STATE OF NEW YORK

5424--A

2021-2022 Regular Sessions

IN ASSEMBLY

February 16, 2021

Introduced by M. of A. TAYLOR -- 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, in relation to enacting the "Make Voting Easy Act" to require that the board of elections designate a number of early voting polling places based on the number of registered voters in each county

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

Section 1. Short title. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Make Voting Easy Act".

§ 2. Subdivision 2 of section 8-600 of the election law, as added by chapter 6 of the laws of 2019, paragraph (a) as amended by chapter 74 of the laws of 2021, paragraph (b) as added and paragraphs (c), (d), and (e) as relettered by chapter 110 of the laws of 2021, is amended to read as follows:

2. (a) The board of elections shall designate polling places for early voting, which may include the offices of the board of elections, for persons to vote early pursuant to this title[~~; provided, however, that the~~].

(b) The largest city in the county or, if there is no city in the county, the municipality with the highest population in each county based on the latest federal decennial census, or the county seat in Washington county, shall have at least one polling place designated for early voting, and to the extent practicable if such **city or** municipality has public transportation routes, such polling place shall be situated along such transportation routes. [~~There~~]

(c) In counties with at least five hundred thousand registered voters, there shall be so designated at least one early voting polling place for every full increment of [~~fifty~~] **forty** thousand registered voters [~~in each county; provided, however,~~].

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

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(d) In all other counties with less than five hundred thousand registered voters, there shall be so designated at least one early voting polling place for every full increment of thirty thousand registered voters; provided, however, the number of early voting polling places in [~~a county~~] counties with less than five hundred thousand registered voters shall not be required to be greater than ten [~~unless required by any other provision of law, and a county with fewer than fifty thousand voters shall have at least one early voting polling place~~] nor less than one.

[~~(b)~~] (e) For any special, primary or run-off primary election at which no voters of the municipality with the highest population within the county are eligible to vote, the board of elections may, in lieu of having an early voting polling place in such municipality, designate a polling place for early voting in the municipality with the highest population within the county within which the voters are eligible to vote at such special, primary, or run-off primary election.

[~~(c)~~] (f) The board of elections of each county or the city of New York may establish additional polling places for early voting in excess of the minimum number required by this subdivision for the convenience of eligible voters.

[~~(d)~~] (g) Notwithstanding the minimum number of early voting poll sites otherwise required by this subdivision, for any primary or special election, upon majority vote of the board of elections, the number of early voting sites may be reduced when the board of elections determines a lesser number of sites is sufficient to meet the needs of early voters.

[~~(e)~~] (h) Polling places for early voting shall be located so that voters in the county have adequate and equitable access, taking into consideration population density, travel time to the polling place, proximity to other early voting poll sites, public transportation routes, commuter traffic patterns and such other factors the board of elections deems appropriate. The provisions of section 4-104 of this chapter, except subdivisions four and five of such section, shall apply to the designation of polling places for early voting except to the extent such provisions are inconsistent with this section.

§ 3. Paragraph (c) of subdivision 4 of section 8-600 of the election law, as added by chapter 6 of the laws of 2019, is amended to read as follows:

(c) Polls shall be open for early voting for at least [~~five~~] eight hours between nine o'clock in the morning and [~~six~~] eight o'clock in the evening on each Saturday, Sunday and legal holiday during the early voting period.

§ 4. This act shall take effect April 1, 2022 and shall apply to any general, primary, run-off primary, or special election held thereafter.