STATE OF NEW YORK

8677--A

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

October 23, 2019

Introduced by M. of A. EPSTEIN -- 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 correction law, in relation to promoting voter registration and voting by incarcerated people; and to repeal certain provisions of the election law relating thereto

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

Section 1. Section 5-104 of the election law is amended by adding a new subdivision 1-a to read as follows:

1-a. For the purpose of registering and voting, an incarcerated person in a state or local correctional facility shall be considered a resident of the address he or she resided at prior to his or her incarceration.

§ 2. Subdivisions 2, 3, 4 and 5 of section 5-106 of the election law are REPEALED and subdivision 6 is renumbered subdivision 2.

§ 3. Subdivision 1 of section 5-400 of the election law, as amended by chapter 659 of the laws of 1994, paragraph (a) as amended by chapter 3 of the laws of 2019, is amended and a new subdivision 1-a is added to read as follows:

1. A voter's registration, including the registration of a voter in inactive status, shall be cancelled if, since the time of his **or her** last registration, he **or she**:

(a) Moved his or her residence outside the state.

(b) [~~**Was convicted of a felony disqualifying him from voting pursuant to the provisions of section 5-106 of this article.**~~

~~**(c)**~~] Has been adjudicated an incompetent.

[~~**(d)**~~] **(c)** Refused to take a challenge oath.

[~~**(e)**~~] **(d)** Has died.

[~~**(f)**~~] **(e)** Did not vote in any election conducted by the board of elections during the period ending with the second general election at which candidates for federal office are on the ballot after his **or her**

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

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name was placed in inactive status and for whom the board of elections did not, during such period, in any other way, receive any information that such voter still resides in the same county or city.

[~~(g)~~] **(f)** Personally requested to have his **or her** name removed from the list of registered voters.

[~~(h)~~] **(g)** For any other reason, is no longer qualified to vote as provided in this chapter.

1-a. A voter's registration shall not be cancelled while he or she is incarcerated in a state or local correctional facility and no municipality shall enact any local law, rule, regulation or ordinance that prevents or restricts an incarcerated person's ability to register or vote.

§ 4. Subdivision 2 of section 5-708 of the election law is REPEALED and subdivisions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7, subdivision 3 as renumbered by chapter 659 of the laws of 1994, are renumbered subdivisions 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6.

§ 5. Subdivision 3 of section 5-708 of the election law, as added by chapter 659 of the laws of 1994 and as renumbered by section four of this act, paragraph a as amended by chapter 200 of the laws of 1996, is amended to read as follows:

3. a. If a board of elections receives any notices pursuant to the provisions of [~~subdivisions~~] **subdivision** two [~~and three~~] of this section which set forth a residence address outside of the city or county of such board's jurisdiction, it shall, at least once a month, transmit such notices to the appropriate board of elections, or, if such address is outside the state, to the state board of elections.

b. The state board shall arrange such notices and the names received pursuant to the other provisions of this section by county of residence and transmit such notices [~~and any notices of conviction for a felony received from a United States attorney~~] to the appropriate board of elections.

c. If any such notices, or names received pursuant to the other provisions of this section, set forth a residence address outside New York state, the state board shall transmit such notices to the chief state election official of such state at such times and in such manner as it deems appropriate.

§ 6. Section 75 of the correction law, as amended by section 18 of subpart A of part C of chapter 62 of the laws of 2011, is amended to read as follows:

§ 75. Notice of voting rights. **1. The department, in collaboration with the state and county boards of election, shall establish a program to promote voter registration and voting by incarcerated people. Such program shall include:**

(a) development and distribution of a voter information guide to be distributed to incarcerated people and shall include but not be limited to the following information:

(i) important dates and deadlines;

(ii) registration requirements and instructions;

(iii) how to request and cast an absentee ballot while incarcerated; and

(iv) resources for any additional questions; and

(b) voter information and registration clinics for incarcerated people. Such clinics shall:

(i) be held every other year to coincide with election cycles;

(ii) be held at least ninety days prior to an election to allow adequate time for voter registration and the requesting and mailing of absentee ballots;

(iii) inform incarcerated people of:

(A) their ability to vote while incarcerated;

(B) important dates and deadlines;

(C) registration requirements and instructions; and

(D) guidance on requesting and casting absentee ballots while incarcerated; and

(iv) serve as voter registration drives for qualified incarcerated people. A department staff member or designee shall be available to assist incarcerated people in filling out paper or electronic registration forms and to provide the appropriate address for the mailing of completed registration forms.

2. Upon the discharge from a correctional facility [~~of any person whose maximum sentence of imprisonment has expired~~] or upon a person's discharge from community supervision, the department shall notify such person of his or her right to vote and provide such person with a form of application for voter registration together with written information distributed by the board of elections on the importance and the mechanics of voting.

§ 7. This act shall take effect on the same date as a "CONCURRENT RESOLUTION OF THE SENATE AND ASSEMBLY proposing an amendment to sections 1 and 3 of article 2 of the constitution, in relation to authorizing voting by incarcerated people" takes effect. Effective immediately, the addition, amendment and/or repeal of any rule or regulation necessary for the implementation of this act on its effective date are authorized to be made and completed on or before such effective date.