

ASSEMBLY JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

[First Reprint]

ASSEMBLY, No. 3820

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 9, 2022

The Assembly Judiciary Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Assembly Bill No. 3820 (1R).

As amended, this bill requires election officials to provide an unaffiliated voter a political party affiliation declaration form and relevant information for voting in a primary election. This bill also prohibits mail-in ballot envelopes from containing a visible political affiliation or designation for certain elections.

Currently, unaffiliated voters listed to receive mail-in ballots receive both a Democrat and Republican primary ballot for a primary election. If they choose, a voter may fill out one ballot and return it, which would then designate them as an affiliated voter for the appropriate party.

This bill requires election officials to provide unaffiliated voters a political party affiliation declaration form and relevant information for voting in a primary election. This bill also requires the county commissioner of registration in each county to publish notice of the requirements for voting in primary elections for unaffiliated voters.

The Secretary of State would prepare uniform language for the information provided to unaffiliated voters. The commissioners of registration of the several counties and the clerks of the municipalities within such counties would distribute the forms and information to the appropriate voters.

This bill also requires each county clerk to ensure that any political affiliation or designation on the envelopes of a voter's mail-in ballot is not visible to the public on the outer envelope's exterior. This requirement would be for any election except for a primary election for the general election. The affiliation or designation on the delivery envelope, which is the envelope that is used to mail the blank ballot, the outer envelope, and the inner envelope would be required to be concealed from the public.

These measures would strengthen the integrity of elections by improving ballot security.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to:

- 1) require election officials to provide unaffiliated voters a political party affiliation declaration form and relevant information for voting in a primary election;
- 2) clarify that the requirement to conceal the political affiliation designation on mail-in ballot envelopes does not apply to primary elections; and
- 3) clarify which types of envelopes the concealment of political affiliation or designation pertains to.