Sponsored by:
Senator  PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.
District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS
Decreases from 55 days to 21 days minimum time required to change political party affiliation prior to primary.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.
AN ACT concerning changing political party affiliation prior to a primary and amending R.S.19:23-45.

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

1. R.S.19:23-45 is amended to read as follows:

19:23-45. No voter shall be allowed to vote at the primary election unless his name appears in the signature copy register.

A voter who votes in a primary election of a political party or who signs and files with the municipal clerk or the county commissioner of registration a declaration that he desires to vote in the primary election of a political party, or who indicates on a voter registration form the voter's choice of political party affiliation and submits the form to the commissioner of registration of the county wherein the voter resides, to the employees or agents of a public agency, as defined in subsection a. of section 15 of P.L.1974, c.30 (C.19:31-6.3), or a voter registration agency, as defined in subsection a. of section 26 of P.L.1994, c.182 (C.19:31-6.11), or to the Secretary of State, shall be deemed to be a member of that party until the voter signs and files with the municipal clerk or the commissioner of registration a declaration that he desires to vote in the primary election of another political party at which time he shall be deemed to be a member of such other political party. The Secretary of State shall cause to be prepared political party affiliation declaration forms and shall provide such forms to the commissioners of registration of the several counties and to the clerks of the municipalities within such counties.

No voter, except a newly registered voter at the first primary at which he is eligible to vote, or a voter who has not previously voted in a primary election, may vote in a primary election of a political party unless he was deemed to be a member of that party on the 55th 21st day next preceding such primary election.

A member of the county committee of a political party and a public official or public employee holding any office or public employment to which he has been elected or appointed as a member of a political party shall be deemed a member of such political party.

A voter may declare the voter's party affiliation or change the voter's party affiliation, or declare that the voter is unaffiliated with any party regardless of any previously declared party affiliation, by so indicating on a political party declaration form filed with the municipal clerk or the county commissioner of registration. A voter may also indicate that the voter wishes to declare a political party affiliation or that the voter does not want to declare a political party affiliation.

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.
affiliation on a voter registration form filed at the time of initial registration.

Any person voting in the primary ballot box of any political party in any primary election in contravention of the election law shall be guilty of a disorderly persons offense, and any person who aids or assists any such person in such violation by means of public proclamation or order, or by means of any public or private direction or suggestions, or by means of any help or assistance or cooperation, shall likewise be guilty of a disorderly persons offense. (cf: P.L.2011, c.134, s.27)

2. This act shall take effect immediately.

STATEMENT

This bill would decrease, from 55 days to 21 days, the minimum time required to change one’s political party affiliation prior to a primary election.

This bill would make the minimum time required to change one’s political party affiliation prior to a primary election identical to the minimum time required to register to vote prior to an election.