



General Assembly

February Session, 2026

Raised Bill No. 491

LCO No. 3082



Referred to Committee on GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATION
AND ELECTIONS

Introduced by:
(GAE)

***AN ACT CONCERNING THE SECRETARY OF THE STATE'S
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NO-EXCUSE
ABSENTEE VOTING.***

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

1 Section 1. Section 9-135 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

3 [(a)] Any elector eligible to vote at a primary or an election and any
4 person eligible to vote at a referendum may vote by absentee ballot, [if
5 such elector or person is unable to appear at such elector's or person's
6 polling place on the day of such primary, election or referendum for any
7 of the following reasons: (1) Such elector's or person's active service with
8 the armed forces of the United States; (2) such elector's or person's
9 absence from the town of such elector's or person's voting residence; (3)
10 sickness; (4) physical disability; (5) the tenets of such elector's or person's
11 religion forbid secular activity on the day of such primary, election or
12 referendum; or (6) the required performance of such elector's or person's
13 duties as a primary, election or referendum official, including as a town
14 clerk or registrar of voters or as staff of the clerk or registrar, at a polling

15 place other than such elector's or person's own during all of the hours
16 of voting at such primary, election or referendum] provided such elector
17 properly completes and submits an absentee ballot application in
18 accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

19 [(b) No person shall misrepresent the eligibility requirements for
20 voting by absentee ballot prescribed in subsection (a) of this section, to
21 any elector or prospective absentee ballot applicant.]

22 Sec. 2. Section 9-137 of the general statutes is repealed and the
23 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

24 (a) Each absentee ballot shall be returned to the municipal clerk,
25 inserted in [an inner] a return envelope which shall be capable of being
26 sealed and which shall have printed on its face a form containing the
27 following [statements] statement:

28 "I hereby state under the penalties of false statement in absentee
29 balloting that I am eligible to vote at the primary, election or referendum
30 in the municipality in which this absentee ballot is to be cast. [and that I
31 expect to be unable to appear at my polling place on the day of such
32 primary, election or referendum for one or more of the following
33 reasons: (1) My active service in the armed forces; (2) my absence from
34 the town in which I am eligible to vote; (3) sickness; (4) physical
35 disability; (5) the tenets of my religion which forbid secular activity on
36 the day of such primary, election or referendum; or (6) my duties as a
37 primary, election or referendum official.]

38 Date

39 (Signature)

40 (Printed name)"

41 (b) Each such return envelope shall also be endorsed on the outside
42 with the words "OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT" and bear a label
43 generated by the state-wide centralized voter registration system

44 described in section 9-50b. Such label shall include (1) (A) the name and
45 return address of the sender, (B) the applicant's name and voting
46 residence by street and number, (C) the applicant's voting district, (D)
47 the ballot style, (E) the unique ballot identification number, appearing
48 both in a text format and as a scannable barcode, and (F) the date of the
49 primary, election or referendum at which the ballot is to be cast and, if
50 the absentee ballot is to be cast at a primary, the name of the party
51 holding the primary, and (2) a notice, sufficient to warn any person
52 handling the ballot, of the restrictions set forth in section 9-140b, as
53 amended by this act, concerning who may possess or return the ballot
54 and the restrictions and penalties set forth in section 9-359 concerning
55 the completion or execution of absentee ballots. The clerk shall also
56 inscribe such clerk's official address for the return of the ballot on the
57 return envelope prior to issuance of the ballot and return envelope.

58 Sec. 3. Section 9-139a of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes
59 is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
60 *passage*):

61 (a) The Secretary of the State shall prescribe and furnish the following
62 materials to municipal clerks: The absentee ballot facsimile, the
63 application for absentee ballot authorized for use at each election or
64 primary, the [inner envelope, the outer] envelope provided for the
65 return of the ballot to the municipal clerk, the instructions for the use of
66 the absentee ballot and the envelope for mailing of such forms by the
67 clerk to the absentee ballot applicant.

68 (b) The application for absentee ballot shall be in the form of a
69 statement signed under the penalties of false statement in absentee
70 balloting. Each application shall contain (1) spaces for the signature
71 under the penalties of false statement in absentee balloting of any person
72 who assists the applicant in the completion of an application together
73 with the information required in section 9-140, as amended by this act,
74 (2) spaces for the signature and the printed or typed name of the
75 applicant, and (3) a clear and conspicuous notation of the year for which

76 such application's use is authorized.

77 (c) The Secretary of the State shall prescribe and furnish to the
78 Department of Correction an application for absentee ballot form for use
79 within Department of Correction facilities. Such form shall contain
80 spaces for all information required under subsection (b) of this section.
81 Each such form shall be consecutively numbered and shall indicate that
82 such form is only for use by an absentee ballot applicant who is
83 incarcerated in a Department of Correction facility and that such
84 applicant is required to provide in the appropriate space on such form
85 a mailing address at the Department of Correction facility in order for
86 an absentee ballot to be mailed to such applicant.

87 (d) The instructions for the use of the absentee ballot shall be in plain
88 language and shall include the steps to be taken if a vote is to be
89 cancelled or changed, and shall also contain a simple and concise
90 restatement of the provisions of subsection [(l)] (k) of section 9-150a, as
91 amended by this act [and section 9-159o] concerning rejection of ballots
92 marked in such manner as to identify the voters casting them, [, and
93 withdrawal of ballots by persons who find they are able to vote at the
94 polls.]

95 (e) A sufficient supply of such instructions and envelopes shall be
96 printed to supply the number which the municipal clerk requests or the
97 Secretary of the State deems sufficient.

98 Sec. 4. Section 9-140 of the 2026 supplement to the general statutes is
99 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
100 *passage*):

101 (a) (1) Except as provided in subsection (b) of this section, application
102 for an absentee ballot shall be made to the clerk of the municipality in
103 which the applicant is eligible to vote or has applied for such eligibility.
104 Any person who assists another person in the completion of an
105 application shall, in the space provided, sign the application and print
106 or type [his] such person's name, residence address and telephone

107 number, except that any employee of the Department of Correction who
108 so assists an incarcerated applicant shall provide the address and
109 telephone number of the department facility to which such employee is
110 assigned in lieu of such employee's residence address and telephone
111 number. Such signature shall be made under the penalties of false
112 statement in absentee balloting. The municipal clerk shall not invalidate
113 the application solely because it does not contain the name of a person
114 who assisted the applicant in the completion of the application. The
115 municipal clerk shall not distribute with an absentee ballot application
116 any material which promotes the success or defeat of any candidate or
117 referendum question. The municipal clerk shall maintain a log of all
118 absentee ballot applications provided under this subsection, including
119 the name and address of each person to whom applications are
120 provided and the number of applications provided to each such person.
121 Each absentee ballot application provided by the municipal clerk shall
122 [be consecutively numbered] display a unique ballot identification
123 number and be stamped or marked with the name of the municipality
124 issuing the application. The application shall be signed by the applicant
125 under the penalties of false statement in absentee balloting on (A) the
126 form prescribed by the Secretary of the State pursuant to section 9-139a,
127 as amended by this act, (B) a form provided by any federal department
128 or agency if applicable pursuant to section 9-153a, or (C) any of the
129 special forms of application prescribed pursuant to section 9-150c, 9-
130 153a, 9-153b, as amended by this act, 9-153d, 9-153e, 9-153f or 9-158d, if
131 applicable. Any such absentee ballot applicant who is unable to write
132 may cause the application to be completed by an authorized agent who
133 shall, in the spaces provided for the date and signature, write the date
134 and name of the absentee ballot applicant followed by the word "by"
135 and [his] such authorized agent's own signature. If the ballot is to be
136 mailed to the applicant, the applicant shall list the bona fide personal
137 mailing address of the applicant in the appropriate space on the
138 application.

139 (2) A municipal clerk may transmit an application to a person under

140 this subsection by facsimile machine or other electronic means, if so
141 requested by the applicant. If a municipal clerk has a facsimile machine
142 or other electronic means, an applicant may return a completed
143 application to the clerk by such a machine or device, provided the
144 applicant shall also mail the original of the completed application to the
145 clerk, either separately or with the absentee ballot that is issued to the
146 applicant. If the clerk does not receive such original application by the
147 close of the polls on the day of the election, primary or referendum, the
148 absentee ballot shall not be counted.

149 (3) No municipal clerk shall provide, for an election, primary or
150 referendum, five or more absentee ballot applications to any person
151 earlier than ninety days prior to the first day of issuance of absentee
152 voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of this section, for such election,
153 primary or referendum.

154 (4) No municipal clerk shall provide or accept for return, and no
155 person shall [distribute or otherwise] use, any absentee ballot
156 application in a given year unless such application contains the notation
157 described in subdivision (3) of subsection (b) of section 9-139a, as
158 amended by this act, authorizing such application's use in such year.

159 (b) On and after July 1, 2021:

160 (1) Application for an absentee ballot may also be made to the
161 Secretary of the State through an online system established and
162 maintained by the Secretary for such purpose if an applicant's signature
163 is in a database described in subsection (b) of section 9-19k, or the system
164 described in section 9-4c, and such signature may be imported into such
165 online application system.

166 (2) In order for an application for an absentee ballot to be submitted
167 through the online system described in subdivision (1) of this
168 subsection, the applicant's signature shall be obtained from a database
169 described in subsection (b) of section 9-19k, or the system described in
170 section 9-4c, and the applicant shall, on an online form prescribed by the

171 Secretary, (A) type [his or her] such applicant's name, (B) indicate the
172 municipality in which such applicant is eligible to vote or has applied
173 for such eligibility, and (C) mark a box associated with the following
174 statement:

175 "By clicking on the box below, I swear or affirm all of the following
176 under penalty of false statement in absentee balloting:

177 1. I am the person whose name is provided on this form, and I desire
178 to apply for an absentee ballot.

179 2. I am eligible to vote in the municipality provided on this form or
180 have applied for such eligibility.

181 3. I authorize the Department of Motor Vehicles or other Connecticut
182 state agency to transmit to the Connecticut Secretary of the State my
183 signature that is on file with such agency and understand that such
184 signature will be used by the Secretary on this online application for an
185 absentee ballot as if I had signed this form personally."

186 (3) Not later than twenty-four hours after receipt of any submitted
187 application for an absentee ballot through the online system described
188 in subdivision (1) of this subsection, the Secretary shall transmit such
189 application to the clerk of the municipality indicated in such application.

190 (c) The municipal clerk shall check the name of each absentee ballot
191 applicant against the last-completed registry list and any updated
192 registry lists on file in the municipal clerk's office. If the name of such
193 applicant does not appear on any of such lists, the clerk shall send such
194 applicant a notice, in a form prescribed by the Secretary of the State, to
195 the effect that (1) the applicant's name did not appear on the list of
196 electors of the municipality at the time the application was processed,
197 and (2) unless the applicant is admitted or restored as an elector of the
198 municipality by the applicable cutoff dates, an absentee ballot will not
199 be mailed to [him] such applicant. Such notice shall not be so mailed if,
200 prior to the mailing of the notice, the registrars provide the clerk with

201 reliable information showing the absentee ballot applicant to be an
202 elector of the municipality.

203 (d) (1) An absentee voting set shall consist of (A) the mailing envelope
204 containing all other items of such set and used to issue such set to the
205 applicant, (B) an absentee ballot, [inner and outer envelopes] (C) an
206 envelope for its return, (D) instructions for its use, and (E) if applicable,
207 explanatory texts concerning ballot questions, as provided for in
208 sections 2-30a and 9-369b, as amended by this act.

209 (2) No other material shall be included with an absentee voting set
210 issued to an applicant, except (A) as provided in sections 9-153e and 9-
211 153f, [or] (B) where necessary to correct an error or omission as provided
212 in section 9-153c, as amended by this act, or (C) any voting information
213 as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the State, provided no such
214 voting information shall promote the success or defeat of any candidate
215 of question.

216 (e) Upon receipt of an application, the municipal clerk shall, unless a
217 notice is mailed to the applicant pursuant to subsection (c) of this
218 section, [write the serial number of the outer] ensure the unique ballot
219 identification number appearing on the return envelope included in the
220 absentee voting set to be issued to the applicant matches the unique
221 identification number displayed on the application form in the space
222 provided for [that purpose on the application form. Sets shall be issued
223 to applicants in consecutive ascending numerical order of the envelope
224 serial numbers, and] such purpose. As absentee voting sets are issued to
225 applicants, the clerk shall keep a list of the unique ballot identification
226 numbers [indicating beside each number] and shall indicate beside each
227 unique ballot identification number on the list the name of the applicant
228 to whom [that set] the absentee voting set corresponding with such
229 unique ballot identification number was issued. The list shall be
230 preserved as a public record as required by section 9-150b, as amended
231 by this act.

232 (f) Absentee voting sets shall be issued beginning on the thirty-first
233 day before an election and the twenty-first day before a primary or, if
234 such day is a Saturday, Sunday or legal holiday, beginning on the next
235 preceding business day.

236 (g) On the first day of issuance of absentee voting sets, the municipal
237 clerk shall mail an absentee voting set to each applicant whose
238 application was received by the clerk prior to that day. When the clerk
239 receives an application during the time period in which absentee voting
240 sets are to be issued, [he] the clerk shall mail an absentee voting set to
241 the applicant [,] within twenty-four hours, unless the applicant submits
242 [his] such applicant's application in person at the office of the clerk and
243 asks to be given [his] such applicant's absentee voting set immediately,
244 in which case the clerk shall comply with the request. Any absentee
245 voting set to be mailed to an applicant shall be mailed to the bona fide
246 personal mailing address shown on the application. If an applicant has
247 provided a mailing address at a Department of Correction facility and
248 such applicant is subsequently transferred to another Department of
249 Correction facility, the Commissioner of Correction shall ensure
250 delivery of the absentee voting set to such applicant. Issuance of
251 absentee voting sets shall also be subject to the provisions of subsection
252 (c) of this section, section 9-150c [and section 9-159q] concerning persons
253 designated to deliver or return ballots in cases involving unforeseen
254 illness or disability and section 9-159q, as amended by this act,
255 concerning supervised voting at certain health care institutions.

256 (h) No absentee ballot shall be issued on the day of an election or
257 primary, or after the opening of the polls on the day of a referendum,
258 except in cases involving unforeseen illness or disability [or presidential
259 or overseas ballots] as provided in section 9-150c and presidential or
260 overseas ballots as provided in sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive.

261 (i) The municipal clerk shall file executed applications in alphabetical
262 order according to the applicants' surnames. Such applications shall be
263 preserved as a public record as required by section 9-150b, as amended

264 by this act.

265 (j) No person shall pay or give any compensation to another, and no
266 person shall accept any compensation, solely for (1) [distributing
267 absentee ballot applications obtained from a municipal clerk or the
268 Secretary of the State or (2)] obtaining an absentee ballot application
269 from a municipal clerk, as the designee of an absentee ballot applicant,
270 (2) obtaining fewer than five absentee ballot applications for the purpose
271 of distributing such applications to members of such person's
272 immediate family pursuant to subparagraph (C) of subdivision (1) of
273 subsection (k) of this section, or (3) assisting any other person in the
274 execution of an absentee ballot application.

275 (k) (1) [A person shall register with the municipal clerk before
276 distributing five or more absentee ballot applications for an election,
277 primary or referendum, not including applications distributed to such
278 person's immediate family. Such requirement shall not apply to] No
279 person shall receive any absentee ballot application for the purpose of
280 distributing such application to another person, except for (A) a person
281 who is the designee of an applicant, [or to] (B) any employee of the
282 Department of Correction who provides the application for absentee
283 ballot form prescribed under subsection (c) of section 9-139a, as
284 amended by this act, to one or more incarcerated absentee ballot
285 applicants, and (C) a person who receives fewer than five absentee ballot
286 applications for the purpose of distributing such applications to
287 members of such person's immediate family.

288 (2) The municipal clerk shall reject the application of any absentee
289 ballot applicant made upon the form prescribed under subsection (c) of
290 section 9-139a, as amended by this act, if such form indicates any
291 address other than an address at a Department of Correction facility.
292 The municipal clerk shall maintain a log of all applications of
293 incarcerated absentee ballot applicants received by such municipal
294 clerk, which log shall indicate the name and address of each applicant,
295 the date of receipt of each application and the date such municipal clerk

296 mailed the absentee ballot to such applicant or the reason why such
297 application was rejected.

298 [(3) Any person who distributes absentee ballot applications shall
299 maintain a list of the names and addresses of prospective absentee ballot
300 applicants who receive such applications, and shall file such list with
301 the municipal clerk prior to the date of the primary, election or
302 referendum for which the applications were so distributed, except that
303 such requirements shall not apply to any employee of the Department
304 of Correction who provides the application for absentee ballot form
305 prescribed under subsection (c) of section 9-139a to incarcerated
306 absentee ballot applicants. Any person who distributes absentee ballot
307 applications and receives an executed application shall forthwith file the
308 application with the municipal clerk.]

309 (l) No candidate, party or political committee, or agent of such
310 candidate or committee shall mail unsolicited applications for absentee
311 ballots to any person, [unless such mailing includes: (1) A written
312 explanation of the eligibility requirements for voting by absentee ballot
313 as prescribed in subsection (a) of section 9-135, and (2) a written warning
314 that voting or attempting to vote by absentee ballot without meeting one
315 or more of such eligibility requirements subjects the elector or applicant
316 to potential civil and criminal penalties.] As used in this subsection,
317 "agent" means any person authorized to act on behalf of another person.

318 (m) The Secretary of the State shall conspicuously post on the
319 Secretary of the State's web site, adjacent to the absentee ballot
320 application form available for downloading, a notice that the
321 application may be downloaded by a person only for (1) the person's
322 own use, (2) the use of a member of the person's immediate family, or
323 (3) the use of a designee of the applicant. The notice shall also contain
324 an advisory statement concerning the requirements of subsection (k) of
325 this section.

326 (n) The State Elections Enforcement Commission, in consultation

327 with the Secretary of the State, shall prepare a summary of the
328 requirements and prohibitions of the absentee voting laws, which shall
329 be posted on said agencies' web sites. Candidates and political party
330 chairpersons shall provide such summary to campaign and party
331 employees and volunteers.

332 (o) As used in this section, (1) "immediate family" has the same
333 meaning as provided in subsection (a) of section 9-140b, as amended by
334 this act, and (2) "designee" has the same meaning as provided in
335 subsection (b) of section 9-140b, as amended by this act.

336 Sec. 5. Section 9-140a of the general statutes is repealed and the
337 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

338 Each absentee ballot applicant shall sign the form on the [inner]
339 return envelope provided for in section 9-137, as amended by this act,
340 which shall constitute a statement under the penalties of false statement
341 in absentee balloting. Any absentee ballot applicant who is unable to
342 write may cause [his] such applicant's name to be signed on the form by
343 an authorized agent who shall, in the space provided for the signature,
344 write the name of the applicant followed by the word "by" and [his] such
345 authorized agent's own signature. The failure of the applicant or
346 authorized agent to date the form shall not invalidate the ballot. The
347 ballot shall be inserted in the [inner envelope, and the inner envelope
348 shall be inserted in the outer] return envelope [,] prior to the return of
349 the ballot to the municipal clerk. If an applicant is required to return
350 identification with the ballot pursuant to the Help America Vote Act,
351 P.L. 107-252, as amended from time to time, the municipal clerk shall
352 provide to the applicant an additional envelope preaddressed to the
353 municipal clerk for the return of such applicant's identification, which
354 envelope may be postage prepaid, and the applicant shall return such
355 identification [shall be inserted in the outer envelope so such
356 identification can be viewed without opening the inner envelope] to the
357 municipal clerk in such additional envelope.

358 Sec. 6. Section 9-140b of the general statutes, as amended by section
 359 88 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
 360 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

361 (a) (1) An absentee ballot shall be cast at a primary, election or
 362 referendum only if: ~~[(1)] (A)~~ It is mailed by ~~[(A)] (i)~~ the ballot applicant,
 363 ~~[(B)] (ii)~~ a designee of a person who applies for an absentee ballot
 364 because of illness or physical disability, or ~~[(C)] (iii)~~ a member of the
 365 immediate family of an applicant who is a student, so that it is received
 366 by the clerk of the municipality in which the applicant is qualified to
 367 vote not later than the close of the polls; ~~[(2)] (B)~~ subject to the provisions
 368 of subdivision (2) of this subsection, it is returned by the applicant in
 369 person to the clerk by the day before the election or primary or prior to
 370 the opening of the polls on the day of the referendum; ~~[(3)] (C)~~ subject
 371 to the provisions of subdivision (2) of this subsection, it is returned by a
 372 designee of an ill or physically disabled ballot applicant, in person, to
 373 ~~[said] the~~ clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the
 374 election, primary or referendum; ~~[(4)] (D)~~ subject to the provisions of
 375 subdivision (2) of this subsection, it is returned by a member of the
 376 immediate family of the absentee voter, in person, to ~~[said] the~~ clerk not
 377 later than the close of the polls on the day of the election, primary or
 378 referendum; ~~[(5)] (E)~~ in the case of a presidential or overseas ballot, it is
 379 mailed or otherwise returned pursuant to the provisions of section 9-
 380 158g, as amended by this act; or ~~[(6)] (F)~~ it is returned with the proper
 381 identification as required by the Help America Vote Act, P.L. 107-252,
 382 as amended from time to time, if applicable, ~~[inserted in the outer~~
 383 ~~envelope so such identification can be viewed without opening the inner~~
 384 ~~envelope]~~ in accordance with the provisions of section 9-140a, as
 385 amended by this act. A person returning an absentee ballot to the
 386 municipal clerk pursuant to ~~[subdivision (3) or (4) of this subsection]~~
 387 subparagraph (C) or (D) of this subdivision shall present identification
 388 and, on the ~~[outer] return~~ envelope of the absentee ballot, sign ~~[his] such~~
 389 person's name in the presence of the municipal clerk ~~[,]~~ and indicate
 390 ~~[his] such person's~~ address ~~[, his]~~ and relationship to the voter or ~~[his]~~

391 position [,] and the date and time of such return. An absentee ballot shall
392 be deemed cast when it is received and accepted by the municipal clerk
393 in accordance with the provisions of this subsection, provided the
394 statement on the return envelope for such absentee ballot is signed by
395 the applicant. As used in this section, "immediate family" means a
396 dependent relative who resides in the individual's household or any
397 spouse, child, parent or sibling of the individual.

398 (2) Not earlier than the day before the commencement of the period
399 of early voting at an election, primary or referendum, the municipal
400 clerk may direct individuals wishing to return absentee ballots in person
401 at the municipal clerk's office to instead deposit such ballots in a secure
402 drop box designated by such clerk for such purpose, except in the case
403 of a ballot returned pursuant to section 9-158g, as amended by this act.
404 Beginning the day before the commencement of the period of early
405 voting at an election, primary or referendum and until the day before
406 such election, primary or referendum, the municipal clerk may, at such
407 clerk's discretion, accept absentee ballots returned in person at the
408 municipal clerk's office.

409 (b) As used in this section and section 9-150c, "designee" means (1) a
410 person who is caring for the applicant because of the applicant's illness
411 or physical disability, including, but not limited to, a licensed physician
412 or a registered or practical nurse, (2) a member of the applicant's family,
413 who is designated by an absentee ballot applicant and who consents to
414 such designation, or (3) a police officer, registrar of voters, deputy
415 registrar of voters or assistant registrar of voters in the municipality in
416 which the applicant resides.

417 (c) (1) For purposes of this section, "mailed" means (A) sent by the
418 United States Postal Service or any commercial carrier, courier or
419 messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the
420 State, or (B) deposited in a secure drop box designated by the municipal
421 clerk for such purpose, in accordance with instructions prescribed by
422 the Secretary.

423 (2) (A) In the case of absentee ballots mailed under subparagraph (B)
424 of subdivision (1) of this subsection, beginning on the first day of
425 issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of section
426 9-140, as amended by this act, and on each [weekday] business day
427 thereafter until the close of the polls at the election, primary or
428 referendum, including at the close of the polls at such election, primary
429 or referendum, the municipal clerk shall retrieve from the secure drop
430 box described in said subparagraph each such ballot deposited in such
431 drop box.

432 (B) On and after July 1, 2025, each municipality shall provide a video
433 recording device for each secure drop box described in subparagraph
434 (B) of subdivision (1) of this subsection within such municipality, which
435 device's recordings shall capture the location of such drop box and
436 evidence the date and time of each such recording beginning on the first
437 day of issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of
438 section 9-140, as amended by this act, and until the last retrieval of
439 absentee ballots from such drop box at the close of the polls at the
440 election or primary. Each such recording shall, as soon as practicable, be
441 made publicly available from the date of recording, but in no case later
442 than five days after such last retrieval. Each such recording shall be
443 retained by the municipality for a period of twelve months and may be
444 destroyed at the end of such period, except that the State Elections
445 Enforcement Commission or a court of competent jurisdiction may
446 order that such period be extended until the conclusion of any
447 investigation related to such recording.

448 (3) The Secretary of the State may adopt regulations, in accordance
449 with the provisions of chapter 54, concerning the use of secure drop
450 boxes for the deposit of absentee ballots, including, but not limited to,
451 the placement and positioning of any such drop box and the video
452 recording of any such drop box and retention of any such recording.

453 (d) No person shall have in [his] such person's possession any official
454 absentee ballot or ballot envelope for use at any primary, election or

455 referendum except the applicant to whom it was issued, the Secretary of
456 the State or [his or her] the Secretary's authorized agents, any official
457 printer of absentee ballot forms and [his] such printer's designated
458 carriers, the United States Postal Service, any other carrier, courier or
459 messenger service recognized and approved by the Secretary of the
460 State, any person authorized by a municipal clerk to receive and process
461 official absentee ballot forms on behalf of the municipal clerk, any
462 authorized primary, election or referendum official or any other person
463 authorized by any provision of the general statutes to possess a ballot or
464 ballot envelope.

465 (e) No (1) candidate, or (2) agent of a candidate, political party or
466 committee, as defined in section 9-601, shall knowingly be present when
467 an absentee ballot applicant executes an absentee ballot, except when
468 (A) [when] the candidate or agent is (i) a member of the immediate
469 family of the applicant, or (ii) authorized by law to be present, or (B)
470 [when] the absentee ballot is executed in the office of the municipal clerk
471 and the municipal clerk or an employee of the municipal clerk is a
472 candidate or agent.

473 Sec. 7. Section 9-140c of the general statutes is repealed and the
474 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

475 (a) (1) The municipal clerk shall retain the return envelopes
476 containing absentee ballots received by [him] such clerk under section
477 9-140b, as amended by this act, and shall not open such return
478 envelopes. The municipal clerk shall endorse over [his] such clerk's
479 signature, upon each [outer] return envelope as [he] such clerk receives
480 it, (A) the date and precise time of its receipt, and (B) the method of its
481 receipt, in accordance with the provisions of subdivision (2) of this
482 subsection. The clerk shall make an affidavit attesting to the accuracy of
483 all such endorsements [, and at the close of the polls] and shall deliver
484 such affidavit at the close of the polls to the head moderator, who shall
485 endorse the time of its receipt and return it to the clerk after all counting
486 is complete. The clerk shall preserve the affidavit for one hundred eighty

487 days in accordance with the requirements of section 9-150b, as amended
488 by this act. The clerk shall keep a list of the names of the applicants who
489 return absentee ballots to the clerk under section 9-140b, as amended by
490 this act. The list shall be preserved as a public record as required by
491 section 9-150b, as amended by this act.

492 (2) The municipal clerk shall record on the [outer] return envelope of
493 each absentee ballot [returned] received by such clerk under section 9-
494 140b, as amended by this act, whether such absentee ballot was (A) sent
495 by the United States Postal Service or any commercial carrier, courier or
496 messenger service, (B) deposited in a secure drop box, in which case the
497 location of such drop box shall also be so recorded, (C) returned in
498 person by an elector, or (D) returned in person by the designee or
499 immediate family member of an elector. As soon as reasonably
500 practicable after the close of the polls at an election or primary, the
501 municipal clerk shall submit to the Secretary of the State a report
502 detailing the total count of all absentee ballots returned for such election
503 or primary, broken down by each method described in subparagraphs
504 (A) to (D), inclusive, of this subdivision.

505 (3) If the municipal clerk receives an absentee ballot without the
506 statement on the return envelope signed by the applicant, such absentee
507 ballot may be cured in person at the municipal clerk's office beginning
508 on the first day of issuance of absentee voting sets, as provided in
509 subsection (f) of section 9-140, as amended by this act, and until the close
510 of the polls on the day of the election, primary or referendum. After such
511 close of the polls, no such absentee ballot may be cured.

512 (b) (1) Beginning [not earlier than the seventh day before the election,
513 primary or referendum] the day after the first day of issuance of
514 absentee voting sets, as provided in subsection (f) of section 9-140, as
515 amended by this act, and on any weekday thereafter, all absentee ballots
516 received by the municipal clerk at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. of
517 [such] the day of the election, primary or referendum may be sorted into
518 voting districts by the municipal clerk and checked as provided in this

519 subsection. On any such day, beginning as soon as the ballots have been
520 sorted, the registrars of voters, without opening the [outer] return
521 envelopes, may check the names of the applicants returning ballots on
522 the official checklist to be used at the election, primary or referendum
523 by indicating "absentee" or "A" preceding each such name and, if
524 unaffiliated electors are authorized under section 9-431 to vote in the
525 primary of either of two parties, the designation of the party in which
526 the applicants are voting preceding each such name. Unless absentee
527 ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places, pursuant to
528 subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the registrars shall also place such
529 indication on a duplicate checklist to be retained by the municipal clerk
530 until the municipal clerk delivers such duplicate checklist to the
531 registrars, in accordance with subsection (e) of this section, for the use
532 of the absentee ballot counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

533 (2) All absentee ballots received at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. of
534 the last day before the election, primary or referendum which is not a
535 Sunday or legal holiday, shall be sorted into voting districts by the
536 municipal clerk and checked as provided in subdivision (1) of this
537 subsection not later than such last day.

538 (c) If the name of the applicant returning the ballot is not on the
539 official checklist for any polling place in such municipality, the
540 registrars shall endorse on the face of [such outer] the return envelope
541 the word "rejected", followed by a statement of the reasons for rejection,
542 and [the outer] such return envelope shall not be opened [or the] nor
543 shall such ballot be counted.

544 (d) After such checking has been completed on any such day, the
545 municipal clerk shall seal the unopened ballots in a package and retain
546 them in a safe place.

547 (e) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection, ballots
548 received at or prior to eleven o'clock a.m. on the last day before the
549 election, primary or referendum shall be delivered by the municipal

550 clerk to the registrars [between ten o'clock a.m. and twelve o'clock noon]
551 not later than seven o'clock a.m. on the day of the election, [or] primary
552 [and at twelve o'clock noon on the day of a] or referendum. Unless
553 absentee ballots are to be counted in the respective polling places,
554 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the municipal clerk shall
555 also deliver to the registrars at this time the duplicate checklist provided
556 for in subsection (b) of this section, for the use of the absentee ballot
557 counters pursuant to subsection (i) of this section.

558 (2) [The] In the case of a special election or referendum, the municipal
559 clerk may deliver [the] such ballots at a time that is later than [the time
560 provided in subdivision (1) of this subsection] seven o'clock a.m. on the
561 day of such special election or referendum, provided such time is
562 mutually agreed upon by the municipal clerk and registrars and is not
563 later than [eight] four o'clock p.m. on the day of [the election, primary]
564 such special election or referendum.

565 (f) Absentee ballots timely received by the municipal clerk after
566 eleven o'clock a.m. of such last day before an election, primary or
567 referendum shall be sorted into voting districts by the clerk and retained
568 by the clerk separately until delivered to the registrars of voters for
569 checking.

570 (g) Any or all of such ballots received after eleven o'clock a.m. of such
571 last day before an election, primary or referendum and before six o'clock
572 p.m. on the day of the election, primary or referendum shall, upon
573 request of the registrars, be delivered to the registrars by the municipal
574 clerk at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the election, primary or
575 referendum for checking, or at a later time mutually agreed upon by the
576 clerk and registrars, provided such time is not later than eight o'clock
577 p.m. on the day of the election, primary or referendum.

578 (h) Absentee ballots received after six o'clock p.m. on the day of the
579 election, primary or referendum and any ballots received prior to six
580 o'clock p.m. of such day which were not delivered earlier shall be

581 delivered to the registrars at the close of the polls for checking. Although
582 absentee ballots shall be checked by the registrars [of voters] at various
583 times throughout the election, primary or referendum day, absentee
584 ballots may be counted at one single time during such day.

585 (i) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this subsection, the absentee
586 ballot counters, upon receipt of the ballots delivered by the municipal
587 clerk to the registrars at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the election,
588 primary or referendum and at the close of the polls pursuant to
589 subsections (g) and (h) of this section, shall check the names of the
590 applicants returning ballots on the duplicate checklist in the same
591 manner as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section.

592 (2) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
593 the names of applicants whose ballots were delivered at six o'clock p.m.
594 on the day of the election, primary or referendum shall be called in to
595 the appropriate polling places where they shall be checked by the
596 checkers on the official checklists, and they shall also be checked by the
597 absentee ballot counters on the duplicate checklist required under
598 subsection (b) of this section.

599 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
600 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the names of applicants
601 whose ballots were delivered at six o'clock p.m. on the day of the
602 election, primary or referendum shall be checked by the absentee ballot
603 counters and checkers at such polling place on the official checklist used
604 at such polling place.

605 (3) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
606 the names of applicants whose ballots were delivered at the close of the
607 polls shall be checked by the absentee ballot counters on the official
608 checklists used at the polling places and such official checklists, bearing
609 the certifications required by section 9-307, shall be delivered by the
610 registrars or assistant registrars to the central counting moderator for
611 that purpose.

612 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
613 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, the official checklist used at
614 such polling place shall remain in such polling place for checking by the
615 absentee ballot counters at such polling place.

616 (4) If the name of an applicant returning a ballot has been checked on
617 the official checklist as having voted in person, the absentee ballot
618 counters shall, in checking the ballots, endorse on the face of the [outer]
619 return envelope the word "rejected" followed by a statement of the
620 reason for rejection, and [the outer] such return envelope shall not be
621 opened [or the] nor shall such ballot be counted.

622 (5) (A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this subdivision,
623 when central counting is completed and the result is announced, the
624 central counting moderator shall deliver the duplicate checklist, the
625 official checklists and the returns required by section 9-150b, as
626 amended by this act, to the head moderator.

627 (B) Whenever absentee ballots are counted in any polling place
628 pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a, and such counting is
629 completed and the result for such polling place is announced, the
630 moderator for such polling place shall deliver the official checklist used
631 at such polling place and the return required by section 9-150b, as
632 amended by this act, to the head moderator.

633 (j) Each time absentee ballots are delivered by the clerk to the
634 registrars pursuant to this section, the clerk and registrars shall execute
635 an affidavit of delivery and receipt stating the number of ballots
636 delivered. The clerk shall preserve the affidavit for the period prescribed
637 in section 9-150b, as amended by this act.

638 (k) The absentee ballot counters shall count, in the manner provided
639 in section 9-150a, as amended by this act, each group of absentee ballots
640 upon receipt from the registrars.

641 (l) The municipal clerk shall retain all [outer] return envelopes

642 containing absentee ballots received by [him] such clerk after the close
643 of the polls, unopened, for the period prescribed in section 9-150b, as
644 amended by this act.

645 Sec. 8. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2027*) The Office of the Secretary of
646 the State shall develop and install integrated ballot-tracking software
647 with the state-wide centralized voter registration system described in
648 section 9-50b of the general statutes, for use by electors who vote by
649 absentee ballot. Such software shall, at a minimum, permit the elector to
650 track (1) when the municipal clerk has received and accepted the
651 elector's absentee ballot application, (2) when the municipal clerk's
652 office has mailed the absentee ballot set to the elector, (3) when the
653 absentee ballot set has been delivered to the elector, (4) when the
654 absentee ballot being returned by the elector has been delivered to the
655 municipal clerk, and (5) whether the elector's returned absentee ballot
656 has been accepted, requires curing pursuant to subdivision (3) of
657 subsection (a) of section 9-140c of the general statutes, as amended by
658 this act, or has been rejected.

659 Sec. 9. Section 9-140e of the general statutes is repealed and the
660 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

661 (a) Any elector who [is permanently physically disabled or suffering
662 from a long-term illness and who files an application for an absentee
663 ballot with a certification from a primary care provider, indicating that
664 such elector is permanently physically disabled or suffering from a long-
665 term illness and unable to appear in person at such elector's designated
666 polling location, shall be eligible for] files an application for an absentee
667 ballot may simultaneously request permanent absentee ballot status, in
668 a space provided on such application for such purpose. Each elector
669 granted permanent absentee ballot status [and] shall receive an absentee
670 ballot for each election, primary or referendum conducted in such
671 elector's municipality for which such elector is eligible to vote. Such
672 elector's permanent absentee ballot status shall remain in effect until
673 such elector: (1) Is removed from the official registry list of the

674 municipality, (2) is removed from permanent absentee ballot status
675 pursuant to the provisions of subsection (b) of this section, or (3)
676 requests that [he or she] such elector no longer receive such permanent
677 absentee ballot status.

678 (b) [The] Beginning January 1, 2028, the registrars of voters shall send
679 written notice to each such elector with permanent absentee ballot status
680 in [January of each year] such month, and biennially thereafter, on a
681 form prescribed by the Secretary of the State, for the purpose of
682 determining if such elector continues to reside at the address indicated
683 on the elector's permanent absentee ballot application. If such written
684 notice is returned as undeliverable, the elector in question shall be
685 removed from permanent absentee ballot status. If such elector indicates
686 on such notice that the elector no longer resides at such address and the
687 elector's new address is within the same municipality, the registrars of
688 voters shall change the elector's address pursuant to section 9-35 and
689 such elector shall retain permanent absentee ballot status. If the elector
690 indicates on such notice that the elector no longer resides in the
691 municipality, the registrars of voters shall remove such individual from
692 the registry list of the municipality and send such individual an
693 application for voter registration. Failure to return such written notice
694 shall not result in the removal of an elector from the official registry list
695 of the municipality or from permanent absentee ballot status.

696 (c) The Secretary of the State shall develop and conduct a state-wide
697 public awareness mailing, beginning January 1, 2028, to educate the
698 public regarding changes to the absentee voting process and the
699 availability of permanent absentee ballot status. The materials
700 comprising such mailing shall also be included with each absentee ballot
701 application provided by a municipal clerk in 2028.

702 Sec. 10. Section 9-150a of the general statutes, as amended by section
703 90 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
704 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

705 (a) [The] Immediately after the opening of the polls on the day of an
706 election, primary or referendum, the absentee ballot counters shall
707 proceed to the central counting location or to the respective polling
708 places when counting is to take place pursuant to subsection (b) of
709 section 9-147a, [at the times designated by the registrars of voters.]

710 (b) At the time each group of ballots is delivered to them pursuant to
711 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, the counters shall perform any
712 checking of such ballots required by subsection (i) of said section and
713 shall then proceed as hereinafter provided.

714 (c) Except with respect to ballots marked "Rejected" pursuant to
715 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, or other applicable law, the
716 counters shall remove the [inner envelopes] absentee ballots from the
717 [outer] return envelopes, shall note the total number of absentee ballots
718 received and shall report such total to the moderator. They shall
719 similarly note and separately so report the total numbers of presidential
720 ballots and overseas ballots received pursuant to sections 9-158a to 9-
721 158m, inclusive.

722 (d) (1) (A) If the statement on the [inner] return envelope has not been
723 signed as required by section 9-140a, as amended by this act, such
724 [inner] return envelope shall not be opened [or] nor shall the ballot be
725 removed therefrom. [, and such inner envelope shall be replaced in the
726 opened outer envelope which shall be marked "Rejected" and the reason
727 therefor endorsed thereon by the counters.] The return envelope shall
728 be marked "Rejected" and the reason for such rejection shall be endorsed
729 on such return envelope by the counters. Such rejection shall be
730 communicated to the municipal clerk for purposes of subdivision (3) of
731 this subsection.

732 (B) The moderator shall maintain a log of each absentee ballot
733 applicant whose ballot was marked "Rejected" under subparagraph (A)
734 of this subdivision and include thereon for each such applicant the
735 reason for the rejection. The moderator shall transmit such log to the

736 Secretary of the State at the same time and in the same manner as the
737 duplicate list to be transmitted to the Secretary by electronic means in
738 accordance with section 9-314.

739 (2) If such statement is signed but the individual completing the
740 ballot is an individual described in subsection (a) of section 9-23r and
741 has not met the requirements of subsection (e) of section 9-23r, as
742 amended by this act, the counters shall replace the ballot in the opened
743 [inner envelope, replace the inner envelope in the opened outer] return
744 envelope and shall mark "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot" and endorse
745 the reason for such rejection on [the outer] such return envelope, and
746 the ballot shall be treated as a provisional ballot for federal offices only,
747 pursuant to sections 9-232i to 9-232o, inclusive. Such rejection shall be
748 communicated to the municipal clerk for purposes of subdivision (3) of
749 this subsection.

750 (B) The moderator shall maintain a log of each absentee ballot
751 applicant whose ballot was marked "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot"
752 under subparagraph (A) of this subdivision and include thereon for
753 each such applicant the reason for the rejection. The moderator shall
754 transmit such log to the Secretary of the State at the same time and in
755 the same manner as the duplicate list to be transmitted to the Secretary
756 by electronic means in accordance with section 9-314.

757 (3) In the case of a rejection under subdivision (1) or (2) of this
758 subsection, the municipal clerk shall use best efforts to contact the
759 affected voter as soon as possible, but in no case later than twenty-four
760 hours after receiving communication of such rejection, for the purpose
761 of curing such rejected ballot pursuant to subdivision (3) of subsection
762 (a) of section 9-140c, as amended by this act. During the period
763 beginning twenty-four hours prior to the closing of the polls and until
764 such closing of the polls, the municipal clerk shall use best efforts to
765 contact the affected voter for such purpose immediately upon receiving
766 communication of such rejection. The municipal clerk's best efforts shall
767 include, but need not be limited to, contacting the affected voter by (A)

768 calling the telephone number or numbers listed on the voter's absentee
769 ballot application and voter registration, if the voter has provided any,
770 and (B) sending an electronic mail to the electronic mail address listed
771 on the voter's absentee ballot application and voter registration, if the
772 voter has provided any. If the voter has provided neither a telephone
773 number nor an electronic mail address, the municipal clerk shall
774 exercise discretion in attempting to contact the voter by other means.

775 [(e) The counters shall then remove the absentee ballots from the
776 remaining inner envelopes.]

777 [(f)] (e) Before the ballots are counted, all opened [outer and inner]
778 envelopes from which such ballots have been removed, and all [outer]
779 envelopes marked "Rejected" as required by law, shall be placed and
780 sealed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
781 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
782 municipal clerk. The counters shall seal such depository envelopes by
783 wrapping them lengthwise and sideways with nonreusable tape,
784 endorse on each such envelope their names, the voting district and the
785 time of the count, and deliver such envelopes to the moderator.

786 [(g)] (f) The counters shall then count such ballots as provided in this
787 section. The moderator shall supervise the counting.

788 [(h)] (g) The Secretary of the State shall provide a procedure manual
789 for counting absentee ballots. The manual shall include a description of
790 the steps to be followed in receiving, handling, counting and preserving
791 absentee ballots. Facsimile ballots shall be printed in the manual,
792 illustrating potential variations in ballot markings along with the correct
793 interpretation to be given in each situation illustrated.

794 [(i)] (h) (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section the provisions
795 of section 9-265 shall apply to write-in votes on absentee ballots at
796 elections.

797 (2) Votes cast by absentee ballot at a primary may be counted only for

798 candidates whose names appear on the ballot on primary day, and no
799 write-in vote shall be counted except as provided in subdivision (3) of
800 this subsection.

801 (3) If a write-in vote on an absentee ballot is cast for a candidate for
802 any office whose name appears on the ballot for that office on election
803 or primary day, such candidate's name shall be deemed to have been
804 checked on such ballot and, except as otherwise provided in subsection
805 [(j)] (i) of this section, one vote shall be counted and recorded for such
806 candidate for such office.

807 (4) Except as otherwise provided in section 9-265, if the name of a
808 registered write-in candidate for an office is written in for such office on
809 an absentee ballot it shall be deemed validly written in for purposes of
810 subsection [(j)] (i) of this section.

811 [(j)] (i) In the counting of absentee ballots the intent of the voter shall
812 govern, provided the following conclusive presumptions, where
813 applicable, shall prevail in determining such intent:

814 (1) If the names of more candidates for an office than the voter is
815 entitled to vote for are checked or validly written in, then the vote cast
816 for that office shall be deemed an invalid overvote.

817 (2) If the name of a candidate who has vacated [his] such candidate's
818 candidacy is checked, such vote shall not be counted.

819 (3) On an absentee ballot on which candidates' names are printed, a
820 vote shall be deemed cast only for each candidate whose name is
821 individually checked or validly written in, except as otherwise provided
822 in this subsection. If a party designation is circled, checked, underscored
823 or similarly marked in any manner, or written in, no vote shall be
824 deemed cast or cancelled for any candidate by virtue of such marking
825 or writing.

826 [(k)] (j) If the intent of an absentee voter is difficult to ascertain due to

827 uncertain, conflicting or incorrect ballot markings which are not clearly
828 addressed in this section or in the procedure manual for counting
829 absentee ballots provided by the Secretary of the State, the absentee
830 ballot counters shall submit the ballot and their question to the
831 moderator. They shall then count the ballot in accordance with the
832 moderator's decision as to the voter's intent, if such intent is
833 ascertainable. A ballot or part of a ballot on which the intent is
834 determined by the moderator to be not ascertainable, shall not be
835 counted. The moderator shall endorse on the ballot the question and
836 [his] such moderator's decision.

837 ~~[(l)]~~ (k) No absentee ballot shall be rejected as a marked ballot unless,
838 in the opinion of the moderator, it was marked for the purpose of
839 providing a means of identifying the voter who cast it.

840 ~~[(m)]~~ (l) After the absentee ballots have been so counted they shall be
841 placed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
842 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
843 municipal clerk. Any notes, worksheets, or other written materials used
844 by the counters in counting such ballots shall be endorsed by them with
845 their names, the date and the time of the count and shall also be placed
846 in such depository envelopes together with the ballots, and with the
847 separate record of the number of votes cast on such ballots for each
848 candidate as required by section 9-150b, as amended by this act. Such
849 depository envelopes shall then be sealed, endorsed and delivered to
850 the moderator by the counters in the same manner as provided in
851 subsection ~~[(f)]~~ (e) of this section.

852 Sec. 11. Subsections (e) to (i), inclusive, of section 9-150b of the general
853 statutes are repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof
854 *(Effective from passage):*

855 (e) The sealed depository envelopes required by subsections ~~[(f) and~~
856 ~~(m)]~~ (e) and (l) of section 9-150a, as amended by this act, shall be
857 returned by the moderator to the municipal clerk as soon as practicable

858 on or before the day following the election, primary or referendum.

859 (f) The municipal clerk shall preserve for sixty days after the election,
860 primary or referendum the depository envelopes containing opened
861 envelopes and rejected ballots required by subsection [(f)] (e) of section
862 9-150a, as amended by this act, and shall so preserve for one hundred
863 eighty days the depository envelopes containing counted ballots and
864 related materials required by subsection [(m)] (l) of section 9-150a, as
865 amended by this act.

866 (g) No such depository envelope shall be opened except by order of
867 a court of competent jurisdiction, by the State Elections Enforcement
868 Commission pursuant to a subpoena issued under subdivision (1) of
869 subsection (a) of section 9-7b, as amended by this act, or within five
870 business days after an election, primary or referendum for the purpose
871 of a recanvass conducted pursuant to law. After such a recanvass the
872 depository envelopes and their contents shall be returned to the
873 municipal clerk and preserved for the stated period.

874 (h) For sixty days after the election, primary or referendum the
875 following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a public record
876 open to public inspection: (1) All executed absentee ballot application
877 forms and direction by registrar forms, as required by subsection (i) of
878 section 9-140, as amended by this act; (2) the list and index of applicants
879 for presidential or overseas ballots as required by section 9-158h, as
880 amended by this act; (3) the [numerical] list of unique ballot
881 identification numbers corresponding to absentee voting sets issued as
882 required by subsection (e) of section 9-140, as amended by this act; (4)
883 the list of the names of persons whose absentee ballots are received by
884 the municipal clerk, as required by subsection (a) of section 9-140c, as
885 amended by this act; (5) all unused absentee ballots; and (6) all
886 envelopes containing ballots received by the municipal clerk after the
887 close of the polls, which shall remain unopened.

888 (i) For one hundred eighty days after the election, primary or

889 referendum the following shall be preserved by the municipal clerk as a
890 public record open to public inspection: (1) The affidavit regarding the
891 municipal clerk's endorsement of [inner] return envelopes, as required
892 by subsection (a) of section 9-140c, as amended by this act; and (2) the
893 affidavit regarding delivery and receipt of ballots, as required by
894 subsection (j) of [said] section 9-140c, as amended by this act.

895 Sec. 12. Section 9-153b of the general statutes is repealed and the
896 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

897 (a) If any absentee ballot applicant applies for an additional absentee
898 ballot, such applicant shall note on the application the reason for
899 applying for an additional absentee ballot and shall return the absentee
900 voting set formerly issued to such applicant before another set is issued,
901 provided, if such applicant is unable to return such formerly issued set,
902 such application for an additional ballot shall be accompanied by a
903 statement signed under the penalties of false statement in absentee
904 balloting in which such applicant shall note the reason for such
905 applicant's inability to return such formerly issued set. If such applicant
906 fails to file such a statement, no additional set shall be issued to such
907 applicant. An application for an additional absentee ballot shall only be
908 made by an absentee ballot applicant. Any additional absentee voting
909 set issued under this subsection shall only be either provided in person
910 to the applicant or mailed directly to the applicant at the bona fide
911 mailing address designated by such applicant.

912 (b) For all absentee voting sets or portions thereof returned under
913 subsection (a) of this section, the municipal clerk shall mark the [serially-
914 numbered outer] return envelope "rejected" and note the reasons for
915 rejection on all absentee ballots and envelopes so returned and shall seal
916 all such absentee voting sets or portions thereof in a package and retain
917 them in a safe place until delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as
918 amended by this act. The municipal clerk shall keep a list of the names
919 of each absentee ballot applicant who has applied for more than one
920 absentee ballot, as provided in section 9-140, as amended by this act,

921 together with the [serial] unique ballot identification number appearing
922 on the [outer] return envelope of each absentee voting set issued to each
923 such applicant.

924 (c) If more than one absentee ballot is received from any elector, the
925 ballot of such elector last received by the municipal clerk shall be
926 counted if no absentee ballot of such elector has already been counted.
927 For all absentee ballots of such elector that are not counted, the
928 municipal clerk shall mark the [serially-numbered outer] return
929 envelopes "rejected" and note the reasons for rejection and shall deliver
930 such ballots in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act.

931 Sec. 13. Section 9-153c of the general statutes is repealed and the
932 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

933 (a) If a municipal clerk has omitted the name of a candidate, party or
934 office designation, inserted an incorrect or misspelled name of a
935 candidate, party or office designation, provided an absentee ballot
936 applicant with a ballot which is not the correct ballot for [his] such
937 applicant's voting district, or incorrectly imprinted or failed to imprint
938 the designation of a state or local question on an absentee ballot in the
939 appropriate space, and if any such omission or error is likely to mislead
940 any voter, [he] the clerk shall, as soon as [he] such clerk becomes aware
941 of such omission or error, promptly mail to each applicant to whom
942 such an absentee ballot has been issued, a correct absentee ballot, the
943 necessary envelopes for its return and instructions, a statement
944 explaining the error or omission including the correct name or question
945 and a copy of this section. The municipal clerk shall inform the Secretary
946 of the State when [he] such clerk proceeds under this subsection.

947 (b) Any additional absentee voting sets issued to applicants under
948 this section shall be issued [in consecutive ascending numerical order
949 based upon the serial number appearing on the outer] bearing a unique
950 ballot identification number on the envelope for return of ballots to the
951 municipal clerk, and the clerk shall keep a record of such unique ballot

952 identification numbers by making a notation on, or attaching a
953 memorandum to, the applicant's original application for an absentee
954 ballot.

955 (c) The municipal clerk shall keep a list containing the name, address
956 and voting district of each absentee ballot applicant who has been issued
957 more than one absentee ballot under this section and the [serial] unique
958 ballot identification number appearing on the [outer] return envelope of
959 each absentee voting set so issued. The list shall be kept with the list
960 required under section 9-140, as amended by this act.

961 (d) If more than one ballot is received from an applicant who has been
962 sent a correct ballot under subsection (a) of this section, the ballot last
963 received by the municipal clerk shall be counted if no ballot of such
964 applicant has already been counted. For all ballots of such applicant that
965 are not counted, the municipal clerk shall inscribe the word "rejected"
966 and note the reasons for rejection on the [outer] return envelope and
967 shall seal them, unopened, in a package and retain them in a safe place
968 until delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this
969 act.

970 Sec. 14. Section 9-158f of the general statutes is repealed and the
971 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

972 (a) The voter, after marking [his] such voter's presidential ballot so as
973 to express [his] such voter's choice, shall fold it so as to conceal the
974 markings, and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope furnished by the
975 town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have imprinted upon
976 its back a statement which shall be signed by the voter. The failure of
977 the voter to date the statement shall not invalidate the ballot. Such
978 statement shall be substantially as follows:

979 Certification of Presidential Voter

980 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false
981 statement in absentee balloting that:

982 (1) I am qualified to vote for Presidential and Vice-Presidential
983 electors in the town of Connecticut, at the presidential election to be
984 held on November, 20...

985 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for
986 Presidential and Vice-Presidential electors at said election from any
987 other town, city, county or state, and

988 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot
989 in said presidential election.

990 Dated at, this day of 20...

991 (Signature of voter)

992 (Printed name of voter)

993 (b) The overseas elector, after marking [his] such elector's overseas
994 ballot so as to express [his] such elector's choice, shall fold it so as to
995 conceal the markings and enclose it in [an inner] a return envelope
996 furnished by the town clerk for such purpose. The envelope shall have
997 imprinted upon its back a statement which shall be signed by the elector.
998 The failure of the elector to date the statement shall not invalidate the
999 ballot. The statement shall be substantially as follows:

1000 Certification of Overseas Elector

1001 I, the undersigned, do hereby state under the penalties of false
1002 statement in absentee balloting that:

1003 (1) I am qualified to vote for candidates for federal office in the town
1004 of, Connecticut, at the federal election to be held on, 20...

1005 (2) I have not applied, nor do I intend to apply, for a ballot to vote for
1006 candidates for federal office at said election from any other town, city or
1007 county in Connecticut or in any other state or election district of any
1008 state or territory or any territory or possession of the United States.

1009 (3) I have not voted, and I will not vote otherwise than by this ballot
1010 in said federal election.

1011 Dated at, this day of, 20...

1012 (Signature of overseas elector)

1013 (Printed name of overseas elector)

1014 Sec. 15. Section 9-158g of the general statutes is repealed and the
1015 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1016 The voter shall sign the certification upon the [inner] return envelope,
1017 [securely seal it, enclose it in an outer serially-numbered envelope]
1018 insert the completed ballot in such return envelope, which shall bear a
1019 return label displaying the unique ballot identification number both in
1020 text format and as a scannable barcode, and return it to the municipal
1021 clerk of the town in which [he] such voter is qualified to vote. The clerk
1022 shall keep it in [his] the clerk's office until delivered by [him] such clerk
1023 to the registrars of voters at the same time and in the same manner as is
1024 provided for absentee ballots. If the ballot is returned by a person other
1025 than the voter or the United States Postal Service, the person delivering
1026 the ballot shall sign [his] such person's name and address and the date
1027 and time of its delivery on the [outer] return envelope in the clerk's
1028 presence. The ballot, to be cast, shall be returned so that it is received by
1029 the town clerk not later than the close of the polls on the day of the
1030 election.

1031 Sec. 16. Section 9-158h of the general statutes is repealed and the
1032 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1033 The clerk shall prepare and keep open to public inspection a list of all
1034 persons who have applied under sections 9-158a to 9-158m, inclusive, to
1035 vote as presidential voters or overseas electors with their names, voting
1036 addresses and application dates together with the [serial number]
1037 unique ballot identification numbers of the return envelopes issued, and

1038 shall maintain an alphabetical index of the list for a period of one
1039 hundred eighty days after the election or primary.

1040 Sec. 17. Section 9-159p of the general statutes is repealed and the
1041 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1042 (a) Any elector may challenge the right of any person offering to vote
1043 by absentee ballot based upon false identity, disenfranchisement for
1044 conviction of a felony or lack of bona fide residence. The failure of an
1045 elector to challenge, pursuant to this section, the right of a person to vote
1046 by absentee ballot shall not bar such elector from bringing an action to
1047 contest the primary or election under section 9-323, 9-324, 9-328 or 9-
1048 329a, based on the alleged invalidity of the absentee ballot cast at such
1049 primary or election.

1050 (b) Challenges shall not be made indiscriminately and may only be
1051 made if the challenger knows or reasonably believes that the right of the
1052 person offering to vote by absentee ballot should be denied on one or
1053 more of the grounds specified in subsection (a) of this section.

1054 (c) Challenges made concerning ballots that the municipal clerk has
1055 not delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections
1056 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be made in writing to
1057 the municipal clerk. Challenges made concerning ballots that the
1058 municipal clerk has delivered to the registrars of voters for counting
1059 pursuant to sections 9-140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be
1060 made in writing to the central counting moderator or the moderator of
1061 the polling place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to
1062 subsection (b) of section 9-147a. All challenges shall be made under oath.

1063 (d) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the municipal clerk shall
1064 send copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters and to the person
1065 offering to vote by absentee ballot. The municipal clerk shall send the
1066 copy of the challenge to the person offering to vote by first class certified
1067 mail to the mailing address shown on the application for the absentee
1068 ballot. The municipal clerk shall furnish copies of any written response

1069 to the challenge to each registrar of voters. The municipal clerk shall
1070 deliver the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall not be
1071 opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other evidence
1072 relevant to the challenge, to the registrars, who shall sign a receipt for
1073 the same.

1074 (e) Immediately upon receipt of a challenge, the moderator shall
1075 deliver copies of the challenge to each registrar of voters. The moderator
1076 shall also deliver, or designate another election, primary or referendum
1077 official to deliver, the ballot in the [inner] return envelope, which shall
1078 not be opened, [the serially-numbered envelope] and any other
1079 evidence relevant to the challenge to the registrars, who shall sign a
1080 receipt for the same.

1081 (f) The registrars of voters shall examine the challenge, any written
1082 response to the challenge and any other evidence or information they
1083 deem relevant to the challenge, including the [inner] return envelope,
1084 which shall not be opened, and shall determine whether the challenge
1085 should be upheld. If the registrars fail to agree that the challenge should
1086 be upheld, it shall be deemed to have been denied.

1087 (g) The registrars of voters shall make the determination not earlier
1088 than noon of the day of the election, primary or referendum at which
1089 the ballot is submitted and not later than the time when the counting of
1090 all other absentee ballots at the election, primary or referendum has
1091 been completed.

1092 (h) The registrars of voters shall notify, in writing, the municipal clerk
1093 and the central counting moderator, or the moderator of the polling
1094 place at which the ballot is to be counted pursuant to subsection (b) of
1095 section 9-147a, of their determination. If the challenge is denied, the
1096 absentee ballot shall be delivered by the registrars to the appropriate
1097 location for counting pursuant to law. If the challenge is upheld, the
1098 registrars shall mark the word "rejected" on the [serially-numbered
1099 outer] return envelope and note the reasons for rejection, and shall

1100 return it together with all other evidence received in connection with the
1101 challenge to the municipal clerk who shall retain the same until
1102 delivered in accordance with section 9-140c, as amended by this act,
1103 except that a challenge to a ballot which the municipal clerk has
1104 delivered to the registrars of voters for counting pursuant to sections 9-
1105 140c, as amended by this act, and 9-147a shall be returned to the
1106 moderator to whom the challenge was made.

1107 (i) Within five days after the election, primary or referendum the
1108 municipal clerk shall send to the person whose offer to vote was
1109 challenged a copy of the written determination of the registrars and a
1110 statement as to the disposition of the absentee ballot.

1111 Sec. 18. Subsection (g) of section 9-159q of the general statutes is
1112 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
1113 *passage*):

1114 (g) The registrars or their designees, as the case may be, shall jointly
1115 deliver the ballots to the respective applicants at the institution and shall
1116 jointly supervise the voting of such ballots. The ballots shall be returned
1117 to the registrars or their designees by the electors in the envelopes
1118 provided and in accordance with the provisions of sections 9-137, as
1119 amended by this act, [9-139] and 9-140a, as amended by this act. If any
1120 elector asks for assistance in voting his ballot, two registrars or their
1121 designees of different political parties or, for a primary, their designees
1122 of different candidates, shall render such assistance as they deem
1123 necessary and appropriate to enable such elector to vote his ballot. The
1124 registrars or their designees may reject a ballot when (1) the elector
1125 declines to vote a ballot, or (2) the registrars or their designees are unable
1126 to determine how the elector who has requested their assistance desires
1127 to vote the ballot. When the registrars or their designees reject a ballot,
1128 they shall mark the [serially-numbered outer] return envelope "rejected"
1129 and note the reasons for rejection. Nothing in this section shall limit the
1130 right of an elector to vote his ballot in secret.

1131 Sec. 19. Subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of section 9-7b of the 2026
1132 supplement to the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1133 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1134 (1) To make investigations on its own initiative or with respect to
1135 statements filed with the commission by the Secretary of the State, any
1136 town clerk or any registrar of voters or upon written complaint under
1137 oath by any individual, with respect to alleged violations of any
1138 provision of the general statutes relating to any election or referendum,
1139 any primary held pursuant to section 9-423, 9-425 or 9-464 or any
1140 primary held pursuant to a special act, and to hold hearings when the
1141 commission deems necessary to investigate violations of any provisions
1142 of the general statutes relating to any such election, primary or
1143 referendum, and for the purpose of such hearings the commission may
1144 administer oaths, examine witnesses and receive oral and documentary
1145 evidence, and shall have the power to subpoena witnesses under
1146 procedural rules the commission shall adopt, to compel their attendance
1147 and to require the production for examination of any books and papers
1148 which the commission deems relevant to any matter under investigation
1149 or in question. Until the commission determines that it is necessary to
1150 investigate a violation, commission members and staff shall keep
1151 confidential any information concerning a complaint or preliminary
1152 investigation, except upon request of the treasurer, deputy treasurer,
1153 chairperson or candidate affiliated with a committee that is the subject
1154 of the complaint or preliminary investigation. In connection with its
1155 investigation of any alleged violation of any provision of chapter 145, or
1156 of any provision of section 9-359 or section 9-359a, as amended by this
1157 act, the commission shall also have the power to subpoena any
1158 municipal clerk and to require the production for examination of any
1159 absentee ballot, [inner and outer] return envelope from which any such
1160 ballot has been removed, depository envelope containing any such
1161 ballot or [inner or outer] return envelope as provided in sections 9-150a,
1162 as amended by this act, and 9-150b, as amended by this act, and any
1163 other record, form or document as provided in section 9-150b, as

1164 amended by this act, in connection with the election, primary or
1165 referendum to which the investigation relates. In case of a refusal to
1166 comply with any subpoena issued pursuant to this subsection or to
1167 testify with respect to any matter upon which that person may be
1168 lawfully interrogated, the superior court for the judicial district of
1169 Hartford, on application of the commission, may issue an order
1170 requiring such person to comply with such subpoena and to testify;
1171 failure to obey any such order of the court may be punished by the court
1172 as a contempt thereof. In any matter under investigation which concerns
1173 the operation or inspection of or outcome recorded on any voting
1174 tabulator, the commission may issue an order to the registrars of voters
1175 to impound such tabulator until the investigation is completed;

1176 Sec. 20. Subsection (e) of section 9-23r of the general statutes is
1177 repealed and the following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from*
1178 *passage*):

1179 (e) If an individual described in subsection (a) of this section does not
1180 submit the identification described in subsection (a) of this section as
1181 part of the individual's application for admission as an elector, and if the
1182 individual votes by absentee ballot in an election for federal office, the
1183 individual shall enclose in the [outer absentee ballot envelope, and not
1184 in the inner envelope with the ballot] additional envelope provided by
1185 the municipal clerk pursuant to section 9-140a, as amended by this act,
1186 for the return of such applicant's identification: (1) A copy of a current
1187 and valid photo identification, or (2) a copy of a current utility bill, bank
1188 statement, government check, paycheck, or other government
1189 document that shows the name and address of the voter. If an individual
1190 does not meet the requirements of this subsection in an election for
1191 federal office, such individual's absentee ballot shall be processed in
1192 accordance with the provisions of subparagraph (A) of subdivision (2)
1193 of subsection (d) of section 9-150a, as amended by this act, and treated
1194 as a provisional ballot for federal office only, pursuant to sections 9-232i
1195 to 9-232o, inclusive.

1196 Sec. 21. Subsection (b) of section 9-311 of the 2026 supplement to the
1197 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
1198 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1199 (b) The moderator shall determine the place or places where the
1200 recanvass shall be conducted and, if such recanvass is held before the
1201 tabulators are boxed and collected in the manner required by section 9-
1202 266, the moderator may require that such recanvass of such tabulators
1203 be conducted in each place where the tabulators are located, or the
1204 moderator may require that such tabulators be removed to one central
1205 place where such recanvass shall be conducted. All recanvassing
1206 procedures shall be open to public observation, subject to the provisions
1207 of subsection (d) of this section. Such recanvass officials shall, in the
1208 presence of such moderator and registrars of voters, make a record of
1209 the number on the seal and the number on the protective counter, if one
1210 is provided, on each voting tabulator specified by such moderator. Such
1211 registrars of voters in the presence of such moderator shall turn over the
1212 keys of each such tabulator to such recanvass officials, and such
1213 recanvass officials, in the presence of such registrars of voters and
1214 moderator, shall immediately proceed to recanvass the vote cast
1215 thereon, and shall then open the package of absentee ballots and
1216 recanvass the vote cast thereon. In the course of the recanvass of the
1217 absentee ballot vote the recanvass officials shall check all [outer] return
1218 envelopes for absentee ballots [against the inner envelopes for such
1219 ballots and] against the registry list to verify postmarks, addresses and
1220 registry list markings and also to determine whether the number of
1221 envelopes from which absentee ballots have been removed is the same
1222 as the number of persons checked as having voted by absentee ballot.
1223 The write-in ballots shall also be recanvassed at this time. Any party
1224 representative present shall have a right to view each ballot as it is being
1225 recanvassed by the recanvass officials, so as to be able to discern the
1226 markings on such ballot. All of the recanvass officials shall use the same
1227 forms for tallies and returns as were used at the original canvass and the
1228 absentee ballot counters shall also sign the tallies.

1229 Sec. 24. Section 9-359a of the general statutes is repealed and the
1230 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1231 (a) A person is guilty of false statement in absentee balloting when
1232 [he] such person intentionally makes a false written statement in or on,
1233 or signs the name of another person to, the application for an absentee
1234 ballot or the [inner] return envelope accompanying any such ballot,
1235 which [he] such person does not believe to be true and which statement
1236 or signature is intended to mislead a public servant in the performance
1237 of [his] such public servant's official function.

1238 (b) False statement in absentee balloting is a class D felony.

1239 Sec. 25. Subparagraph (B) of subdivision (1) of subsection (a) of
1240 section 9-369b of the general statutes is repealed and the following is
1241 substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective from passage*):

1242 (B) Each such explanatory text shall be prepared by the municipal
1243 clerk and shall specify the intent and purpose of each such proposal or
1244 question. Such explanatory text shall not advocate either the approval
1245 or disapproval of the proposal or question. The municipal clerk shall
1246 cause such question or proposal and such explanatory text to be printed
1247 in sufficient supply for public dissemination and shall also provide for
1248 the printing of such explanations of proposals or questions on posters
1249 of a size to be determined by said clerk. At least three such posters shall
1250 be posted at each polling place at which electors will be voting on such
1251 proposals or questions. Any posters printed in excess of the number
1252 required by this section to be posted may be displayed by said clerk at
1253 the clerk's discretion at locations which are frequented by the public.
1254 The explanatory text shall also be furnished to each absentee ballot
1255 applicant pursuant to subdivision (1) of subsection (d) of section 9-140,
1256 as amended by this act. Each such explanatory text shall be subject to
1257 the approval of the municipal attorney.

1258 Sec. 26. Sections 9-139 and 9-159o of the general statutes are repealed.
1259 (*Effective from passage*)

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>from passage</i>	9-135
Sec. 2	<i>from passage</i>	9-137
Sec. 3	<i>from passage</i>	9-139a
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	9-140
Sec. 5	<i>from passage</i>	9-140a
Sec. 6	<i>from passage</i>	9-140b
Sec. 7	<i>from passage</i>	9-140c
Sec. 8	<i>January 1, 2027</i>	New section
Sec. 9	<i>from passage</i>	9-140e
Sec. 10	<i>from passage</i>	9-150a
Sec. 11	<i>from passage</i>	9-150b(e) to (i)
Sec. 12	<i>from passage</i>	9-153b
Sec. 13	<i>from passage</i>	9-153c
Sec. 14	<i>from passage</i>	9-158f
Sec. 15	<i>from passage</i>	9-158g
Sec. 16	<i>from passage</i>	9-158h
Sec. 17	<i>from passage</i>	9-159p
Sec. 18	<i>from passage</i>	9-159q(g)
Sec. 19	<i>from passage</i>	9-7b(a)(1)
Sec. 20	<i>from passage</i>	9-23r(e)
Sec. 21	<i>from passage</i>	9-311(b)
Sec. 24	<i>from passage</i>	9-359a
Sec. 25	<i>from passage</i>	9-369b(a)(1)(B)
Sec. 26	<i>from passage</i>	Repealer section

Statement of Purpose:

To implement the Secretary of the State's recommendations for implementation of no-excuse absentee voting, including provisions regarding (1) removal of the statutory restrictions on absentee voting, (2) distribution of absentee ballot applications, (3) use of a single envelope and other aspects of returning absentee ballots, (4) ability to cure absentee ballots in cases where voters have not signed the statement on the return envelope, and (5) tracking of absentee ballots and applications throughout the process.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]