

8815

I N   A S S E M B L Y

February 18, 2014

---

Introduced by M. of A. WEPRIN, CUSICK, COLTON, ENGLEBRIGHT, 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

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  
20    OF ELECTIONS SHALL REQUIRE SUCH BRAILLE BALLOT TO BE PROOFREAD BY A  
21    QUALIFIED BRAILLE READER. THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SHALL ESTABLISH  
22    THE MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS FOR A BRAILLE BALLOT PROOFREADER IN CONSULTA-  
23    TION WITH AT LEAST THREE NEW YORK STATE ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERTISE IN  
24    THE FIELD OF ADVOCACY FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND SUCH OTHER APPRO-

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

LBD05514-04-4

1 PRIATE PERSONS, GROUPS, ENTITIES OR ORGANIZATIONS AS SUCH BOARD SHALL  
2 DETERMINE.

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 S 4. This act shall take effect immediately; provided however that  
2 sections one and two of this act shall take effect on the first of  
3 December next succeeding the date on which it shall have become a law;  
4 provided, further that section 2022-a of the education law added by  
5 section two of this act shall expire and be deemed repealed on the same  
6 date as chapter 359 of the laws of 2010 expires, when upon such date the  
7 provisions of section three of this act shall take effect; and provided,  
8 further that effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or  
9 repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of  
10 this act on its effective date are authorized to be made on or before  
11 such effective date.