

General Assembly

January Session, 2025

## Raised Bill No. 6849

GOVERNMENT

Referred to Committee on ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by: (GAE)

## AN ACT CONCERNING THE LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS' RECOMMENDATIONS FOR MINOR AND TECHNICAL REVISIONS TO THE GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS STATUTES.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

Section 1. Subdivision (9) of section 3-56a of the general statutes is
 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October* 1, 2025):

(9) "Mineral" means gas; oil; other gaseous, liquid [,] and solid
hydrocarbons; oil shale; cement material; sand and gravel; road
material; building stone; chemical raw material; gemstone; fissionable
and nonfissionable ores; colloidal and other clay; steam and other
geothermal resource; or any other substance defined as a mineral by the
law of this state;

10 Sec. 2. Subsection (c) of section 4-8 of the general statutes is repealed 11 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

12 (c) Each department head may appoint such deputies as may be

necessary for the efficient conduct of the business of the department. 13 14 Each department head shall designate one deputy who shall, in the 15 absence or disqualification of the department head or upon the 16 department head's death, exercise the powers and duties of the 17 department head until the department head resumes his or her duties 18 or the vacancy is filled, as applicable. Such deputies shall serve at the 19 pleasure of the department head. Subject to the provisions of chapter 67, 20 each department head shall appoint such other employees as may be 21 necessary for the discharge of the department head's duties.

Sec. 3. Subdivision (2) of subsection (b) of section 9-4a of the general
statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
(*Effective October 1, 2025*):

25 (2) The name, party affiliation and contact information of each 26 candidate who is nominated or qualifies as a petitioning candidate for 27 election to the office of President of the United States, Vice-President of 28 the United States, senator in Congress, representative in Congress, 29 Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney General, State Treasurer, 30 State Comptroller, Secretary of the State, state senator or state 31 representative at the state election. As used in this section, "contact 32 information" means any or all of the following information received by 33 the Secretary of the State in the course of the secretary's elections duties 34 or by the Federal Election Commission: A candidate's campaign mailing 35 address, telephone number, facsimile number, electronic mail address 36 and web site. The voter guide may provide contact information for a 37 candidate for the office of President of the United States, Vice-President 38 of the United States, senator in Congress or representative in Congress 39 by an electronic link to such information on the Federal Election 40 Commission's Internet web site;

Sec. 4. Subdivision (6) of subsection (b) of section 9-31*l* of the general
statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
(*Effective October 1, 2025*):

44 (6) The decision of the commission shall determine the person's right

45 to be or remain an elector. If any such decision is adverse to such 46 individual's right, the commission shall order both registrars to remove 47 the elector's name from the town's active and inactive registry list and 48 any enrollment list. Any person whose name has been so removed may 49 reapply for admission as an elector with the registrars of voters of the 50 same town at any time. If such application is made within four years 51 after the commission's decision, both registrars may approve such application only after they find that there has been a substantial change 52 53 in the circumstances that provided the basis for the commission's 54 decision and that the individual is eligible to be an elector. Registrars 55 who approve an individual's application for admission within this time 56 period without a substantial change in circumstances may be subject to 57 a civil penalty imposed by the commission in accordance with 58 subdivision (2) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b if the commission 59 determines, following a written complaint filed with the commission 60 pursuant to [said] section 9-7b, that the registrars' action was without 61 good cause and constitutes a wilful violation of a prior order of the 62 commission.

63 Sec. 5. Subsection (b) of section 9-32 of the general statutes is repealed 64 and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

65 (b) No elector's name shall be removed from the registry list, 66 pursuant to section 9-35, unless (1) the elector confirms in writing that 67 the elector has moved out of the municipality, or (2) the elector has been 68 sent, by forwardable mail, a notice and a postage prepaid preaddressed 69 return card in accordance with the National Voter Registration Act of 70 1993, P.L. 103-31, as amended from time to time, four years prior to 71 removal from the registry list and such elector has failed to respond and 72 has not restored the elector's name to the active registry list under 73 section 9-42 or voted in an election or primary in the municipality 74 during the period beginning on the date of the notice and ending four 75 years later. If a registrar or a registrar's designee conducts a telephone 76 canvass, a telephone call by any such person shall constitute an attempt 77 to contact the elector only if the elector's household has a published 78 telephone number and the telephone is in operating order. If a registrar,

79 or a registrar's designee, during a telephone canvass contacts a 80 telecommunication device for the deaf in an elector's household, such 81 call shall not constitute an attempt to contact the elector unless the 82 registrar, or the registrar's designee, uses a similar device or uses a 83 message relay center. No elector's name shall be removed from the 84 active registry list pursuant to [said] section 9-35 as a result of 85 information obtained during a telephone canvass, unless the registrar 86 believes such information is reliable and sufficient to enable the registrar 87 to determine if the elector is entitled to remain on the list under the 88 provisions of this chapter.

Sec. 6. Section 9-35c of the general statutes is repealed and the
following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

91 Notwithstanding the provisions of sections 9-238, 9-406 and 9-436 92 and other provisions of the general statutes, the names of electors on the 93 inactive registry list compiled under section 9-35 shall not be counted 94 for purposes of computing the number of petition signatures required. 95 Each elector on such inactive registry list who, in the determination of 96 the registrars, has signed a petition pursuant to the general statutes, 97 giving the same address as appears on the inactive registry list, shall 98 forthwith be placed on the active registry list compiled under [said] 99 section 9-35. Each such elector shall be counted for purposes of future 100 computations of the number of signatures required on future petitions 101 issued for other electoral events. The names of electors on the inactive 102 registry list compiled pursuant to section 9-35 shall not be counted for 103 purposes of computing the minimum percentage of the number of 104 electors required in any charter or special act, if such charter or special 105 act requires approval of a referendum by a minimum percentage of 106 electors qualified on the last-completed registry list or has a similar 107 requirement.

108 Sec. 7. Section 9-153a of the general statutes is repealed and the 109 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

110 The form of absentee ballot application provided by any federal

111 department or agency, referred to in section 9-140, may be used only by 112 a person in any one of the following categories who is eligible to vote 113 and who expects to be unable to appear at his proper polling place for 114 any reason specified in section 9-135: (1) Members of the armed forces, 115 (2) the spouses and dependents of such members, (3) members of 116 religious groups or welfare agencies assisting members of the armed 117 forces, who are officially attached to and serving with the armed forces, 118 and their spouses and dependents, (4) civilian employees of the United 119 States in all categories serving outside the territorial limits of the several 120 states of the United States and the District of Columbia and their 121 spouses and dependents when residing with or accompanying them, 122 whether or not the employee is subject to the civil service laws and the 123 Federal Classification Act of 1949, and whether or not paid from funds 124 appropriated by the Congress, (5) citizens of the United States 125 temporarily residing outside of the territorial limits of the several states 126 of the United States and the District of Columbia and (6) overseas 127 citizens qualified to vote under the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens 128 Absentee Voting Act, 100 Stat. 924, 42 USC 1973ff et seq., as amended 129 from time to time. Any such person may apply for an absentee ballot in 130 the manner provided in [said] section 9-140, either on the form 131 prescribed by the Secretary of the State under [said] section <u>9-140</u>, or on 132 the application form provided by any federal department or agency 133 hereinbefore referred to.

Sec. 8. Subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-158c of the general
statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
(*Effective October 1, 2025*):

137 (a) (1) Not earlier than forty-five days before the election and not later 138 than the close of the polls on election day, each former resident who 139 desires to vote in a presidential election under sections 9-158a to 9-158m, 140 inclusive, may apply for a "presidential ballot" to the municipal clerk of 141 the town in which such former resident is qualified to vote on the form 142 prescribed in section 9-158d. Application for a "presidential ballot" may 143 be made in person or absentee, in the manner provided for applying for 144 an absentee ballot under section 9-140, except as provided in [said]

145 sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive.

Sec. 9. Subdivision (3) of subsection (c) of section 9-163k of the general
statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
(*Effective October 1, 2025*):

149 (3) For a municipal election, each registrar of voters shall appoint at 150 least one absentee ballot coordinator for each two hundred persons who 151 voted by absentee ballot in the most recent municipal election. For a 152 municipal primary, each registrar of voters shall appoint at least one absentee ballot coordinator for each two hundred persons who voted by 153 154 absentee ballot in the most recent municipal primary. [A registrar of 155 voter's] The appointment of an absentee ballot coordinator by a registrar 156 of voters shall not be effective until the registrar files the appointment 157 with the municipal clerk;

Sec. 10. Section 9-264 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

160 An elector who requires assistance to vote, by reason of blindness, 161 disability or inability to write or to read the ballot, may be given 162 assistance by a person of the elector's choice, other than (1) the elector's 163 employer, (2) an agent of such employer, (3) an officer or agent of the 164 elector's union, or (4) a candidate for any office on the ballot, unless the 165 elector is a member of the immediate family of such candidate. The 166 person assisting the elector may accompany the elector into the voting 167 booth at the polling place, the location designated for same-day election 168 registration or the location designated for the conduct of early voting, 169 as applicable. Such person shall register such elector's vote upon the ballot as such elector directs. Any person accompanying an elector into 170 171 the voting booth at the polling place or the location designated for 172 election day registration who deceives any elector in registering the 173 elector's vote under this section or seeks to influence any elector while 174 in the act of voting, or who registers any vote for any elector or on any question other than as requested by such elector, or who gives 175 176 information to any person as to what person or persons such elector

voted for, or how such elector voted on any question, shall be guilty of
a class D felony. As used in this section, "immediate family" [means
"immediate family" as defined] has the same meaning as provided in
section 9-140b.

Sec. 11. Subsections (a) and (b) of section 9-311 of the general statutes
are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

184 (a) If, within three days after an election, it appears to the moderator 185 that there is a discrepancy in the returns of any voting district, such 186 moderator shall forthwith within said period summon, by written 187 notice delivered personally, the recanvass officials, consisting of at least 188 two checkers of different political parties and at least two absentee ballot 189 counters of different political parties who served at such election, and 190 the registrars of voters of the municipality in which the election was 191 held and such other officials as may be required to conduct such 192 recanvass. Such written notice shall require the clerk or registrars of 193 voters, as the case may be, to bring with them the depository envelopes 194 required by section 9-150a, the package of write-in ballots provided for 195 in section 9-310, the absentee ballot applications, the list of absentee 196 ballot applications, the registry list and the moderators' returns and 197 shall require such recanvass officials to meet at a specified time not later 198 than the fifth business day after such election to recanvass the returns of 199 a voting tabulator or voting tabulators or absentee ballots or write-in 200 ballots used in such district in such election. If any of such recanvass 201 officials are unavailable at the time of the recanvass, the registrar of 202 voters of the same political party as that of the recanvass official unable 203 to attend shall designate another elector having previous training and 204 experience in the conduct of elections to take [his] such recanvass 205 official's place. Before such recanvass is made, such moderator shall give 206 notice, in writing, to the chairperson of the town committee of each 207 political party which nominated candidates for the election, and, in the 208 case of a state election, not later than twenty-four hours after a determination is made regarding the need for a recanvass to the 209 210 Secretary of the State, of the time and place where such recanvass is to

211 be made; and each such chairperson may send party representatives to 212 be present at such recanvass. Such party representatives may observe, 213 but no one other than a recanvass official may take part in the recanvass. 214 If [any irregularity in the recanvass procedure is noted by such a party 215 representative, he] a party representative notes any irregularity in the 216 recanvass procedure, such party representative shall be permitted to 217 present evidence of such irregularity in any contest relating to the 218 election.

219 (b) The moderator shall determine the place or places where the 220 recanvass shall be conducted and, if such recanvass is held before the 221 tabulators are boxed and collected in the manner required by section 9-222 266, the moderator may [either] require that such recanvass of such tabulators be conducted in each place where the tabulators are located, 223 224 or [he] the moderator may require that [they] such tabulators be 225 removed to one central place [,] where such recanvass shall be 226 conducted. All recanvassing procedures shall be open to public 227 observation, subject to the provisions of subsection (d) of this section. 228 Such recanvass officials shall, in the presence of such moderator and 229 registrars of voters, make a record of the number on the seal and the 230 number on the protective counter, if one is provided, on each voting 231 tabulator specified by such moderator. Such registrars of voters in the 232 presence of such moderator shall turn over the keys of each such 233 tabulator to such recanvass officials, and such recanvass officials, in the 234 presence of such registrars of voters and moderator, shall immediately 235 proceed to recanvass the vote cast thereon, and shall then open the 236 package of absentee ballots and recanvass the vote cast thereon. In the 237 course of the recanvass of the absentee ballot vote the recanvass officials 238 shall check all outer envelopes for absentee ballots against the inner 239 envelopes for such ballots and against the registry list to verify 240 postmarks, addresses and registry list markings and also to determine 241 whether the number of envelopes from which absentee ballots have 242 been removed is the same as the number of persons checked as having 243 voted by absentee ballot. The write-in ballots shall also be recanvassed 244 at this time. Any party representative present shall have a right to view

each ballot as it is being recanvassed by the recanvass officials, so as to
be able to discern the markings on such ballot. All of the recanvass
officials shall use the same forms for tallies and returns as were used at
the original canvass and the absentee ballot counters shall also sign the
tallies.

250 Sec. 12. Section 9-311a of the general statutes is repealed and the 251 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

252 For purposes of this section, state, district and municipal offices shall 253 be as defined in section 9-372 except that the office of presidential elector 254 shall be deemed a state office. Forthwith after a regular or special 255 election for municipal office, or forthwith upon tabulation of the vote 256 for state and district offices by the Secretary of the State, when at any 257 such election the plurality of an elected candidate for an office over the 258 vote for a defeated candidate receiving the next highest number of votes 259 was either (1) less than a vote equivalent to one-half of one per cent of 260 the total number of votes cast for the office but not more than two 261 thousand votes, or (2) less than twenty votes, there shall be a recanvass 262 of the returns of the voting tabulator or voting tabulators and absentee 263 ballots used in such election for such office unless such defeated 264 candidate or defeated candidates, as the case may be, for such office file 265 a written statement waiving this right to such canvass with the 266 municipal clerk in the case of a municipal office, or with the Secretary of 267 the State in the case of a state or district office. In the case of state and 268 district offices, the Secretary of the State upon tabulation of the votes for 269 such offices shall notify the town clerks in the state or district, as the case 270 may be, of the state and district offices which qualify for an automatic 271 recanvass and shall also notify each candidate for any such office. When 272 a recanvass is to be held, the municipal clerk shall promptly notify the 273 moderator, as defined in section 9-311, as amended by this act, who shall 274 proceed forthwith to cause a recanvass of such returns of the office in 275 question in the same manner as is provided in [said] section 9-311, as 276 amended by this act. In addition to the notice required under section 9-277 311, as amended by this act, the moderator shall before such recanvass 278 is made give notice in writing of the time when, and place where, such

279 recanvass is to be made to each candidate for a municipal office which 280 qualifies for an automatic recanvass under this section. Nothing in this section shall preclude the right to judicial proceedings on behalf of a 281 282 candidate under any provision of chapter 149. For the purposes of this 283 section, "the total number of votes cast for the office" means, in the case 284 of multiple openings for the same office, the total number of electors 285 checked as having voted in the state, district, municipality or political 286 subdivision, as the case may be. When a recanvass of the returns for an 287 office for which there are multiple openings is required by the 288 provisions of this section, the returns for all candidates for all openings 289 for the office shall be recanvassed. No one other than a recanvass official 290 shall take part in the recanvass. If [any irregularity in the recanvass 291 procedure is noted by a candidate, he] <u>a candidate notes any irregularity</u> 292 in the recanvass procedure, such candidate shall be permitted to present 293 evidence of such irregularity in any contest relating to the election.

Sec. 13. Subsection (b) of section 9-404c of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October* 1, 2025):

(b) Upon the filing of all pages of a petition, the Secretary shall reject any page of the petition which does not contain the certifications required in section 9-404b or which the Secretary determines to have been circulated in violation of any provision of said section, [9-404b,] and shall immediately cause the number of certified signatures to be tabulated. Petitions filed with the Secretary shall be preserved for a period of three years and then may be destroyed.

Sec. 14. Subparagraph (C) of subdivision (33) of section 9-601 of the general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October 1, 2025*):

307 (C) A firm, partnership, corporation, association, organization or308 other entity:

309 (i) With respect to which a foreign owner or a person described in 310 subparagraph (A) or (B) of this subdivision holds, owns, controls or otherwise has a direct or indirect beneficial ownership of at least fiveper cent of such entity's total equity or outstanding voting shares;

(ii) With respect to which two or more, in combination, foreign
owners or persons described in subparagraph (A) or (B) of this
subdivision hold, own, control or otherwise have a direct or indirect
beneficial ownership of at least twenty per cent of such entity's total
equity or outstanding voting shares, excluding interests held in a widely
held, diversified fund;

(iii) With respect to which a foreign owner or individual described in
subparagraph (A) or (B) of this subdivision, as applicable, [of this
subdivision] participates directly or indirectly in decisions to engage in
any activity subject to the provisions of chapter 155 or 157; or

(iv) That is exempt from taxation under Section 501(c)(4) of the
Internal Revenue Code of 1986, or any subsequent corresponding
internal revenue code of the United States, as amended from time to
time, and with respect to which at least twenty per cent of the income
received by such entity in the most recent taxable year derives from one
or more foreign owners.

Sec. 15. Subsection (a) of section 9-601d of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*1, 2025):

332 (a) Any person, as defined in section 9-601, as amended by this act, 333 may, unless otherwise restricted or prohibited by law, including, but not 334 limited to, any provision of this chapter or chapter 157, make unlimited 335 independent expenditures, as defined in section 9-601c, and accept 336 unlimited covered transfers, as defined in [said] section 9-601, as 337 amended by this act. Except as provided pursuant to this section, any 338 such person who makes or obligates to make an independent 339 expenditure or expenditures in excess of one thousand dollars, in the 340 aggregate, shall file statements according to the same schedule and in 341 the same manner as is required of a treasurer of a candidate committee 342 pursuant to section 9-608.

343 Sec. 16. Section 9-750 of the general statutes, as amended by section
344 188 of public act 23-205, is repealed and the following is substituted in
345 lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2025*):

346 If, (1) for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2006, or any fiscal year 347 thereafter, the amount of funds available under section 3-69a for deposit 348 in the Citizens' Election Fund established in section 9-701 is less than the 349 amount of funds required under [said] section 3-69a to be deposited in 350 said fund, resulting in an insufficiency in the amount of the deposit, or 351 (2) during an election cycle the amount of funds in the Citizens' Election 352 Fund is less than the amount of funds required to provide grants to each 353 qualified candidate committee pursuant to the provisions of this 354 chapter, resulting in an insufficiency in said fund, a portion of the 355 revenues from the tax imposed under chapter 208, equal to the amount 356 of any insufficiency described in subdivision (1) or (2) of this section, 357 shall be deposited in said fund to allow for the payment of grants 358 pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

Sec. 17. Subsection (b) of section 12-107e of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*1, 2025):

362 (b) An owner of land included in any area designated as open space 363 land upon any plan as finally adopted may apply for its classification as 364 open space land on any grand list of a municipality by filing a written 365 application for such classification with the assessor thereof not earlier 366 than thirty days before or later than thirty days after the assessment 367 date, provided in a year in which a revaluation of all real property in 368 accordance with section 12-62 becomes effective such application may 369 be filed not later than ninety days after such assessment date. The 370 assessor shall determine whether there has been any change in the area 371 designated as an area of open space land upon the plan of development 372 which adversely affects its essential character as an area of open space 373 land and, if the assessor determines that there has been no such change, 374 said assessor shall classify such land as open space land and include it 375 as such on the grand list. An application for classification of land as open

376 space land shall be made upon a form prescribed by the Commissioner 377 of Agriculture and shall set forth a description of the land, a general 378 description of the use to which it is being put, a statement of the potential liability for tax under the provisions of [section] sections 12-379 380 504a to 12-504f, inclusive, and such other information as the assessor 381 may require to aid in determining whether such land qualifies for such 382 classification. Any advisory opinion issued by the Commissioner of 383 Agriculture pursuant to section 22-4c, stating that such land constitutes 384 open space land, shall be prima facie evidence that such land is classified 385 as open space land for purposes of this section.

Sec. 18. Subsection (b) of section 21a-7 of the general statutes is
repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*1, 2025):

389 (b) With the exception of the Liquor Control Commission, each board 390 or commission within the Department of Consumer Protection under 391 section 21a-6 that makes a proposed final decision that is adverse to a 392 party, as described in subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of this section, 393 shall submit such proposed final decision to the Commissioner of 394 Consumer Protection. Not later than thirty calendar days after receipt of 395 any such proposed final decision, the Commissioner of Consumer 396 Protection shall notify such board or commission that the commissioner 397 shall render the final decision concerning such matter. Not later than 398 thirty days after receipt of any such proposed final decision, the 399 commissioner shall approve, modify or reject the proposed final 400 decision or remand the proposed final decision for further review or for 401 the taking of additional evidence. The commissioner shall notify the 402 board or commission in writing of the commissioner's decision and 403 include in such notification the rationale for such decision. The decision 404 of the commissioner shall be the final decision in accordance with 405 section 4-180 for purposes of reconsideration in accordance with section 406 4-181a or appeal to the Superior Court in accordance with section 4-183.

407 Sec. 19. Subsection (a) of section 25-156 of the general statutes is 408 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective October*  409 1, 2025):

410	(a) There is established the Long Island Sound Foundation, Inc., a
411	nonstock, nonprofit corporation, organized under the laws of the state
412	of Connecticut as a state chartered foundation. The Long Island Sound
413	Foundation, Inc. shall be a successor organization to the Long Island
414	Sound Assembly established under section 25-155 of the general
415	statutes, revision of 1958, revised to January 1, 2023.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: October 1, 2025 Section 1 3-56a(9) October 1, 2025 Sec. 2 4-8(c) October 1, 2025 9-4a(b)(2)Sec. 3 Sec. 4 October 1, 2025 9-311(b)(6) Sec. 5 October 1, 2025 9-32(b) October 1, 2025 9-35c Sec. 6 October 1, 2025 Sec. 7 9-153a Sec. 8 October 1, 2025 9-158c(a)(1) Sec. 9 October 1, 2025 9-163k(c)(3)October 1, 2025 Sec. 10 9-264 October 1, 2025 Sec. 11 9-311(a) and (b) Sec. 12 October 1, 2025 9-311a Sec. 13 October 1, 2025 9-404c(b) Sec. 14 October 1, 2025 9-601(33)(C) Sec. 15 October 1, 2025 9-601d(a) Sec. 16 July 1, 2025 9-750 Sec. 17 *October* 1, 2025 12-107e(b) Sec. 18 October 1, 2025 21a-7(b) Sec. 19 October 1, 2025 25-156(a)

## GAE Joint Favorable