

VIRGINIA ACTS OF ASSEMBLY — CHAPTER

*An Act to amend the Code of Virginia by adding a section numbered 24.2-709.1, relating to alternative procedures to expedite counting absentee votes.*

[H 2287]

Approved

**Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:**

**1. That the Code of Virginia is amended by adding a section numbered 24.2-709.1 as follows:**

*§ 24.2-709.1. Alternative procedures for counting absentee ballots.*

*The electoral board may authorize a general registrar at his option to take one or more of the following measures as needed to expedite counting absentee ballots capable of being read with optical scan counting devices and returned by mail before election day: (i) examine the ballot envelopes to verify completion of the required voter affirmation; (ii) mark the pollbook, or the absentee voter applicant list if the pollbook is not available, that the voter has voted; or (iii) open the sealed ballot envelopes and insert the ballots in the optical scan counting equipment without initiating any ballot count totals. If the board authorizes optical scanning as provided in clause (iii), at least two officers of election, one representing each political party, shall be present during all hours when a general registrar uses the expedited procedures authorized in this section. No person present while sealed ballot envelopes are opened and ballots are inserted into counting equipment pursuant to clause (iii) shall disclose any information concerning the ballots.*

ENROLLED

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