

S T A T E O F N E W Y O R K

6195--A

2013-2014 Regular Sessions

I N A S S E M B L Y

March 15, 2013

Introduced by M. of A. CUSICK, COLTON, ENGLEBRIGHT, GIBSON, STEVENSON, ORTIZ, ZEBROWSKI, SCARBOROUGH, MOYA, ROBINSON, CAHILL, LAVINE -- Multi-Sponsored by -- M. of A. BOYLAND, FARRELL, GLICK, HEASTIE, HIKIND, PERRY, WEISENBERG -- read once and referred to the Committee on Election Law -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the election law and the education law, in relation to making absentee ballots available in Braille and large-print; and providing for the repeal of certain provisions upon the expiration thereof

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

- 1 Section 1. The election law is amended by adding a new section 7-107
2 to read as follows:
3 S 7-107. ABSENTEE BALLOTS IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT TO BE MADE AVAIL-
4 ABLE. 1. ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT SHALL BE
5 MADE AVAILABLE UPON THE REQUEST OF ANY REGISTERED VOTER WHO IS BLIND OR
6 VISUALLY IMPAIRED. PERSONS WISHING TO RECEIVE BRAILLE OR LARGE-PRINT
7 ABSENTEE BALLOTS MUST GIVE NOTICE THEREOF TO THE BOARD OF ELECTIONS NO
8 LESS THAN THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO EACH ELECTION DAY TO ENABLE THE BOARD TO
9 PREPARE AND DISTRIBUTE SUCH BALLOTS.
10 2. THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SHALL PROMULGATE RULES FOR THE PREPA-
11 RATION, DISTRIBUTION, CASTING, AND CANVASS OF BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT
12 ABSENTEE BALLOTS. THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SHALL DEVELOP THE
13 INITIAL FORMAT FOR BOTH BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT BALLOTS IN CONSULTATION
14 WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK STATE ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE
15 FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPROPRI-
16 ATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS AS THE STATE BOARD OF
17 ELECTIONS SHALL DETERMINE. FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS SECTION, "BRAILLE"
18 REFERS TO GRADE TWO BRAILLE AND "LARGE-PRINT" REFERS TO A FONT OF EIGH-
19 TEEN POINT OR LARGER. UPON THE PRINTING OF A BRAILLE BALLOT, THE BOARD

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

LBD05514-02-3

1 OF ELECTIONS SHALL REQUIRE SUCH BRAILLE BALLOT TO BE PROOFREAD BY A
2 QUALIFIED BRAILLE READER. THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SHALL ESTABLISH
3 THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR A BRAILLE BALLOT PROOFREADER IN CONSULTA-
4 TION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK STATE ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN
5 THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPRO-
6 PRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH BOARD SHALL
7 DETERMINE.

8 S 2. The education law is amended by adding a new section 2022-a to
9 read as follows:

10 S 2022-A. BALLOTS IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT TO BE MADE AVAILABLE. 1.
11 ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT SHALL BE MADE AVAIL-
12 ABLE FOR EVERY ELECTION UPON THE REQUEST OF ANY REGISTERED VOTER WHO IS
13 BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED. SUCH BALLOTS SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE AT
14 POLLING PLACES UPON REQUEST, AND MAY BE USED BY A VOTER IN LIEU OF THE
15 VOTING MACHINE. ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT
16 SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE UPON THE REQUEST OF ANY REGISTERED VOTER WHO IS
17 BLIND OR VISUALLY IMPAIRED. PERSONS WISHING TO RECEIVE BRAILLE AND
18 LARGE-PRINT ABSENTEE OR IN-PERSON BALLOTS MUST GIVE NOTICE THEREOF NO
19 LESS THAN THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO EACH ELECTION DAY TO ENABLE PREPARATION
20 AND DISTRIBUTION OF SUCH BALLOTS.

21 2. THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE BOARD OF
22 ELECTIONS, SHALL PROMULGATE RULES FOR THE PREPARATION, DISTRIBUTION,
23 CASTING, AND CANVASS OF BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT ABSENTEE BALLOTS. THE
24 DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP THE INITIAL FORMAT FOR BOTH BRAILLE AND LARGE-
25 PRINT BALLOTS IN CONSULTATION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK STATE ORGAN-
26 IZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISA-
27 BILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES OR
28 ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH BOARD SHALL DETERMINE. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS
29 SECTION, "BRAILLE" REFERS TO GRADE TWO BRAILLE AND "LARGE-PRINT" REFERS
30 TO A FONT OF EIGHTEEN POINT OR LARGER. UPON THE PRINTING OF A BRAILLE
31 BALLOT, SUCH BRAILLE BALLOT SHALL BE PROOFREAD BY A QUALIFIED BRAILLE
32 READER. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR A
33 BRAILLE BALLOT PROOFREADER IN CONSULTATION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK
34 STATE ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE
35 WITH DISABILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES
36 OR ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE.

37 S 3. The education law is amended by adding a new section 2022-a to
38 read as follows:

39 S 2022-A. BALLOTS IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT TO BE MADE AVAILABLE. 1.
40 ABSENTEE BALLOTS PRINTED IN BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT SHALL BE MADE AVAIL-
41 ABLE UPON THE REQUEST OF ANY REGISTERED VOTER WHO IS BLIND OR VISUALLY
42 IMPAIRED. PERSONS WISHING TO RECEIVE BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT ABSENTEE
43 BALLOTS MUST GIVE NOTICE THEREOF NO LESS THAN THIRTY DAYS PRIOR TO EACH
44 ELECTION DAY TO ENABLE PREPARATION AND DISTRIBUTION OF SUCH BALLOTS.

45 2. THE COMMISSIONER, IN CONSULTATION WITH THE STATE BOARD OF
46 ELECTIONS, SHALL PROMULGATE RULES FOR THE PREPARATION, DISTRIBUTION,
47 CASTING, AND CANVASS OF BRAILLE AND LARGE-PRINT ABSENTEE BALLOTS. THE
48 DEPARTMENT SHALL DEVELOP THE INITIAL FORMAT FOR BOTH BRAILLE AND LARGE-
49 PRINT BALLOTS IN CONSULTATION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK STATE ORGAN-
50 IZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISA-
51 BILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES OR
52 ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH BOARD SHALL DETERMINE. FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS
53 SECTION, "BRAILLE" REFERS TO GRADE TWO BRAILLE AND "LARGE-PRINT" REFERS
54 TO A FONT OF EIGHTEEN POINT OR LARGER. UPON THE PRINTING OF A BRAILLE
55 BALLOT, SUCH BRAILLE BALLOT SHALL BE PROOFREAD BY A QUALIFIED BRAILLE
56 READER. THE DEPARTMENT SHALL ESTABLISH THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR A

1 BRAILLE BALLOT PROOFREADER IN CONSULTATION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK
2 STATE ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE
3 WITH DISABILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPROPRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES
4 OR ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH DEPARTMENT SHALL DETERMINE.
5 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided however that
6 sections one and two of this act shall take effect on the first of
7 December next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law;
8 provided, further that section 2022-a of the education law added by
9 section two of this act shall expire and be deemed repealed on the same
10 date as chapter 359 of the laws of 2010 expires, when upon such date the
11 provisions of section three of this act shall take effect; and provided,
12 further that effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or
13 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of
14 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made on or before
15 such effective date.