

SENATE BUDGET AND APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 2433

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 25, 2020

The Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 2433, with committee amendments.

This bill, as amended, requires an electronic process for the collection of petition signatures and their submission for all elections remaining in 2020 and thereafter for the duration of the COVID-19 public health emergency. As amended, this bill would apply to petitions required to be submitted by any candidate, including a candidate for a board of education, or delegate, and for recall, initiative, and referendum petitions. Under the bill, the requirements to collect petition signatures via an online form or forms and to submit petitions online implemented by the Secretary of State, county clerks, and municipal clerks pursuant to paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 of Executive Order No. 105 (2020) for candidate and delegate petitions, and pursuant to paragraphs 1, 2, 3, and 4 of Executive Order No. 132 (2020) for initiative and referendum petitions, would be implemented to include any pending petition for all remaining elections in 2020 and for any other election taking place thereafter for the duration of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency and State of Emergency declared by the Governor under Executive Order No. 103 (2020).

The bill provides that the petition electronic signature and submission requirements would apply to the:

(1) collection of signatures for any candidate, delegate, recall, initiative, referendum, or other petition required to be filed prior to an election;

(2) delivery of petitions to the Secretary of State, county clerks, and municipal clerks;

(3) acceptance by the Secretary of State, county clerks, and municipal clerks of electronic petitions with signatures collected via the online form or forms, except that handwritten signatures obtained prior to the effective date of this section shall also be accepted electronically and in person; and

(4) verification of signatures, notarization of petitions, and submission of oaths to accompany petitions, as may be required by law.

The Secretary of State, in consultation with the Department of Law and Public Safety, would develop a generic template or templates for

the online form or forms to be used for the collection of signatures and submission of petitions. The petition's respective filing officer would develop the electronic procedures for signature verification, petition notarization, and submission of oaths to meet the requirements of current law.

COMMITTEE ADMENDMENTS:

There are committee amendments to:

(1) include board of education candidates to the electronic signature and submission requirements for candidate petitions for remaining elections in 2020 and thereafter during the COVID-19 public health emergency; and

(2) provide the Secretary of State the ability to develop more than one form or template, as deemed necessary to effectuate the purposes of this bill.

FISCAL IMPACT:

This bill is not certified as requiring a fiscal note.