

3251--B

Cal. No. 805

2009-2010 Regular Sessions

I N S E N A T E

March 13, 2009

Introduced by Sens. ADDABBO, DIAZ, DILAN, ESPADA, HASSELL-THOMPSON, C. JOHNSON, ONORATO, OPPENHEIMER, PERKINS, STAVISKY -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections -- recommitted to the Committee on Elections in accordance with Senate Rule 6, sec. 8 -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee -- reported favorably from said committee, ordered to first and second report, ordered to a third reading, amended and ordered reprinted, retaining its place in the order of third reading

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to absentee voting at village elections

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Section 15-120 of the election law, paragraph (b) of subdi-
2 vision 1 and subdivision 8 as amended by chapter 373 of the laws of
3 1978, subdivision 2 as amended by chapter 279 of the laws of 1983,
4 subdivision 3 as amended by chapter 333 of the laws of 1983, subdivi-
5 sions 4 and 5 as amended by chapter 84 of the laws of 1986 and subdivi-
6 sion 6 as amended by chapter 216 of the laws of 1982, is amended to read
7 as follows:
8 S 15-120. Absentee voting at village elections. 1. A qualified [elec-
9 tor] VOTER of a village may vote as an absentee voter under this section
10 if during all the hours of voting on the day of a general or special
11 village election he OR SHE will be:
12 [(a) Unavoidably absent from the county in which his residence is
13 located because:
14 i. he is a member of the armed forces of the United States of America;
15 or
16 ii. he is a student matriculated at an institution of learning located
17 outside such county; or
18 iii. he is a patient at a veterans administration hospital; or

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets [] is old law to be omitted.

LBD01720-09-0

1 iv. his duties, occupation or business require him to be so absent,
2 provided, however, such absence is not caused by the fact that his regu-
3 lar and daily place of business is located outside of said county.

4 (b) Absent from the county in which his residence is located because
5 he is on vacation outside said county.

6 (c) He is the spouse, parent or child of, and resides in the same
7 household with, a person qualified under any of the foregoing paragraphs
8 of this subdivision and will also be absent from said county by reason
9 of accompanying the person so qualified.]

10 (A) ABSENT FROM THE COUNTY OF HIS OR HER RESIDENCE; OR

11 (B) UNABLE TO APPEAR AT THE POLLING PLACE BECAUSE OF ILLNESS OR PHYS-
12 ICAL DISABILITY, OR DUTIES RELATED TO THE PRIMARY CARE OF ONE OR MORE
13 INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ILL OR PHYSICALLY DISABLED, OR BECAUSE HE OR SHE
14 WILL BE OR IS A PATIENT IN A HOSPITAL; OR

15 (C) AN INMATE OR PATIENT OF A VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL; OR

16 (D) ABSENT FROM HIS OR HER VOTING RESIDENCE BECAUSE HE OR SHE IS
17 DETAINED IN JAIL AWAITING ACTION BY A GRAND JURY OR AWAITING TRIAL, OR
18 CONFINED IN JAIL OR PRISON AFTER A CONVICTION FOR AN OFFENSE OTHER THAN
19 A FELONY, PROVIDED THAT HE OR SHE IS QUALIFIED TO VOTE IN THE ELECTION
20 DISTRICT OF HIS OR HER RESIDENCE.

21 2. Each person entitled to vote as an absentee voter pursuant to this
22 section and desirous of obtaining an absentee ballot shall make written
23 application therefor to the village clerk. Application forms for use
24 pursuant to this section shall be in a form prescribed by the state
25 board of elections. The use of any application which is on a form
26 prescribed by the state board of elections shall be acceptable.

27 3. An application for an absentee ballot must be signed by the appli-
28 cant. Such application may require that the applicant submit a certifi-
29 cate in lieu of any affidavit which shall state that the information
30 contained in the application is true. Such certificate shall be accepted
31 for all purposes as the equivalent of an affidavit and shall have the
32 following language printed in bold face type above the signature line:

33 "I UNDERSTAND THAT THIS CERTIFICATE WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR
34 ALL PURPOSES AS THE EQUIVALENT OF AN AFFIDAVIT AND, IF
35 IT CONTAINS A MATERIAL FALSE STATEMENT, SHALL SUBJECT ME
36 TO THE SAME PENALTIES AS IF I HAD BEEN DULY SWORN."

37 4. THE APPLICATION FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT WHEN FILED MUST CONTAIN IN
38 EACH INSTANCE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

39 (A) APPLICANT'S FULL NAME, DATE OF BIRTH, AND RESIDENCE ADDRESS,
40 INCLUDING THE STREET AND NUMBER, IF ANY, RURAL DELIVERY ROUTE, IF ANY,
41 MAILING ADDRESS IF DIFFERENT FROM THE RESIDENCE ADDRESS AND HIS OR HER
42 VILLAGE AND AN ADDRESS TO WHICH THE BALLOT SHALL BE MAILED.

43 (B) A STATEMENT THAT THE APPLICANT IS A QUALIFIED AND REGISTERED
44 VOTER.

45 (C) A STATEMENT, AS APPROPRIATE, THAT ON THE DAY OF SUCH ELECTION THE
46 APPLICANT EXPECTS IN GOOD FAITH TO BE IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING Catego-
47 ries:

48 (I) ABSENT FROM THE COUNTY OF HIS OR HER RESIDENCE; PROVIDED, HOWEVER,
49 IF THE APPLICANT EXPECTS TO BE ABSENT FROM SUCH COUNTY FOR A DURATION
50 COVERING MORE THAN ONE ELECTION AND SEEKS AN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR EACH
51 ELECTION, HE OR SHE SHALL STATE THE DATES WHEN HE OR SHE EXPECTS TO
52 BEGIN AND END SUCH ABSENCE; OR

53 (II) UNABLE TO APPEAR AT A POLLING PLACE BECAUSE OF ILLNESS OR PHYS-
54 ICAL DISABILITY OR DUTIES RELATED TO THE PRIMARY CARE OF ONE OR MORE
55 INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE ILL OR PHYSICALLY DISABLED; OR

56 (III) AN INMATE OR PATIENT OF A VETERAN'S ADMINISTRATION HOSPITAL; OR

(IV) DETAINED IN JAIL AWAITING ACTION BY A GRAND JURY OR AWAITING TRIAL OR CONFINED IN JAIL OR PRISON AFTER A CONVICTION FOR AN OFFENSE OTHER THAN A FELONY AND STATING THE PLACE WHERE HE OR SHE IS SO DETAINED OR CONFINED.

(D) SUCH APPLICATION SHALL PERMIT THE APPLICANT TO APPLY FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR EITHER A PRIMARY ELECTION OR THE GENERAL ELECTION IN ANY YEAR AND FOR THOSE PERSONS WHO WILL BE CONTINUOUSLY ABSENT FROM THEIR COUNTY OF RESIDENCE DURING THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE FALL PRIMARY ELECTION AND THE GENERAL ELECTION IN ANY YEAR TO APPLY FOR BALLOTS FOR BOTH SUCH ELECTIONS IN SUCH YEAR. A VOTER WHO APPLIES FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT SHALL BE SENT AN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR ANY SPECIAL ELECTION OR WINTER PRIMARY THAT OCCURS DURING THE PERIOD OF ABSENCE SPECIFIED IN THE APPLICATION.

5. An application must be received by the village clerk no earlier than [four months] THE THIRTIETH DAY before the election for which an absentee ballot is sought. If the application requests that the absentee ballot be mailed, such application must be received not later than seven days before the election. If the applicant or his OR HER agent delivers the application to the village clerk in person, such application must be received not later than the day before the election. The village clerk shall examine each application and shall determine from the information contained therein whether the applicant is qualified under this section to receive an absentee ballot. The clerk in making such decision shall not determine whether the applicant is a qualified elector, said determination being reserved to the inspectors of election as is hereinafter provided in subdivision [eight] NINE of this section.

[5] 6. No later than six days before the election for which an application has been received and for which the village clerk has determined the applicant to be qualified to vote by absentee ballot the village clerk shall mail, by regular mail, an absentee ballot to each qualified applicant who has applied before such day and who has requested that such absentee ballot be mailed to him OR HER at the address set forth in his OR HER application. If the applicant or his OR HER agent delivers the application to the village clerk in person after the seventh day before the village election and not later than the day before the election, the village clerk shall forthwith deliver such absentee ballots for those applicants whom he OR SHE determines are qualified to make such applications and to receive such ballots to such applicants or the agents named in the applications when such applicants or agents appear in the village clerk's office.

[6] 7. The absentee ballot shall be caused to be prepared and printed by the village clerk as provided by law for paper ballots or machine ballots, whichever are to be used in said election and appropriate modifications for the purposes of this section. He OR SHE shall also cause to be prepared and printed return envelopes addressed to him OR HER, conforming so far as may be practicable to the provisions of this chapter stating thereon that in order for the ballot contained therein to be counted it must be received by the village clerk not later than the close of the polls on election day. On the reverse side of each return envelope there shall be written instructions for the voter to insert at designated places his OR HER signature, his OR HER name printed, his OR HER residence address within the village and his OR HER village election district if there be more than one district within the village.

[7] 8. The method of marking, preparing and mailing such ballot for voting shall conform, wherever practicable, to the methods used for absentee ballots for a general election, except that the envelope in

1 which it is contained shall be returned to the village clerk. On the day
2 of the election, the village clerk shall deliver all such ballots, which
3 have been returned to him OR HER, in the sealed envelopes to the board
4 of inspectors of election of the proper election district. No such
5 ballot shall be deemed to have been voted unless or until it shall have
6 been delivered to the board of inspectors of election of the election
7 district in which the elector casting the ballot resides and shall have
8 been deposited by the chairman of such board in the box provided for
9 receiving such ballot.

10 [8] 9. When such ballots shall have been delivered to the board of
11 inspectors of election of the proper election district and shall have
12 been duly determined by such board to have been lawfully cast by a qual-
13 ified elector of such district, the chairman of such board shall, after
14 the close of the polls, open the envelopes containing such ballots and,
15 without unfolding such ballots or permitting the face thereof to be
16 exposed to the view of anyone, shall deposit each such ballot in a box
17 specifically furnished for such purpose by the village clerk. If the
18 board of inspectors shall determine that any such ballot has been cast
19 by an elector who would not be qualified under the provisions of this
20 section, then such ballot shall not be counted.

21 [9] 10. After all the ballots shall have been deposited, the box
22 shall be opened and such ballots canvassed in the same manner as other
23 ballots cast at such election and shall be counted and included in the
24 total of all ballots cast at such election.

25 S 2. This act shall take effect immediately.