

2014 -- S 3103

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2014

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS --STATEWIDE REFERENDA ELECTIONS

Introduced By: Senators Crowley, Ruggiero, Ciccone, Goodwin, and Pearson

Date Introduced: June 12, 2014

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

(Secretary of State)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1           SECTION 1. Section 17-5-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-5 entitled "Statewide  
2 Referenda Elections" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3           **17-5-5. Language contained on computer ballots.** -- (a) Notwithstanding the authority  
4 of the secretary of state to determine the design and content of the computer ballots by rules and  
5 regulations, all computer ballots shall contain a clear and concise statement of the nature of each  
6 question presented without the necessity of repeating the full text of the question as adopted by  
7 the general assembly; provided, that in the case of proposed amendments to the Constitution of  
8 the state of Rhode Island, the full text as adopted by the general assembly shall be reprinted on  
9 the computer ballots. The secretary of state shall cause each question appearing on the computer  
10 ballot prepared by the secretary to be designated by number, the first question to be designated by  
11 the number I and additional questions shall be submitted with numbers in consecutive order.

12           (b) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the general election to be held on November 2,  
13 2004, in order to avoid a two-sheet statewide ballot, given the number of public questions to be  
14 submitted to the electors at such general election, the secretary of state may prepare the ballot in  
15 such manner that the statewide public questions involving the issuance of bonds or other evidence  
16 of indebtedness, or other long-term financial obligation shall appear on the ballot with only a  
17 caption and the amount of financial obligation to be incurred, but without the clear and concise  
18 statement of each question, as otherwise required. Provided, however, that such clear and concise  
19 statement of such question shall instead appear in a conspicuous location within each privacy

1 voting booth at each polling place with additional copies thereof available at each polling place;  
2 and for mail ballot voters, each such ballot sent to a mail ballot voter shall be accompanied by a  
3 clear and concise statement of each question printed on a separate sheet of paper.

4 (c) Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the general election to be held on November 4,  
5 2014, in order to avoid a multiple page statewide ballot, given the number of public questions to  
6 be submitted to the electors at such general election, the secretary of state may prepare the ballot  
7 in such manner that the statewide public questions involving the issuance of bonds or other  
8 evidence of indebtedness, or other long-term financial obligation shall appear on the ballot with  
9 only a caption and the amount of financial obligation to be incurred, but without the clear and  
10 concise statement of each question, as otherwise required; provided, however, that such clear and  
11 concise statement of such question shall instead appear in a conspicuous location within each  
12 privacy voting booth at each polling place with additional copies thereof available at each polling  
13 place; and for mail ballot voters, each such ballot sent to a mail ballot voter shall be accompanied  
14 by a clear and concise statement of each question printed on a separate sheet of paper.

15 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 --STATEWIDE REFERENDA ELECTIONS

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1           This act would require for the November 4, 2014 election the secretary of state prepare  
2 the ballot so that for statewide public questions or bonds or other indebtedness only the caption  
3 and financial obligation be listed without a statement of the question but instead the statement  
4 will appear in the voting booth.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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