

2011 -- H 5813

LC01837

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2011

A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS - VOTING DISTRICTS AND ELECTIONS

Introduced By: Representatives Azzinaro, and Walsh

Date Introduced: March 03, 2011

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-11-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-11 entitled "Voting
2 Districts and Officials" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-11-1. Division of towns and representative district into voting districts.** -- The
4 local board of any city or town may, on or before the sixtieth (60th) day preceding any election,
5 divide or redivide the town, or any representative district in the city or town, into voting districts.
6 The local board of each city shall determine voting districts by geographical boundaries and by
7 no other means. No voting district shall at any time comprise parts of two (2) or more wards. It
8 shall be the duty of the board to divide the town, representative district, or ward, ~~so that~~
9 ~~substantially not more than nineteen hundred (1900) voters shall be served by the same polling~~
10 ~~place; provided, that~~ subject to the approval of the state board, ~~a local board may provide for~~
11 ~~servng more than nineteen hundred (1900) voters in the same polling place where the effect to~~
12 ~~the contrary would be of creating a polling place serving less than one hundred fifty (150) voters.~~

13 A polling place may be located either within or without the voting district for which it is
14 established; provided, that a polling place may be located outside the district only upon
15 unanimous determination of the local board and subject to the approval of the state board that a
16 suitable place is not available within the voting district. In making the calculation required by this
17 section, voters whose names are on the inactive list of voters shall not be included.

18 SECTION 2. Section 17-18-11 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-18 entitled "Elected
19 Meetings" is hereby amended to read as follows:

1 **17-18-11. Time of closing of polls.** -- Elective meetings in all cities and towns shall be
2 continuously kept open for voting until 9 8 p.m.; provided, that any qualified voter who is within
3 the building in which the elective meeting is being conducted and is waiting in line to vote at 9 8
4 p.m. shall be entitled to cast his or her vote. When all persons entitled to vote have been afforded
5 a reasonable opportunity to do so, the polls shall be closed; provided, that the city council of the
6 city of Pawtucket shall have the authority, solely in local elections, to close the polls one hour
7 earlier than set forth in this section.

8 SECTION 3. Section 17-20-13 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-20 entitled "Mail
9 Ballots" is hereby amended to read as follows:

10 **17-20-13. Form of application.** -- The application to be subscribed by the voters before
11 receiving a mail ballot shall, in addition to those directions that may be printed, stamped, or
12 written on it by authority of the secretary of state, be in substantially the following form:

13 STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS APPLICATION
14 OF VOTER FOR BALLOT FOR ELECTION ON_____

15 (COMPLETE HIGHLIGHTED SECTIONS)

16 NOTE - THIS APPLICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE BOARD OF
17 CANVASSERS OF YOUR CITY OR TOWN NOT LATER THAN 4:00 P.M ON_____

18 BOX A (PRINT OR TYPE)

19 NAME

20 VOTING ADDRESS

21 CITY/TOWN STATE RI ZIP CODE_____

22 DATE OF BIRTH PHONE #_____

23 BOX B (PRINT OR TYPE)

24 NAME OF INSTITUTION (IF APPLICABLE)

25 ADDRESS

26 ADDRESS CITY/TOWN_____ STATE_____ ZIP CODE_____

27 FACSIMILE NUMBER (if applicable)

28 I CERTIFY THAT I AM ELIGIBLE FOR A MAIL BALLOT ON THE FOLLOWING
29 BASIS; (CHECK ONE ONLY)

30 ~~() 1. I will be absent from the state on the date of the election during the entire period of~~
31 ~~time when the polls are to be open. Provide an out of state mailing address in BOX B above or~~
32 ~~the ballot will be mailed to the local board of canvassers.~~

33 ~~() 2. I will be absent from the city or town of my voting residence during the entire~~
34 ~~period of time when the polls are to be open because of my status as a student, or spouse of a~~

1 ~~student, at an institution of higher learning within the state of Rhode Island.~~

2 ~~Complete BOX B above with your entire address or the ballot will be mailed to the~~
3 ~~address in BOX A.~~

4 ~~Indicate name of institution _____~~

5 ~~()~~ 3. 1. I am incapacitated to such an extent that it would be an undue hardship to vote at
6 the polls because of illness, mental or physical disability, blindness or a serious impairment of
7 mobility. Ballot will be mailed to address in BOX A.

8 ~~() 4. I belong to a religion whose tenets forbid secular activity, including voting, on the~~
9 ~~day of election. Ballot will be mailed to address in BOX A.~~

10 ~~()~~ 5. 2. I am confined in a hospital, convalescent home, nursing home, rest home, or
11 similar institution. Complete BOX B above.

12 ~~() 6. I am detained while awaiting trial or imprisoned for a cause other than final~~
13 ~~conviction of a felony. Complete BOX B above.~~

14 ~~()~~ 7. 3. I am employed or in service intimately connected with military operations or
15 because I am a spouse or dependent of such person. Complete BOX B above or the ballot will be
16 mailed to the local board of canvassers.

17 ~~() 8. I am employed by the (a)() state board of elections, (b)() elections division of the~~
18 ~~secretary of state, (c)() a member of the staff of a local canvassing authority, (d)() or a poll~~
19 ~~worker assigned to work election day outside of their voting district.~~

20 () 4. I may not be able to vote at my polling place on the day of election during voting
21 hours.

22 I declare that all of the information I have provided on this form is true and correct to the
23 best of my knowledge. I further state that I am not a qualified voter of any other city or town or
24 state and have not claimed and do not intend to claim the right to vote in any other city or town or
25 state.

26 If unable to sign name because of physical incapacity or otherwise, applicant shall make
27 his or her mark "X".

28 SIGNATURE IN FULL _____

29 This application must either be sworn to before a notary public OR before two (2)
30 witnesses who must sign their names and affix their addresses. No witness or notary is necessary
31 if checking category No. 7.

32 WITNESSES:

33 Name _____

34 Address _____

1 Name_____

2 Address_____

3 OR

4 NOTARY:

5 (If executed outside of RI by a notary public, attest in manner authorized by law of places

6 where taken.)

7 Sworn to (or affirmed) before me, this_____ day of_____, 20____ .

8 Notary Public

9 My Commission Expires: _____

10 SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon passage.

=====
LC01837
=====

EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
A N A C T
RELATING TO ELECTIONS - VOTING DISTRICTS AND ELECTIONS

1 This act would make changes to the election laws as they pertain to voting districts, poll
2 times, and mail ballot qualification.

3 This act would take effect upon passage.

=====
LC01837
=====