

2018 -- H 7728

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LC004959
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- MAIL BALLOTS

Introduced By: Representatives Azzinaro, Coughlin, and Maldonado

Date Introduced: February 28, 2018

Referred To: House Judiciary

(Board of Elections)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 17-20-8 and 17-20-25 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-20
2 entitled "Mail Ballots" are hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-20-8. Application for ballot.**

4 (a) Whenever any person is unable to sign his or her name because of physical incapacity
5 or otherwise, that person shall make his or her mark "X".

6 (b) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter as to time and manner thereof, it
7 shall be the duty of the applicant to cause the mail ballot application or the emergency mail ballot
8 application, as the case may be, to be processed by the local board so that the applicant may
9 receive the ballot, cast it, and cause delivery thereof to be made to the state board not later than
10 ~~nine o'clock (9:00)~~ eight o'clock (8:00) p.m. on the date of election.

11 (c) The local board shall maintain a separate list of names and addresses of all applicants
12 and their subscribing witnesses and a copy of the list shall be made available for inspection to any
13 person upon request.

14 (d) Any person knowingly and willfully making a false application or certification or
15 knowingly and willfully aiding and abetting in the making of a false application or certification
16 shall be guilty of a felony.

17 **17-20-25. Return of unused ballots.**

18 Every voter who has received a mail ballot and has not cast it shall nevertheless return the
19 unvoted ballot and its uncertified enclosing envelope to the state board or local board with a

1 statement that the voter is not using the mail ballot, before ~~nine o'clock (9:00)~~ eight o'clock (8:00)
2 p.m. on election day.

3 SECTION 2. Section 17-22-1 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-22 entitled "Tabulation
4 and Certification of Returns by State Board" is hereby amended to read as follows:

5 **17-22-1. Commencement and continuance of tabulations.**

6 The state board shall commence the counting, canvassing, and tabulating of all votes cast,
7 including mail ballots, at ~~nine o'clock (9:00)~~ eight o'clock (8:00) p.m. on any election day at
8 which mail ballots may be cast and within twenty-four (24) hours after any other election or
9 primary, and shall continue and complete the tabulation with all reasonable expedition by using
10 an optical scan count system.

11 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- MAIL BALLOTS

1 This act would amend the time within which mail ballots must be returned to the state
2 board of elections and the time to commence the counting of mail ballots on election day, from
3 nine o'clock (9:00) p.m. to eight o'clock (8:00) p.m.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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