SYNOPSIS

Requires ballot question on approval of State bond issue to disclose total amount of debt of State or other entity, debt service on which is funded through annual State appropriation.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.
AN ACT requiring that certain information be included in the interpretive statement that appears on the ballot with a State bond issue question, amending R.S.19:3-6.

BE IT ENACTED by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:

1. R.S.19:3-6 is amended to read as follows:

19:3-6. Any public question voted upon at an election shall be presented in simple language that can be easily understood by the voter. The printed phrasing of said question on the ballots shall clearly set forth the true purpose of the matter being voted upon. Where the question concerns any amendment to the State Constitution, or any act or statute or other legal titles of any nature, the printed phrasing on the ballots shall include a brief statement interpreting same. Whenever, pursuant to the provisions of Article VIII, Section II, paragraph 3 of the State Constitution, a public question submits to the people for their approval a law authorizing the creation of a debt or liability of the State, that interpretive statement shall include a recitation of the total amount outstanding of debts and liabilities of the State, of any agency or instrumentality of the State, and of any other entity, to which is pledged an annual State appropriation as the ways and means to pay the interest on such debts or liabilities when due and to discharge the principal thereof. Such a recitation of outstanding debts and liabilities shall be current as of June 30 of the year preceding the year in which the public question is submitted.

In event that in any statute the public question to be voted upon is so stated as not clearly to set forth the true purpose of the matter being voted upon and no provision is made in said statute for presenting the same in simple language or printing upon the ballots a brief statement interpreting the same, there may be added on the ballots to be used in voting upon the question, a brief statement interpreting the same and setting forth the true purpose of the matter being voted upon in addition to the statement of the public question required by the statute itself.

Such public question, when duly voted upon at an election, shall be deemed to be approved when that percentage of the legal voters of the State or any subdivision thereof as required by the statute authorizing the proposal of such public question shall vote in favor of its adoption.

For the purpose of this Title it is hereby declared that the intent and meaning in any such statute of the words "legal voters" are persons entitled to vote, and who do vote, at the time and in the manner prescribed in and by such statute upon the public question.

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.
submitted; and for the purpose of ascertaining what is the percentage of the legal voters of any district defined in such statute, upon the public question therein directed to be submitted, the persons who do not vote at such election, the persons who do not vote upon the public question and the persons whose ballots may be declared invalid, shall not be estimated, counted or considered. (cf: P.L.1941, c.170, s.1)

2. This act shall take effect immediately and shall apply to public questions submitted at any general election held at least 70 days after enactment.

STATEMENT

This bill provides that whenever a law authorizing the issuance of State general obligation debt is submitted to the people for their approval, as required by the State Constitution, the interpretive statement appearing on the ballot with that public question shall include a recitation of the total amount of debts and liabilities outstanding of the State, any State agency or instrumentality, and any other entity, to which is pledged an annual State appropriation as the ways and means to pay the interest on and discharge the principal of such debts or liabilities. This recitation of the amount of outstanding debts and liabilities is required to be current as of June 30 of the year preceding the year in which the public question is submitted.