

ASSEMBLY, No. 759

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 1996 SESSION

By Assemblywomen BUONO and TURNER

1 AN ACT establishing a public education program which explains the
2 procedure for requesting and receiving an absentee ballot and
3 supplementing Title 52 of the Revised Statutes.

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

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8 1. a. Within one year of the effective date of this act, the Secretary
9 of State shall establish a permanent public education program which
10 explains the procedure for requesting and receiving an absentee ballot,
11 as provided for in P.L.1953, c.211 (C.19:57-1 et seq.), P.L.1964,
12 c.134 (C.19:58-1 et seq.), and P.L.1976, c.23 (C.19:59-1 et seq.).

13 b. The materials produced by the program shall make clear:
14 (1) the qualifications necessary to be eligible to receive a civilian
15 or military absentee ballot, a Presidential ballot or an overseas Federal
16 election voter ballot;

17 (2) the procedure for requesting any such absentee ballot; and

18 (3) the advantages of voting by any such absentee ballot.

19 c. The program shall take the form of public service
20 announcements suitable for radio or television broadcasting and
21 instructional video tapes of no longer than 30 minutes. The materials
22 produced by the program shall be revised and updated as deemed
23 necessary.

24 d. The Secretary of State shall make certain:

25 (1) that the public service announcements and instructional video
26 tapes are distributed free to every commercial and public radio station
27 and to every commercial, public and cable television broadcasting
28 station located in this State at least two months prior to the date of the
29 primary election and the date of the general election; and

30 (2) that any materials produced by the program are available free
31 to any individual, group, organization or association interested in
32 viewing, borrowing or exhibiting those materials.

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34 2. The Secretary of State may adopt such rules and regulations
35 pursuant to the "Administrative Procedure Act," P.L.1968, c.410

1 (C.52:14B-1 et seq.) as may be necessary to effectuate the purposes
2 of this act.

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4 3. This act shall take effect immediately.

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STATEMENT

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9 The purpose of this bill is to require the Secretary of State to
10 establish a permanent public education program which explains the
11 procedure for requesting and receiving an absentee ballot.

12 The program shall take the form of public service announcements
13 suitable for radio or television broadcasting and instructional video
14 tapes of no longer than 30 minutes. Under the bill, the Secretary of
15 State would make certain that these materials are distributed free to
16 every commercial and public radio station and to every commercial,
17 public and cable television broadcasting station located in this State at
18 least two months prior to the date of the primary election and the date
19 of the general election. Any materials produced by the program would
20 also be available free to any individual, group, organization or
21 association interested in viewing, borrowing or exhibiting those
22 materials.

23 This bill is necessary because there is widespread public ignorance
24 about the availability of such ballots and different types which may be
25 used by a registered voter. Such ignorance stands in the way of
26 enabling a person who is not able to vote at his or her assigned polling
27 place on the day of an election to request and receive the type of
28 absentee ballot most suited to that voter's particular needs and
29 circumstance. The wider dissemination of information about such
30 ballots which would be provided by the program established by this bill
31 would help to make voting more convenient for many people and may
32 help to increase the number of people voting in an election.

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37 Establishes public education program which explains procedure for
38 requesting and receiving an absentee ballot.