
Various Municipalities	Potential Savings	See Below	See Below	See Below

### **Explanation**

The bill authorizes all eligible voters to apply for and participate in 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 \$707,000 to \$848,000 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 results in a revenue gain to UConn associated with new voting official training requirements, and potential fiscal impacts to the General Fund due to expanded elections-related penalties, 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, associated with the bill's absentee voting and risk-limiting audits provisions. There are additionally minimal costs to municipalities beginning in FY 27 due to the bill's voting official training requirements, and potential costs to municipalities that choose to engage in a voter participation pilot program beginning in FY 27.

Costs continue into the out years.

### **State Fiscal Impacts**

The state costs in the bill are primarily to the Secretary of the State (SOTS), totaling approximately \$612,000 to \$753,000 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 future. These costs are associated with supporting

the anticipated increase in absentee voting,<sup>3</sup> 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. This savings is associated with the elimination of the absentee ballot outer envelope and may be partially offset by the cost of adding an absentee ballot privacy sleeve.

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 expands absentee voting provisions (Sections 1 and 26-28), which 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 of these costs are to SOTS, associated with providing additional forms.<sup>4</sup>

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 into 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 also allows an elector to request permanent absentee ballot application status beginning in FY 27. This provision may increase SOTS absentee ballot application costs beyond the estimates described above.

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<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> Expanded absentee voting 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.

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 to participate via absentee voting.

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 \$68,000<sup>5</sup> and one position<sup>6</sup> 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 expansion of absentee voting is anticipated to result in an increase in SEEC investigations.

**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 \$150,000<sup>7</sup> in FY 27, \$60,000 to \$125,000 in FY 28, and \$70,000 to \$150,000 in FY 29, with savings continuing into the out years. The exact savings will depend on the number of electors who

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<sup>5</sup> The FY 27 costs reflect an October 1 start date. Costs include a salary of \$64,500 and other expenses of \$3,500.

<sup>6</sup> The position is a Legal Investigator.

<sup>7</sup> 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.

choose to participate via absentee voting.

The above savings may be partially offset by the requirement of a privacy sleeve for absentee ballots (Section 4). This is expected to result in a cost to SOTS beginning in FY 27. The exact cost will depend on the number of electors who choose to participate via absentee voting.

**Risk-Limiting Audits.** The bill establishes risk-limiting audits (Sections 44 and 56), resulting 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 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.

**Additional Penalties Imposed.** The bill prohibits certain actions around the polling place or otherwise related to elections, resulting in a potential cost to the Department of Correction (DOC) and the Judicial Department, and a potential revenue gain to the General Fund, beginning in FY 27.

The bill establishes several new felonies (Sections 57-60), resulting in potential costs to DOC and the Judicial Department for incarceration or probation, and a potential revenue gain to the General Fund from fines. On average, the marginal cost to the state for incarcerating an offender for the year is \$3,300<sup>8</sup> while the average marginal cost of supervision in the community is less than \$600 per year for adults and \$450 per year for juveniles.

**Deputy Registrar Training and Certification.** The bill requires certification and training of deputy registrars and requires municipalities to pay for such costs (Sections 63-64). This results in an annual revenue increase for the University of Connecticut<sup>9</sup> (UConn), which will provide the training, beginning in FY 27. The certification process will be handled by SOTS, resulting in no fiscal impact as the agency has sufficient staff capacity to carry out its responsibilities.

### **Municipal Fiscal Impacts**

The bill results in an estimated total cost<sup>10</sup> to municipalities of \$824,000 to \$2.5 million in FY 27,<sup>11</sup> \$650,000 to \$1.9 million in FY 28,<sup>12</sup> and \$820,000 to \$2.35 million in FY 29,<sup>13</sup> 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

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<sup>8</sup> Inmate marginal cost is based on increased consumables (e.g., food, clothing, water, sewage, living supplies, etc.) This does not include a change in staffing costs or utility expenses because these expenses would only be realized if a unit or facility opened.

<sup>9</sup> The current cost of the registrar of voters training program facilitated through the University of Connecticut School of Public Policy is \$800 per person.

<sup>10</sup> This estimate was calculated using the 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.

<sup>11</sup> FY 27 includes the 2026 State Election Primary and the 2026 State Election.

<sup>12</sup> FY 28 includes the 2027 Municipal Primary, 2027 Municipal Election and the 2028 Presidential Preference Primary.

<sup>13</sup> FY 29 includes the 2028 State Election Primary and the 2028 Presidential Election.

or lower than projected.

The bill additionally results in: (1) a minimal cost to towns associated with expanded election official training, beginning in FY 27; and (2) a potential cost to towns that choose to engage in a pilot program regarding voter participation, also beginning in FY 27.

**Expanded Absentee Voting.** The bill expands absentee voting provisions (Sections 1, 2, and 26-28), resulting 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 postage needed to facilitate and process additional absentee ballots.<sup>14</sup> 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 numbers<sup>15</sup> of registered voters will generally see a significantly lower cost than in towns with higher numbers<sup>16</sup> 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

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<sup>14</sup> 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.

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> 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.

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 40), 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.

**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 \$2,000<sup>17</sup> in FY 27 and up to \$50,000<sup>18</sup> for applicable races in FY 29 and beyond to complete risk-limiting audits (Sections 44 and 56). The bill establishes a limited pilot program in FY 27 for three municipalities, before expanding the applicability of risk-limiting audits 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.

**Deputy Registrar Training and Certification.** The bill requires deputy registrars to attend required training and obtain certification at

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<sup>17</sup> This cost is the estimated maximum cost for three municipalities to complete the pilot program for State Elections in FY 27.

<sup>18</sup> 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.

the expense of the municipality (Sections 63 and 64),<sup>19</sup> resulting in a cost to all municipalities beginning in FY 27. The cost is dependent on the training and certification fee. The timing of the cost will be in FY 27 or FY 28 for current deputy registrars, and each time a new deputy registrar takes office, within two years of their start date.

These sections also require deputy registrars to attend two SOTS conferences annually, beginning in FY 26. This results in minimal cost to municipalities for compensating positions that attend the required conferences, expected to be less than \$200 in total per year for each town that has these positions. The compensation provided to attendees at such conferences is \$35 per day plus mileage.

**Voter Participation Pilot Program.** The amendment empowers municipalities to create a pilot program to achieve 100% voter participation (Section 72), resulting in a potential cost to municipalities beginning in FY 27. The exact cost will depend on the number of municipalities that choose to establish a pilot program and the components of the pilot programs.

House "A" eliminates the original bill and its associated fiscal impact, and results in the fiscal impacts described above.

House "E" makes a variety of changes, including eliminating the requirement to conduct a voter public awareness mailing and adjusting the means through which permanent absentee ballot status is obtained. The elimination of the voter public awareness mailing results reduces the bill's costs to the Secretary of the State (SOTS) by \$1.3 million in FY 27.

### ***The Out Years***

#### ***State Impact:***

The annualized ongoing fiscal impact above will continue into the

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<sup>19</sup> The current cost of the registrar of voter training program facilitated through the University of Connecticut School of Public Policy is \$800 per person.

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; (3) inflation in postage and labor costs; and (4) the number of towns that implement a pilot program to increase voter participation.

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

*The preceding Fiscal Impact statement is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for the purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does 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.*

## OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5001 (as amended by House "A" and "E")\*

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

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*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, (3) requiring a privacy sleeve, and (4) switching from serial numbers to unique ballot ID numbers*

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

§ 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*

§ 31 — ELECTION DAY DUTIES OF ASSISTANT TOWN CLERKS

*Adds assistant town clerks to an existing exemption for serving at a polling place even if on the ballot*

§ 32 — RELIEVING REGISTRARS OF VOTERS

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

§ 33 — 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*

§ 34 — 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*

§§ 35-37 — VOTING TABULATOR USE IN RECANVASSES

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

§§ 38 & 39 — MAIL VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS

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

§ 40 — 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*

§ 41 — 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*

§ 42 — PROVIDING MUNICIPAL CANDIDATE NOMINATION FORMS

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

§ 43 — INVESTIGATIONS INTO COMPLAINTS REGARDING TOWN CLERKS

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

§§ 44-56 — RISK-LIMITING AUDITS

*Implements RLAs for state elections; establishes an RLA pilot program for municipal elections*

§ 57 — PROHIBITED ACTS NEAR AN ELECTIONS SITE

*Generally prohibits law enforcement from knowingly being within 250 feet of an elections site, with certain exceptions, or being within this perimeter to check voter qualifications; prohibits anyone from wearing a mask or other covering within 250 feet of an election site, with certain exceptions; establishes criminal penalties for violations and disenfranchises individuals for certain violations*

§ 58 — HARASSMENT OF ELECTION WORKERS

*Increases the penalty for subsequent offenses of an existing prohibition against harassing election workers to interfere with their election day duties; expands existing harassment protections to assistant town clerks*

§ 59 — PROHIBITION ON SHARING TABULATORS OR TABULATOR PARTS WITH UNAUTHORIZED THIRD PARTIES

*Makes it a class D felony for an election official to give a third party any tabulator or tabulator part or appliance unless authorized by SOTS*

§ 60 — ABSENTEE BALLOT DROP BOX TAMPERING

*Penalizes several acts concerning absentee ballot drop boxes, including tampering with them, the ballots inside, or ballots removed from them*

§ 61 — ATTORNEY GENERAL AUTHORITY TO BRING AN ACTION

*Expands the AG's authority to investigate, intervene in, and take certain actions when anyone has established a policy that deprives or interferes with another person's civil rights; specifies that interfering with another person's civil rights (or attempting to) includes doing so by physical obstruction*

§ 62 — TECHNICAL CHANGE CONCERNING TABULATOR TESTING AT SDR LOCATIONS

*Makes a technical change concerning tabulators at SDR locations*

§§ 63-64 & 73 — REGISTRAR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS

*Establishes certification requirements for deputy registrars of voters and makes conforming changes; repeals a duplicative registrar training requirement*

§§ 65-68 — CORRECTION OF CERTAIN CERTIFICATES BY SOTS

*Requires SOTS, if she notices an error or omission in certain candidate certificates, to make her best efforts to notify the affected candidate so it may be corrected*

§ 69 — NOTIFICATION OF ELECTRONIC POLL BOOK USE

*Specifies electronic poll books may only be used as a backup to the paper-based poll book when checking in voters; requires registrars to provide certain notice if they plan to do so*

### § 70 — ABSENTEE BALLOTS IN UNCONSOLIDATED CITIES AND BOROUGH TASK FORCE

*Establishes a task force to study absentee ballot access in certain cities and boroughs in the state that are unconsolidated with the towns where they are located*

### §§ 71 & 72 — VOTER PARTICIPATION EFFORTS

*Establishes a task force to study achieving 100% voter participation; allows municipalities to conduct pilot programs to achieve this*

## BACKGROUND

### **SUMMARY**

This bill makes various changes to the state's election laws, as well as technical and conforming changes, as described in the section-by-section analysis below.

\*House Amendment "A" makes various changes to the bill including (1) requiring absentee balloting sets to include a privacy sleeve, (2) removing the disclaimer requirements for unsolicited absentee ballots delivered by certain entities, (3) changing the deadline by which (a) town clerks must deliver certain absentee ballots to registrars on election day and (b) absentee ballot counters must report to their counting locations, (4) eliminating the provision authorizing delivery of absentee ballots electronically to voters with permanent absentee ballot status, and (5) expanding the secretary of the state's (SOTS) authority to relieve deputy registrars.

The amendment also adds several new provisions that (1) prohibit certain acts near election sites; (2) expand additional harassment protections to assistant municipal clerks and modifying the related penalty; (3) criminalize certain acts involving tabulators, tabulator parts, and absentee ballot drop boxes; (4) expand the attorney general's (AG) authority regarding certain civil rights violations; (5) make technical changes concerning tabulators at same-day registration (SDR) locations; (6) extend certification requirements to deputy registrars; (7) require SOTS to make best efforts to notify certain people about errors and omissions in certain election certificates filed with her office; (8)

establish procedures for when registrars plan to use electronic poll books to check in voters; (9) establish task forces to study (a) absentee voting in unconsolidated cities and boroughs and (b) reaching 100% voter participation; and (10) authorize municipalities to establish a pilot program for achieving 100% voter participation.

\*House Amendment "E" (1) eliminates provisions expanding permanent absentee voting, (2) authorizes electronic transmission of absentee ballots to voters with permanent absentee ballot status who request it, (3) creates procedures for voters to automatically receive absentee ballot applications, and (4) specifies that certain prohibited acts near elections sites concerning certain officers and agents do not apply if these officers and agents are residing within 250 feet of one.

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, 18-21, 23-25 & 73 — 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, (3) requiring a privacy sleeve, and (4) 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, (3) requiring a privacy sleeve for the ballot, and (4) 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). It also 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 to 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 ID number (see below);
5. a notice about 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 federal law requires the voter 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 ID 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.

### **Privacy Sleeve**

The bill additionally requires absentee ballot voting sets to contain a

privacy sleeve for the ballot and requires SOTS to create and provide them. Relatedly, the bill specifies the return envelope must accommodate returning an absentee ballot in the sleeve and that the existing plain language instructions on using an absentee ballot must also cover using the privacy sleeve. As under existing law for other absentee ballot materials, a sufficient supply of the privacy sleeves must be printed to supply the amount (1) a town clerk requests or (2) SOTS deems sufficient.

### **Ballot Identification Numbers**

For 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 SOTS requires to be included, but explicitly prohibits including voting information promoting a question's success or defeat.

## **§ 4 — ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION DISTRIBUTION**

*Modifies requirements for mailing 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 instead requires these unsolicited applications to include a written (1) disclaimer noting that the individual or committee paid for the mailing and, if the mailing was paid for by a candidate committee, that the applicable candidate approved it, and (2) 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**

*Specifies that town clerks, when required by federal law, must send absentee ballots electronically or by mail as requested by a voter, including for presidential ballots; allows voters with permanent absentee ballot status to receive absentee ballots electronically*

Under federal law, states generally must send absentee ballots electronically to overseas voters and members of the armed forces and their spouses and dependents who live with them. States do not have 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.)

Similarly, the bill authorizes voters with permanent absentee ballot status to request and receive absentee ballots electronically. (By law, only voters who are permanently physically disabled or suffering from a long-term illness may receive permanent absentee ballot status).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### **§§ 6 & 73 — 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

### **§ 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**

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

State law, unchanged by the bill, also 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 at least 15 minutes before the deadline for the clerks to deliver the absentee ballots to the registrars as described in the table above, 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 — AUTOMATIC ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION STATUS**

*Creates procedures for voters to request that absentee ballot applications automatically be sent to them for elections they are eligible to vote in*

The bill allows voters to submit a request to their local registrars, through procedures SOTS sets, to automatically receive absentee ballot applications for each election, primary, or referendum held in the municipality for which they are eligible to vote. All approved applicants must be issued an application as soon as practicable before the election contest. Under the bill, approved voters must continue to receive applications automatically until they (1) submit a written request for removal to the registrars or (2) are removed due to one of the reasons described below (generally similar to the existing triggers for removal from permanent absentee ballot status).

First, a voter's automatic absentee ballot application status must be removed if (1) they are removed from the municipality's official registry list or (2) the application 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 about 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 after 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's automatic absentee ballot application

status must also be removed if:

1. 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,
2. SOTS or the applicable registrar receives information from an out-of-state admitting official that the voter has registered to vote there, or
3. the applicable registrar receives information or data from the statewide centralized voter registration system that the voter moved out of state (such as information from another state or the federal government used to update voter registration systems).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

## **§ 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 — ELECTION DAY DUTIES OF ASSISTANT TOWN CLERKS**

*Adds assistant town clerks to an existing exemption for serving at a polling place even if on the ballot*

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.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

**§ 32 — RELIEVING REGISTRARS OF VOTERS**

*Specifies SOTS may temporarily relieve deputy registrars and 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 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 and expands these provisions to also cover deputy registrars. As under existing law for registrars, nothing in these provisions prohibits a municipality from paying a deputy registrar's salary while these procedures are pending.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

**§ 33 — 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 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

**§ 34 — 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

### **§§ 35-37 — 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

### **§§ 38 & 39 — 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

### **§ 40 — 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

### **§ 41 — 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

#### **§ 42 — 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 the (1) party's endorsement of candidates for that position or (2) 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

### **§ 43 — 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

### **§§ 44-56 — RISK-LIMITING AUDITS**

*Implements RLAs for state elections; establishes an 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.

### **§ 57 — PROHIBITED ACTS NEAR AN ELECTIONS SITE**

*Generally prohibits law enforcement from knowingly being within 250 feet of an elections site, with certain exceptions, or being within this perimeter to check voter qualifications; prohibits anyone from wearing a mask or other covering within 250 feet of an election site, with certain exceptions; establishes criminal penalties for violations and disenfranchises individuals for certain violations*

The bill generally prohibits certain acts near elections sites and subjects violators to a criminal penalty. Under the bill, “elections sites” include the following:

1. polling places on the day of an election, primary, or referendum;
2. early voting locations during an early voting period;
3. same-day election registration locations on election day or during the early voting period;
4. central ballot counting locations;
5. recanvass locations; and
6. drop boxes during the absentee voting period.

### ***Prohibited Actions by Certain Officers, Agents, and Those That Control Them***

The bill generally prohibits officers and agents authorized by any state or the federal government to use force against, search, detain, or arrest people, and those that control these officers, from knowingly

being within 250 feet of any elections site. However, these officers and agents, and those that control them, may be within this perimeter if:

1. voting while off-duty as allowed by state law;
2. engaging in protected political expression while off-duty;
3. in transit to another location;
4. they reside within the perimeter;
5. the governor deems it necessary for them to use force to repel armed enemies of the U.S. or the state;
6. the person is conducting a search, detention, or arrest and (a) is acting in their official capacity, (b) notified SOTS and the AG at least 24 hours before, (c) has a legal judicial warrant or order to specifically conduct these activities within the 250-foot perimeter and at the specific location, and (d) is present only as long as reasonably necessary to conduct the activity;
7. exigent circumstances reasonably require it to protect against a serious threat to life or property, but only as long as reasonably necessary to do so; or
8. SOTS or the moderator (a) requests force to suppress disorder or (b) gives permission (and the permission has not been withdrawn).

The bill also prohibits these individuals from engaging in conduct that would violate federal laws that prohibit (1) stationing military forces at locations where elections are being held, (2) military forces from interfering with elections, and (3) government employees from interfering with elections for federal offices (see BACKGROUND).

Additionally, the bill specifically prohibits these officers, agents, and supervisors from (1) knowingly being within 250 feet of an elections site to attempt to examine voter qualifications or (2) loitering or remaining

within this perimeter.

Under the bill, any violation of these provisions is a class C felony, punishable by up to 10 years in prison, up to a \$10,000 fine, or both. Further, any person who violates these provisions must be disenfranchised. (The bill does not specify the process for disenfranchising a person, such as providing notice to election officials that a person may not vote or hold public office. It is also unclear how the state's existing electoral rights forfeiture and restoration laws apply to this provision (CGS §§ 9-46 & 9-46a).)

### ***Prohibited Actions by the General Public***

Under the bill, no person may be required to present any identification within 250 feet of an elections site unless required by state law. However, this provision does not prevent election, primary, or referendum officials from performing their election duties under state law. Further, under the bill, actions taken by an officer or agent conducting an authorized search, detention, or arrest as described above are not a violation.

The bill also prohibits any person from wearing a mask or covering that obscures their face, head, or identity within 250 feet of an elections site unless it is (1) medically necessary or of religious significance or (2) reasonable given the weather conditions if the person complies with a moderator's request to remove the mask or covering.

The bill makes it a class D felony to (1) violate the voter identification prohibition or (2) willfully violate the mask prohibition or refuse to comply with a moderator's request to remove a mask or other covering. A class D felony is punishable by up to 5 years in prison, up to a \$5,000 fine, or both.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

## **§ 58 — HARASSMENT OF ELECTION WORKERS**

*Increases the penalty for subsequent offenses of an existing prohibition against harassing election workers to interfere with their election day duties; expands existing harassment protections to assistant town clerks*

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 makes subsequent offenses a class C felony.

It also 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. subjects anyone who influences (or attempts to) an assistant municipal clerk performing election administration duties to a class C felony, 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

## **§ 59 — PROHIBITION ON SHARING TABULATORS OR TABULATOR PARTS WITH UNAUTHORIZED THIRD PARTIES**

*Makes it a class D felony for an election official to give a third party any tabulator or tabulator part or appliance unless authorized by SOTS*

Under existing law, it is generally a class D felony for an election official to tamper with voting tabulators or alter ballots read by the

tabulators. The bill additionally makes it a class D felony for an election official to give a third party any tabulator or tabulator part or appliance (unless authorized by SOTS).

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

### **§ 60 — ABSENTEE BALLOT DROP BOX TAMPERING**

*Penalizes several acts concerning absentee ballot drop boxes, including tampering with them, the ballots inside, or ballots removed from them*

State law authorizes voters to cast their absentee ballots by depositing them in designated drop boxes during the absentee voting period. The bill establishes a new criminal penalty for certain acts related to these drop boxes. Specifically, it makes it a class D felony to knowingly do the following:

1. tamper with, alter, destroy, or unlawfully carry away a drop box;
2. change or destroy a ballot after it has been deposited;
3. fraudulently deposit additional ballots into a drop box with those lawfully deposited, before or after they have been counted, and falsely claiming the additional ballots were lawfully deposited, with the intent to interrupt or invalidate an election contest; or
4. fraudulently add a ballot to those retrieved from drop boxes during the counting or recanvassing of ballots, with the intent of affecting the election contest or to enter any ballot as evidence in election complaint hearings.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

### **§ 61 — ATTORNEY GENERAL AUTHORITY TO BRING AN ACTION**

*Expands the AG's authority to investigate, intervene in, and take certain actions when anyone has established a policy that deprives or interferes with another person's civil rights; specifies that interfering with another person's civil rights (or attempting to) includes doing so by physical obstruction*

Existing state law authorizes the AG to investigate, intervene in, and bring civil or administrative actions on behalf of the state seeking injunctive or declaratory relief, damages, and any other relief that may be available under law, whenever there is a practice or pattern of conduct that:

1. deprives persons of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the U.S. or Connecticut constitutions or laws (civil rights) or
2. interferes, or attempts to interfere by threats, intimidation, or coercion, with another persons' exercise or enjoyment of any rights, privileges, or immunities secured by the U.S. or Connecticut constitutions or laws.

The bill expands the AG's authority to take these actions on behalf of the state by also allowing him to do so when anyone has established a policy that deprives or interferes with another person's civil rights in the ways described above. It also specifies that interfering with another person's civil rights (or attempting to) includes doing so by physical obstruction.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

## **§ 62 — TECHNICAL CHANGE CONCERNING TABULATOR TESTING AT SDR LOCATIONS**

*Makes a technical change concerning tabulators at SDR locations*

Current law requires that registrars set, adjust, test, and deliver voting tabulators to polling places, including early voting and same-day registration (SDR) locations, at least one hour before they open. The bill eliminates this requirement for SDR locations which, in practice, do not have dedicated tabulators (as ballots cast there are counted at a central location).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

## **§§ 63-64 & 73 — REGISTRAR TRAINING REQUIREMENTS**

*Establishes certification requirements for deputy registrars of voters and makes conforming changes; repeals a duplicative registrar training requirement*

By law, SOTS, in consultation with an advisory committee, must establish a program and criteria for certifying registrars of voters. The bill expands this program to deputy registrars of voters and requires that they be certified, instead of making certification optional as under current law.

Specifically, deputy registrars taking office on or before July 1, 2026, must complete the program and meet the criteria for certification by July 1, 2028. Deputy registrars taking office after July 1, 2026, must, if elected for a (1) two-year term, be certified by the end of their term or (2) four-year term, be certified within two years of taking office. Correspondingly, the bill eliminates provisions requiring deputy registrars who become registrars under certain circumstances to complete an abridged version of the program.

The bill expands existing provisions on registrars to also cover deputy registrars, including requiring (1) towns to pay the costs of completing the program and obtaining this certification, (2) deputy registrars to annually complete eight hours of continuing education to retain their certification, and (3) SOTS to direct deputy registrars to take remedial measures she requires if a deputy fails to meet the annual training requirement.

Relatedly, the bill specifies if a deputy registrar becomes a registrar due to the death, removal, or resignation of the registrar, the deputy's certification (completing the program and meeting the criteria) carries forward for the remainder of the term.

Existing law also requires towns to compensate municipal clerks and registrars of voters that attend two election law conferences SOTS holds (generally, \$35 per day and a mileage rate). Under current law, in the absence of a municipality's registrar, the municipality must compensate the deputy registrar's cost if he or she attends. Under the bill, municipalities must always compensate a deputy registrar, regardless of the registrar's absence.

The bill also 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. It also makes conforming changes concerning SOTS and the advisory committee's duties.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### **§§ 65-68 — CORRECTION OF CERTAIN CERTIFICATES BY SOTS**

*Requires SOTS, if she notices an error or omission in certain candidate certificates, to make her best efforts to notify the affected candidate so it may be corrected*

By law, SOTS may amend endorsement certificates, certificates of candidacies for nomination, and certificates of nomination to correct certain errors or omissions, but must maintain a record of any amendment she makes. The law specifies that the secretary is not required to evaluate these certificates to identify possible errors or omissions. However, under the bill, if she does identify one, she must make best efforts to notify the affected candidate so an authorized individual can correct it. (The bill does not specify what constitutes "best efforts.")

As under existing law, if a timely-filed certificate contains an error or omission that would invalidate it, only the candidate or an individual authorized to act on his or her behalf may correct the issue by appearing in person at the secretary of the state's office to amend it. If the candidate or individual does not correct the certificate, it is deemed invalid and the party is deemed to have neither made nor certified the endorsement or candidacy for nomination, whichever applies.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

### **§ 69 — NOTIFICATION OF ELECTRONIC POLL BOOK USE**

*Specifies electronic poll books may only be used as a backup to the paper-based poll book when checking in voters; requires registrars to provide certain notice if they plan to do so*

By law, registrars must use a paper-based list for checking in voters on election day or for early voting, and may only use electronic lists (electronic poll books) as authorized by SOTS. The bill codifies current

practice by specifying electronic lists may only be used in conjunction with the official paper-based list.

Additionally, if the registrars plan to use an electronic list, they must post conspicuous written notice on the municipality's website and at a readily accessible place at town hall or the town's municipal building at least 14 days before (1) any election or primary early voting period or (2) a referendum.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2027

### **§ 70 — ABSENTEE BALLOTS IN UNCONSOLIDATED CITIES AND BOROUGH TASK FORCE**

*Establishes a task force to study absentee ballot access in certain cities and boroughs in the state that are unconsolidated with the towns where they are located*

The bill creates a nine-person task force to study absentee ballot access in certain cities and boroughs in the state that are unconsolidated with the towns where they are located. For elections, primaries, and referenda in these cities and boroughs, the task force must examine possible absentee ballot application procedures and delivery methods (including having absentee ballots include the ballot items to be voted on by both the (1) unconsolidated city or borough and (2) town where it is located).

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

#### ***Membership***

The task force's membership consists of seven appointed members as well as SOTS and UConn's Center for Voting Research Technology director, or their designees. The appointed members are appointed as described in the table below.

**Table: Task Force Appointed Members**

<b><i>Appointing Authority</i></b>	<b><i>Appointee Qualifications</i></b>
House speaker	A town clerk for a town that contains all or part of an unconsolidated city or borough
Senate president pro tempore	A clerk for an unconsolidated city or borough
House majority leader	None (but may be a legislator)

<b><i>Appointing Authority</i></b>	<b><i>Appointee Qualifications</i></b>
Senate majority leader	A registrar of voters for a town that contains all or part of an unconsolidated city or borough
House minority leader	None (but may be a legislator)
Senate minority leader	A registrar of voters for a town that contains all or part of an unconsolidated city or borough
SOTS	An attorney with state election law expertise

Appointing authorities must make their initial appointments within 30 days after the bill's passage and fill any vacancy.

### ***Leadership and Meetings***

Under the bill, SOTS or her designee must chair the taskforce and schedule and hold the first meeting within 60 days after the bill passes. The Government Administration and Elections (GAE) Committee's administrative staff serve in this capacity for the task force.

### ***Reports***

By January 1, 2027, the task force must report its findings and recommendations to the GAE Committee. The task force ends when it makes this report or on January 1, 2027, whichever is later.

## **§§ 71 & 72 — VOTER PARTICIPATION EFFORTS**

*Establishes a task force to study achieving 100% voter participation; allows municipalities to conduct pilot programs to achieve this*

The bill allows municipalities, within existing resources, to establish a pilot program to promote the goal of achieving 100% voter participation. The program may include efforts to enhance civic engagement, such as voter outreach and education campaigns. The bill specifies that these pilot programs are subject to the state's election laws and municipal restrictions on diverging from certain state election policies.

The bill also establishes a nine-member task force to study (1) efforts to achieve 100% voter participation in the state by January 1, 2030, and potential implementation options; (2) ways to generally enhance civic engagement; (3) the experiences of jurisdictions that require citizens to

vote; (4) municipal officials' needs in administering elections with 100% participation; and (5) needed budgetary resources to achieve 100% participation.

The task force members include the secretary of the state, or her designee, and eight members appointed as follows:

1. two by the governor and
2. one by each of the six legislative leaders.

Members appointed by the legislative leaders may be legislators. The bill requires (1) initial appointments to be made by August 1, 2026, and (2) the first meeting to be held by September 1, 2026. The appointing authority must fill any vacancy. The House speaker and Senate president pro tempore must select the chairpersons, who must schedule the first meeting. The GAE Committee's administrative staff must serve as the task force's administrative staff.

By February 1, 2027, the task force must submit a report to the GAE Committee on its findings and recommendations, including any potential legislation to direct resources or funds to municipalities to increase voter participation. The task force ends when it submits its report or February 1, 2027, whichever is later.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2026

## **BACKGROUND**

### ***Required Voter 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).

***Peace Officers***

By law, the following people are designated peace officers: state and local police, Division of Criminal Justice inspectors, state marshals exercising statutory powers, judicial marshals performing their duties, conservation or special conservation officers, constables who perform criminal law enforcement duties, appointed special police officers, adult probation officers, DOC officials authorized to make arrests in a correctional institution or facility, investigators in the State Treasurer's Office, certified Department of Motor Vehicles inspectors, U.S. marshals and deputy marshals, U.S. special agents authorized to enforce federal food and drug laws, and certified police officers of a law enforcement unit created and governed under a state-tribal memorandum (CGS § 53a-3(9)).

***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)).

**Federal Laws Concerning Election Interference**

Federal law generally prohibits civil or military officers from ordering or placing troops or armed individuals at any place where a general or special election is being held (18 U.S.C. § 592). Relatedly, it also prohibits armed forces members from (1) setting voter qualifications for elections; (2) using force, threats, or other means to prevent or attempt to prevent voters from voting; (3) forcing election officials to receive a vote from someone who is not qualified to vote; (4) imposing election regulations that differ from the law; or (5) interfering with an election official's duties (18 U.S.C. § 593).

It also prohibits anyone employed in an administrative position in the United States or serving as a municipal, state, or federal government employee, among others, from using their official authority to interfere or affect the nomination or election of a candidate for president, vice president, U.S. senator, U.S. representative, or representatives from U.S. territories or the District of Columbia (18 U.S.C. § 595).

**Related Bills**

sSB 91 (File 491), reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee, restricts taking people into custody based on a civil offense in state or municipal facilities and protected areas.

sSB 394 (File 564), reported favorably by the Appropriations and GAE committees, contains substantially identical provisions concerning RLAs.

SB 395 (File 497), reported favorably by the GAE Committee, among other things, contains substantially identical provisions on voter participation efforts.

sSB 397 (File 399), reported favorably by the Judiciary Committee, restricts taking people into custody for a civil offense in state or municipal facilities or protected areas and prohibits, with certain exceptions, wearing a facial covering or personal disguise when interacting with the public and performing law enforcement duties.

sSB 459 (File 500), reported favorably by the GAE Committee, generally prohibits acquiring absentee ballot applications for others or giving them to others, with certain exceptions.

sSB 463 (File 570) and sHB 5533 (File 548), reported favorably by the GAE and Judiciary committees, among other things, contains substantially identical provisions on (1) prohibiting certain activities near election sites, (2) expanding election worker protections to assistant town clerks, (3) prohibitions concerning tabulators and absentee ballot drop boxes, (4) municipal official and election worker notification to certain state officials of election-related requests, and (5) AG authority regarding certain election interference and civil rights claims.

sSB 491 (File 581), reported favorably by the GAE Committee, among other things, contains substantially identical absentee balloting provisions.

HB 5529 (File 546), reported favorably by the GAE Committee, requires notification when using electronic poll books to certain entities and establishes a fine for failing to do so.

HB 5530 (File 521), reported favorably by the GAE Committee, contains substantially similar requirements for a study of absentee ballot access in unconsolidated cities and boroughs within a town.

sHB 5544 (File 550), 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)

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 40 Nay 13 (04/17/2026)