

STATE OF NEW YORK

9706

IN ASSEMBLY

February 6, 2020

Introduced by M. of A. ARROYO -- read once and referred to the Committee on Transportation

AN ACT to amend the highway law, in relation to authorizing variable message signs placed within the right of way of highways to display certain voting related communications

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

1 Section 1. The highway law is amended by adding a new section 332 to
2 read as follows:

3 § 332. Variable message signs; voting related communications. (a) The
4 commissioner is authorized to place, cause to be placed, or permit to be
5 placed permanent or portable variable message signs within the right of
6 way of any highway over which he or she has jurisdiction, displaying
7 voting related communications including without limitation:

8 (i) notice of the deadline to register to vote beginning the fifth day
9 prior to the respective deadline for a statewide primary or general
10 election; and

11 (ii) notice of any statewide general, primary, or special election for
12 any statewide public office, beginning three days prior to and including
13 election day.

14 (b) Provided that it does not interfere with state or federal law or
15 regulation, any political subdivision of the state having jurisdiction
16 over any highway is authorized to place, cause to be placed, or permit
17 to be placed permanent or portable variable message signs displaying
18 voting related communications within the right of way of such highway,
19 including without limitation:

20 (i) notice of the deadline to register to vote beginning the fifth day
21 prior to the respective deadline for a statewide primary or general
22 election; and

23 (ii) notice of any statewide general, primary, or special election for
24 any statewide public office, beginning three days prior to and including
25 election day.

26 (c) The commissioner shall consult the state board of elections prior
27 to displaying voting related communications to ensure that such communi-

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

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1 cations are uniform and accurate. Any political subdivision of the state
2 having jurisdiction over any highway shall consult the state board of
3 elections prior to displaying voting related communications to ensure
4 that such communications are uniform and accurate.

5 (d) For purposes of this section, the term "variable message signs"
6 shall include changeable message signs as adopted by the federal highway
7 safety administration's manual on uniform traffic control devices,
8 dynamic message signs developed as part of the national transportation
9 communication for ITS protocol, and variable message signs as defined by
10 the commissioner.

11 (e) The commissioner may give priority to other appropriate variable
12 message sign communications, including, but not limited to, the display
13 of emergency alerts, amber alerts, missing vulnerable adult alerts,
14 missing or exploited children alerts and other transportation related
15 messages, over the communications authorized pursuant to this section.

16 § 2. No information authorized to be displayed on a variable message
17 sign pursuant to section 332 of the highway law as added by this act
18 shall be displayed if advised by the United States Department of Trans-
19 portation or any of its agencies that the display of such information
20 will interfere with federal law or regulation or result in the reduction
21 of federal aid highway funds.

22 § 3. This act shall take effect on the sixtieth day after it shall
23 have become a law. The department of transportation and state board of
24 elections are authorized to promulgate any rules and regulations neces-
25 sary to implement the provisions of this act on its effective date on or
26 before such date.