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HOUSE BILL NO. 1197

House Amendments in [] - January 29, 2008

A BILL to amend and reenact §§ 24.2-414, 24.2-416, and 24.2-611 of the Code of Virginia, relating to elections; voter registration; and electronic administration systems.

Patron Prior to Engrossment—Delegate Sickles

Referred to Committee on Privileges and Elections

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1. That §§ 24.2-414, 24.2-416, and 24.2-611 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

§ 24.2-414. Final registration day.

Each general registrar shall, ~~twenty-nine days before the day fixed by law for every primary election and every general election that will be held in his jurisdiction,~~ hold a final day of registration *on the day before the registration records close under § 24.2-416 for the every election held in his jurisdiction.* On the final day of registration, the principal office of the general registrar shall be open a minimum of eight hours. The registrar shall make a list by name of any persons in line at the time of closing and shall permit those persons to complete an application to register or to make any necessary changes to their registration records.

§ 24.2-416. Closing registration records before elections.

In any county, city, or town in which an election is being held, the registration records shall be closed for the purpose of registering voters on the election day and during the period in advance of the election as provided in this section. The registration records shall be closed during the twenty-eight days before a primary or general election. *Beginning January 1, 2010, the registration records shall be closed during the [~~fourteen~~ 21] days before a primary or general election.* If the registration records have not been closed previously for a primary or general election, they shall be closed during the six days before a special election called by the Governor, Speaker of the House of Delegates, or President pro tempore of the Senate, or pursuant to rule or resolution of either house of the General Assembly and during the thirteen days before any other special election.

§ 24.2-611. Form and signing of pollbooks; records of persons voting; electronic pollbooks.

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, a member of the electoral board, or an officer of election designated by the general registrar and secretary of the electoral board, 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 the pollbook pursuant to subdivision A 7 of § 24.2-404. The pollbook 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. If the pollbook is provided in printed form, 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. If the pollbook is provided in electronic form, the consecutive number shall be entered automatically when the officer of election records that the voter has voted. When the name and number of the last qualified voter have been entered on the pollbook, the officer of election responsible for that pollbook shall sign a statement on the check sheet, or on a separate form if an electronic pollbook is used, 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 incorporate safeguards to assure that the records of the election, including the pollbook, voter count sheets, or other alternative records, will provide promptly an accurate and secure record of those who have voted. The State Board may provide for the pollbook to be in a paper

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59 format or in an electronic format if funds are appropriated to cover the costs associated with the
60 provision of a pollbook in an electronic format capable of being transmitted to local electronic systems
61 acquired pursuant to this section. The governing body of a county, city, or town may purchase,
62 lease-purchase, or otherwise acquire one or more electronic systems for administering elections, of a
63 kind approved by the State Board, for use at one or more precincts for elections held in the county, city,
64 or town. The State Board shall be authorized to conduct pilot programs in one or more localities, with
65 the consent of the electoral board of the locality, to test the use of an electronic pollbook in one or more
66 precincts, notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary.