STATE OF NEW YORK

4976

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 9, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. ABINANTI -- read once and referred to the Committee on Election Law

AN ACT to amend the election law, in relation to authorizing online facilitation of voter registration

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

Section 1. The election law is amended by adding a new section 5-205 to read as follows:

§ 5-205. Online voter registration. a. The state board of elections shall provide a secure website and mobile application that allows any individual qualified to vote in the state to confidentially submit to his or her county board of elections through such website and mobile application the information collected on a voter registration application form pursuant to section 5-210 of this title for the purpose of registering to vote or updating such individual's voter registration. Such website and mobile application shall allow such individual to electronically provide a signature of a quality and likeness comparable to a signature written with ink, consistent with subdivision c of this section. The website and mobile application shall also allow such individual to view the notices contained on or accompanying a printed voter registration application form.

b. Such website and mobile application shall also conspicuously set forth information concerning the timeframes and deadlines for applying to register to vote or updating registration, to assist such individual in ascertaining whether the registration or update will take effect for the next election. Such website and mobile application shall also conspicuously set forth information concerning how a voter may confirm his or her registration information.

c. The website and mobile application provided pursuant to this section shall permit the submission of an individual's signature through one or more methods determined by the state board of elections to result

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

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in a signature of a quality and likeness comparable to a signature written with ink. Methods to be considered by the state board of elections shall include, but not be limited to: (i) the uploading of an electronic file; and (ii) direct input through a touch or stylus interface. In addition to any other method or methods utilized pursuant to this subdivision, a county board of elections may, with the consent of an individual, utilize a signature previously provided by such individual to an agency or to the department of motor vehicles, if the county board of elections determines that such signature otherwise meets the requirements of this section and may be used consistent with the applicable law governing the use of the signature provided.

d. To the extent practicable and consistent with the privacy of users, data security and applicable law, the state board of elections shall make available to the public a web application program interface that permits programs approved by such board to directly transmit voter registration application form information to such board and to county boards of election in a manner equivalent to the submission authorized by subdivision a of this section.

§ 2. The opening paragraph of paragraph (b) of subdivision 4 of section 3-212 of the election law, as amended by chapter 79 of the laws of 1992, is amended to read as follows:

Said annual report, as required by paragraph (a) of this subdivision, shall include a detailed description of existing programs designed to enhance voter registration, including the number of voter registration application forms received and transmitted to the New York state board of elections during the preceding calendar year pursuant to section 5-205 of this chapter, both in total and disaggregated for the website and mobile application. Such report shall include a voter registration action plan which details the various activities and programs of each board, including a description of those steps which shall be taken in the future to increase registration opportunities, especially for those identifiable groups of persons historically underrepresented on the rolls of registered voters; and coordinate voter education programs with school districts, colleges and universities within the board's jurisdiction including voter registration of qualified applicants and instructional or extracurricular activities promoting participation in the electoral process.

§ 3. This act shall take effect on the one hundred eightieth day after it shall have become a law. 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.