SENATE, No. 587

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Senator JAMES BEACH
District 6 (Burlington and Camden)
Senator NILSA CRUZ-PEREZ
District 5 (Camden and Gloucester)

Co-Sponsored by:
Senators Turner, Gill, Ruiz, Greenstein, Weinberg, Gopal and Diegnan

SYNOPSIS
   "New Voter Empowerment Act"; permits 17 year olds to vote in primary election if they turn 18 years old before next succeeding general election.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT
   Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 11/22/2021)

1　**AN ACT** concerning eligibility to vote in a primary election for the
2　　general election and designated as the "New Voter
3　　Empowerment Act," amending R.S.19:31-5, and supplementing
4　　chapter 23 of Title 19 of the Revised Statutes.
5
6　　**BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
7　*of New Jersey:*
8
9　　1.　(New section) Notwithstanding the provisions of
10　R.S.19:4-1, or any other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, any
11　registered voter who is 17 years of age prior to the date on which a
12　primary election for the general election is held shall be permitted
13　to vote in that primary election if the registered voter attains 18
14　years of age on or before the day of the next succeeding general
15　election.
16
17　　2.　R.S.19:31-5 is amended to read as follows:
18　　19:31-5. Each person, who is at least 17 years of age at the time
19　he or she applies for registration, who resides in the district in
20　which he or she expects to vote, who will be of the age of 18 years
21　or more on or before the first election in which he or she expects to
22　vote, who is a citizen of the United States, and who, if he or she
23　continues to reside in the district until that election, will at the time
24　have fulfilled all the requirements as to length of residence to
25　qualify him or her as a legal voter, shall, unless otherwise
26　disqualified, be entitled to be registered in such district. Each 17-
27　year-old registrant shall be designated in the Statewide voter
28　registration system as temporarily ineligible to vote until the
29　registrant's 18th birthday <u>, except as provided pursuant to section 1</u>
30　<u>of P.L.　, c.　(C.　) (pending before the Legislature as this bill)</u>.
31　　Whenever an individual registers by mail after January 1, 2003
32　to vote for the first time in his or her current county of residence,
33　that individual shall provide either the individual's New Jersey
34　driver's license number or the last four digits of the individual's
35　Social Security Number, or shall submit with the voter registration
36　form a copy of: (1) a current and valid photo identification card; (2)
37　a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or pay
38　check; (3) any other government document that shows the
39　individual's name and current address; or (4) any other identifying
40　document that the Attorney General has determined to be
41　acceptable for this purpose.　If the individual does not provide his
42　or her New Jersey driver's license number or Social Security
43　Number information or submit a copy of any one of these
44　documents, either at the time of registration or at any time
45　thereafter prior to attempting to vote, the individual shall be asked
46　for identification when voting for the first time starting at the first

1   election held after January 1, 2004 at which candidates are seeking
2   federal office or thereafter. This requirement shall not apply to any
3   individual entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the "Uniformed
4   and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act" (42 U.S.C. 1973ff-1 et
5   seq.) or to any individual who is provided the right to vote other
6   than in person under section 3 of Pub.L.98-435, the "Voting
7   Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act," or any other
8   voter entitled to vote otherwise than in person under any other
9   federal law. This requirement shall also not apply to any individual
10   who registers to vote by appearing in person at any voter
11   registration agency or to any individual whose voter registration
12   form is delivered to the county commissioner of registration or to
13   the Attorney General, as the case may be, through a third party by
14   means other than by mail delivery.
15   Once registered, the registrant shall not be required to register
16   again in such district as long as he or she resides therein, except
17   when required to do so by the commissioner, because of the loss of
18   or some defect in his or her registration record.
19   The registrant, when registered as provided in this Title, shall be
20   eligible to vote at any election to be held subsequent to such
21   registration, if he or she shall be a citizen of the United States of the
22   age of 18 years <u>, except as provided pursuant to section 1 of</u>
23   <u>P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill),</u> and
24   shall have been a resident of the State for at least 30 days and of the
25   county at least 30 days, when the same is held, subject to any
26   change in his qualifications which may later disqualify him. No
27   registrant shall lose the right to vote, and no registrant's name shall
28   be removed from the registry list of the county in which the person
29   is registered, solely on grounds of the person's failure to vote in one
30   or more elections
31   (cf: P.L.2015, c.222, s.1)
32
33   3   This act shall take effect on January 1st next following the
34   date of enactment.
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37   STATEMENT
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39   This bill, designated as the "New Voter Empowerment Act,"
40   permits any registered voter who is 17 years of age prior to the date
41   on which a primary election for the general election is held to vote
42   in that primary election if the registered voter attains 18 years of
43   age on or before the day of the next succeeding general election.
44   The bill creates an exemption in a provision of current law that
45   requires 17-year-old registrants in the Statewide voter registration
46   system to be marked as temporarily ineligible to vote until the
47   registrant's 18th birthday, in order to allow 17-year-old registrants
48   to vote in the primary election if they will be 18 on or before the
49   general election day.