

2012 -- H 7949

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LC02183
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS - VOTER CHOICE ACT

Introduced By: Representative Christopher R. Blazewski

Date Introduced: March 14, 2012

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-29-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-29 entitled "Voter
2 Choice Act" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-29-3. Voter choice study commission -- Established -- Definitions.** -- (a) The voter
4 choice study commission is hereby established for the purpose of studying instant runoff voting
5 and other advanced voting methods.

6 (b) As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, "Advanced voting
7 method" means a voting method that allows an elector to indicate a preference for more than one
8 candidate in an election and that determines the winner of the election by majority vote.
9 "Advanced voting method" includes, but is not limited to, instant runoff voting, approval voting,
10 range voting, and proportional voting.

11 (c) The voter choice study commission shall consist of ~~fourteen (14)~~ sixteen (16)
12 members selected as follows:

13 (1) ~~Seven (7)~~ Eight (8) members to be appointed by the speaker of the house, no more
14 than ~~five (5)~~ six (6) of whom shall be from the same political party, and at least ~~three (3)~~ two (2)
15 of whom shall be the clerk of a city or town of this state;

16 (2) ~~Seven (7)~~ Eight (8) members to be appointed by the president of the senate, no more
17 than ~~five (5)~~ six (6) of whom shall be from the same political party, at least two (2) of whom shall
18 be the clerk of a city or town of this state; and

19 (3) Provided, that all members of the study commission shall be registered voters of this

1 state at the time of their selection and at all times while they remain on said study group.

2 (d) Members of the voter choice study group shall be appointed no later than August 1,
3 ~~2011~~ 2012.

4 (e) The voter choice study commission shall:

5 (1) Study advanced voting methods;

6 (2) Analyze the requirements for implementing advanced voting methods, including
7 public education, voting equipment and technology, ballot designs, the costs of conducting the
8 pilot project established by this chapter and using advanced voting methods in elections for state
9 and federal offices, and savings due to the elimination of primary elections;

10 (3) Determine the level of public support for a change in voting methods;

11 (4) Review the experience of other states in conducting elections using advanced voting
12 methods;

13 (5) Recommend statutory changes to implement advanced voting methods in elections
14 for state and federal offices to be held in the state in 2014;

15 (6) Make recommendations on making all voting systems used in the state compatible
16 with advanced voting methods by 2014, including a review of the availability and costs of
17 necessary voting equipment;

18 (7) Make recommendations to the governing bodies and designated election officials of
19 political subdivisions of the state on preparing to conduct an election using an advanced voting
20 methods; and

21 (8) Consider changes to the state's statutes governing access to the ballot for presidential
22 candidates.

23 (f) The voter choice study commission shall present a report on its work to the general
24 assembly, the governor, and the secretary of state no later than ~~January 4, 2012~~ May 1, 2013.

25 (g) The director of research of the legislative council and the director of the office of
26 legislative legal services shall provide staff assistance to the voter choice study commission.

27 (h) The members of the voter choice study commission shall serve without
28 compensation; except that the members shall be reimbursed for necessary expenses incurred in
29 the performance of their duties.

30 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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RELATING TO ELECTIONS - VOTER CHOICE ACT

1 This act would add two (2) members to the voter choice study commission for a total of
2 sixteen (16) members. This act would also extend the reporting date of the commission to May 1,
3 2013.

4 This act would take effect upon passage.

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