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HOUSE BILL NO. 525

Offered January 18, 2000

A BILL to amend and reenact § 24.2-611 of the Code of Virginia, relating to election pollbooks and procedures.

Patrons—Cox, Callahan, Dillard, Drake, Griffith, Howell, Johnson, Jones, S.C., Plum, Putney, Reid and Van Landingham; Senator: Miller, K.G.

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**1. That § 24.2-611 of the Code of Virginia is amended and reenacted as follows:**

§ 24.2-611. Form and signing of pollbooks; use of precinct registered voter lists.

A. The following oath shall be on a form prescribed by the State Board, administered to all officers of election, and kept by the officers of election with the pollbook:

"I do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I will perform the duties for this election according to law and the best of my ability, and that I will studiously endeavor to prevent fraud, deceit, and abuse in conducting this election."

The oath shall be administered to each officer of election by the general registrar, the secretary of the electoral board, or an officer of election designated by them, who shall be so identified on the form. The oath shall be signed by each officer of election and the person administering the oath. The pollbook shall be marked to identify the election for which it is used.

B. The State Board shall provide a second or a divisible precinct registered voter list to serve as the pollbook for elections conducted on and after July 1, 1995. The second or divisible list shall (i) provide a space for the officer of election to record the name and consecutive number of the voter at the time he offers to vote and (ii) be retained in accordance with the provisions governing pollbooks in this title. The State Board shall provide a numerical check sheet to be used to determine the consecutive number to be recorded with the name of the voter by the officer of election. When the name and number of the last qualified voter have been entered on the registered voter list, the officer of election responsible for that list shall sign a statement on the check sheet certifying the number of qualified registrants who have voted. The State Board shall provide instructions to the local electoral boards, general registrars, and officers of election for the conduct of the election and for procedures for entering a voting record for each voter and recording each voter's name, including voters unable to enter the polling place, and for verifying the accurate entry of the voting record for each registrant on the Virginia Voter Registration System.

C. The State Board shall be authorized to conduct pilot programs in one or more localities, with the consent of the electoral board of the locality, to test the use of a combined precinct registered voter list and pollbook, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary. The pilot programs authorized by this subsection may be conducted at any election held prior to ~~January 1, 2000~~ *July 1, 2001*. Any pilot program conducted by the State Board shall incorporate safeguards to assure that the records of the election, including a combined precinct registered voter list and pollbook, voter count sheets, or other alternative records, will provide promptly an accurate and secure record of those who have voted. The State Board shall report its evaluation of any pilot programs conducted by it and any recommendations for legislation as a result of the programs to the Committees on Privileges and Elections of the General Assembly prior to the year 2000 ~~and 2001 Regular Session~~ *Sessions* of the General Assembly.

2. That an emergency exists and this act is in force from its passage.

INTRODUCED

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