

STATE OF NEW YORK

2425

2019-2020 Regular Sessions

IN SENATE

January 24, 2019

Introduced by Sen. KAPLAN -- read twice and ordered printed, and when printed to be committed to the Committee on Elections

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to watchers during election

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

1 Section 1. Section 8-500 of the election law, as amended by chapter 9
2 of the laws of 1978, subdivisions 1 and 3 as amended by chapter 373 of
3 the laws of 1978, and subdivision 4 as amended by chapter 254 of the
4 laws of 2014, is amended to read as follows:

5 § 8-500. Watchers; provision for. 1. At any general, special, town or
6 village election, any party committee [~~or~~] and any independent body
7 whose candidates are upon the ballot, [~~and at any primary election, any~~
8 ~~two or more candidates and any political committee~~] may have for each
9 election district three watchers at any one time, not more than one of
10 whom may be within the guard rail at any one time. Watchers shall be
11 appointed by the [~~chairman~~] chair or other officer of any such party,
12 committee or independent body [~~or by the candidates~~].

13 2. At any primary election, any party committee, any two or more
14 candidates on the ballot and any political committee may have for each
15 election district three watchers at any one time, not more than one of
16 whom may be within the guard rail at any one time. Watchers shall be
17 appointed by the chair or other officer of any such party, committee or
18 by any two candidates.

19 3. Watchers may be present at the polling place at least fifteen
20 minutes before the unlocking and examination of any voting machine or
21 ballot box at the opening of the polls, until after the signing of the
22 inspectors' returns and proclamation of the result.

23 [~~3-~~] 4. The appointment of watchers for any election shall be by a
24 certificate in writing issued by the [~~chairman or secretary of the poli-~~
25 ~~tical party or independent body, or the candidates~~] appointing

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

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1 authority. Such certificate shall be delivered to an inspector at the
2 election district.
3 ~~[4.]~~ 5. Each watcher must be a qualified voter of the city or county
4 in which he or she is to serve. No person shall be appointed or act as a
5 watcher who is a candidate for any public office to be voted for by the
6 voters of the election district in the same election in which the watch-
7 er is to serve. Nothing in this subdivision shall be construed as
8 prohibiting any such candidate from visiting a polling place in such
9 district on an election day while the polls are open.
10 § 2. This act shall take effect immediately.