STATE OF NEW YORK

1128--A

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 11, 2019

Introduced by Sen. BENJAMIN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections -- reported favorably from said committee and committed to the Committee on Finance -- committee discharged, bill amended, ordered reprinted as amended and recommitted to said committee

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to voter registration form distribution and assistance

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. The opening paragraph of section 5-211 of the election law, as amended by section 1 of part AA of chapter 56 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

Each agency designated as a participating agency under the provisions of this section shall implement and administer a program of distribution of voter registration forms pursuant to the provisions of this section. The following offices which provide public assistance and/or provide state funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to persons with disabilities are hereby designated as voter registration agencies: designated as the state agencies which provide public assistance are the office of children and family services, the office of temporary and disability assistance and the department of health. Also designated as public assistance agencies are all agencies of local government that provide such assistance. Designated as state agencies that provide programs primarily engaged in providing services to people with disabilities are the department of labor, office for the aging, division of veterans' services, office of mental health, office of vocational and educational services for individuals with disabilities, commission on quality of care for the mentally disabled, office [~~of mental retardation and~~] **for people with** developmental disabilities, commission for the blind, office of alcoholism and substance abuse services, the office of the advocate for the disabled and all offices which administer programs

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

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established or funded by such agencies. Additional [~~state~~] participating agencies designated as voter registration offices are the department of state and the [~~division~~] district offices of the workers' compensation board. Such agencies shall be required to offer voter registration forms to persons upon initial application for services, renewal or recertification for services and upon change of address relating to such services. Such agencies shall also be responsible for providing assistance to applicants in completing voter registration forms, receiving and transmitting the completed application form from all applicants who wish to have such form transmitted to the appropriate board of elections. The state board of elections shall, together with representatives of the United States department of defense, develop and implement procedures for including recruitment offices of the armed forces of the United States as voter registration offices when such offices are so designated by federal law. The state board of elections shall also make request of the United States [~~Immigration and Naturalization Service~~] Citizenship and Immigration Services to include applications for registration by mail with any materials which are given to new citizens. [~~All institutions of the state university of New York and the city university of New York, shall, at the beginning of the school year, and again in January of a year in which the president of the United States is to be elected, provide an application for registration to each student in each such institution. The state board of elections may, by regulation, grant a waiver from any or all of the requirements of this section to any office or program of an agency, if it determines that it is not feasible for such office or program to administer such requirement.~~]

§ 2. Section 5-211 of the election law is amended by adding a new subdivision 18 to read as follows:

18. (a) On or before January first, two thousand twenty, all institutions of the state university of New York and the city university of New York shall create and make available to all students a webpage for voter education on each such institution's website, containing a link to an application for voter registration, a link to an application for an absentee ballot, contact information for the county board of elections, and the name and contact information for the administrator responsible for voter registration assistance on each campus. Each such institution shall, at the beginning of the school year, and again in January of a year in which the president of the United States is to be elected, provide an application for voter registration to each student in each such institution. Such institutions shall also offer each student an application for an absentee ballot. Such institutions shall provide the same degree of assistance as required of participating agencies. Each institution shall be considered in compliance with these requirements for each student to whom the institution electronically transmits a message containing the link to the webpage for voter education and the link to an application for voter registration, if such information is in an electronic message devoted exclusively to voter registration.

(b) Each institution shall on or before January first, two thousand twenty, and each subsequent year, submit a report to the state board of elections that includes:

(i) the efforts of the institution to register voters in the preceding calendar year;

(ii) a date-stamped screen shot of the webpage for voter education that contains the required information under paragraph (a) of this subdivision;

(iii) the number of students who were registered for course work in the preceding twelve months at such institution and the number of students who clicked on the links to online voter registration and absentee ballot applications; and

(iv) any other efforts or recommendations the institution plans to implement to improve access to voter registration and absentee ballot voting for students at the institution.

§ 3. This act shall take effect immediately.