



General Assembly

Amendment

February Session, 2026

LCO No. 6011



Offered by:

SEN. HARDING, 30th Dist.
SEN. MARTIN, 31st Dist.
SEN. SAMPSON, 16th Dist.
SEN. SOMERS, 18th Dist.

SEN. HWANG, 28th Dist.
SEN. BERTHEL, 32nd Dist.
SEN. FAZIO, 36th Dist.
SEN. PERILLO J., 21st Dist.

To: Subst. House Bill No. 5001

File No. 725

Cal. No. 460

"AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE VOTING FOR ALL AND VARIOUS OTHER REFORMS RELATED TO THE ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS."

1 Strike section 10 in its entirety and renumber the remaining sections
2 and internal references

3 After the last section, add the following and renumber sections and
4 internal references accordingly:

5 "Sec. 501. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) Not later than January 1, 2026,
6 the Secretary of the State shall develop and implement a process by
7 which town clerks, registrars of voters, moderators, absentee ballot
8 counters and other election officials serving at polling places or central
9 locations designated for the counting of absentee ballots, as applicable,
10 shall verify that the signature upon the inner envelope statement of a
11 returned absentee ballot matches the signature upon the corresponding
12 absentee ballot application.

13 Sec. 502. Section 9-150a of the general statutes, as amended by section
14 90 of public act 26-1, is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu
15 thereof (*Effective from passage*):

16 (a) [The] Not later than fifteen minutes prior to the time specified or
17 agreed to, as applicable, under subsection (e) of section 9-140c, as
18 amended by this act, the absentee ballot counters shall proceed to the
19 central counting location or to the respective polling places when
20 counting is to take place pursuant to subsection (b) of section 9-147a. [at
21 the times designated by the registrars of voters.]

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

26 (c) Except with respect to ballots marked "Rejected" pursuant to
27 section 9-140c, as amended by this act, or other applicable law, the
28 counters shall remove the [inner envelopes] absentee ballots from the
29 [outer] return envelopes, shall note the total number of absentee ballots
30 received and shall report such total to the moderator. They shall
31 similarly note and separately so report the total numbers of presidential
32 ballots and overseas ballots received pursuant to sections 9-158a to 9-
33 158m, inclusive.

34 (d) (1) (A) If the statement on the [inner] return envelope has not been
35 signed as required by section 9-140a, as amended by this act, such
36 [inner] return envelope shall not be opened [or] nor shall the ballot be
37 removed therefrom. [, and such inner envelope shall be replaced in the
38 opened outer envelope which shall be marked "Rejected" and the reason
39 therefor endorsed thereon] The return envelope shall be marked
40 "Rejected" and the reason for such rejection shall be endorsed on such
41 return envelope by the counters.

42 (B) The moderator shall maintain a log of each absentee ballot
43 applicant whose ballot was marked "Rejected" under subparagraph (A)

44 of this subdivision and include thereon for each such applicant the
45 reason for the rejection. The moderator shall transmit such log to the
46 Secretary of the State at the same time and in the same manner as the
47 duplicate list to be transmitted to the Secretary by electronic means in
48 accordance with section 9-314.

49 (2) (A) If such statement is signed but the individual completing the
50 ballot is an individual described in subsection (a) of section 9-23r and
51 has not met the requirements of subsection (e) of section 9-23r, as
52 amended by this act, the counters shall replace the ballot in the opened
53 [inner envelope, replace the inner envelope in the opened outer] return
54 envelope and shall mark "Rejected as an Absentee Ballot" and endorse
55 the reason for such rejection on [the outer] such return envelope, and
56 the ballot shall be treated as a provisional ballot for federal offices only,
57 pursuant to sections 9-232i to 9-232o, inclusive.

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

65 (3) If such statement is signed but the signature upon the return
66 envelope does not match the signature upon the corresponding absentee
67 ballot application, as determined under the process described in section
68 501 of this act, such inner envelope shall not be opened nor the ballot
69 removed therefrom, and such inner envelope shall be replaced in the
70 opened outer envelope which shall be remarked "Rejected" and the
71 reason therefor endorsed thereupon by the counters.

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

74 [(f)] (e) Before the ballots are counted, all opened [outer and inner]

75 envelopes from which such ballots have been removed, and all [outer]
76 envelopes marked "Rejected" as required by law, shall be placed and
77 sealed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
78 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
79 municipal clerk. The counters shall seal such depository envelopes by
80 wrapping them lengthwise and sideways with nonreusable tape,
81 endorse on each such envelope their names, the voting district and the
82 time of the count, and deliver such envelopes to the moderator.

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

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

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

94 (2) Votes cast by absentee ballot at a primary may be counted only for
95 candidates whose names appear on the ballot on primary day, and no
96 write-in vote shall be counted except as provided in subdivision (3) of
97 this subsection.

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

104 (4) Except as otherwise provided in section 9-265, if the name of a
105 registered write-in candidate for an office is written in for such office on

106 an absentee ballot it shall be deemed validly written in for purposes of
107 subsection [(j)] (i) of this section.

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

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

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

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

123 [(k)] (j) If the intent of an absentee voter is difficult to ascertain due to
124 uncertain, conflicting or incorrect ballot markings which are not clearly
125 addressed in this section or in the procedure manual for counting
126 absentee ballots provided by the Secretary of the State, the absentee
127 ballot counters shall submit the ballot and their question to the
128 moderator. They shall then count the ballot in accordance with the
129 moderator's decision as to the voter's intent, if such intent is
130 ascertainable. A ballot or part of a ballot on which the intent is
131 determined by the moderator to be not ascertainable, shall not be
132 counted. The moderator shall endorse on the ballot the question and
133 [his] such moderator's decision.

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

137 [(m)] (l) After the absentee ballots have been so counted they shall be
 138 placed by the counters, separately by voting district, in depository
 139 envelopes prescribed by the Secretary of the State and provided by the
 140 municipal clerk. Any notes, worksheets, or other written materials used
 141 by the counters in counting such ballots shall be endorsed by them with
 142 their names, the date and the time of the count and shall also be placed
 143 in such depository envelopes together with the ballots, and with the
 144 separate record of the number of votes cast on such ballots for each
 145 candidate as required by section 9-150b, as amended by this act. Such
 146 depository envelopes shall then be sealed, endorsed and delivered to
 147 the moderator by the counters in the same manner as provided in
 148 subsection [(f)] (e) of this section."

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Sec. 501	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 502	<i>from passage</i>	9-150a