

ASSEMBLY, No. 2952

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

INTRODUCED MAY 12, 1997

By Assemblyman ZECKER

1 AN ACT concerning the use at school elections of signature copy
2 registers and amending P.L.1995, c.278.

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

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7 1. Section 11 of P.L.1995, c.278 (C.19:60-11) is amended to read
8 as follows:

9 11. a. (1) The district board of election shall, for any school
10 election, utilize a poll list instead of the signature copy register. The
11 poll list shall be arranged in a column or columns appropriately headed
12 so as to indicate the election, the date thereof, and the school district
13 and election district in which the same is used, in such a manner that
14 each voter voting in the polling place at the election may sign the
15 voter's name and state the voter's address therein and the number of
16 the voter's official ballot may be indicated opposite the signature. The
17 district board shall compare the signature in the poll lists with that in
18 the signature copy registers before accepting the ballot.

19 If, in a municipality within which an annual school election is to be
20 conducted, no municipal election under the "Uniform Nonpartisan
21 Elections Law", P.L.1981, c.379 (C.40:45-5 et seq.), is to be held in
22 the same year, the governing body of that municipality may, by
23 resolution, request the use in that school election at each polling place
24 within the municipality of the signature comparison record contained
25 in the signature copy register, rather than a poll list as hereinabove
26 provided, as the place at which a voter in the school election shall sign
27 the voter's name for signature comparison purposes. The municipal
28 governing body shall transmit a certified copy of the resolution to the
29 commissioner of registration of the county on or before the 21st day
30 preceding the school election. Upon receipt of the certified copy of
31 such a resolution, the commissioner of registration shall provide that
32 only the signature copy registers are forwarded to the several district
33 boards serving within the municipality for use at that school election.
34 In any municipality, the governing body of which has adopted such a

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

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 resolution, the district board shall direct each voter in the school
2 election to sign the voter's name in the column of the signature
3 comparison record that is headed "any other elections".

4 (2) The provisions of paragraph (1) of this subsection shall not
5 apply at school elections in any county in which the commissioner of
6 registration has, in accordance with the provisions of section 2 of
7 P.L.1994, c.170 (C.19:31-3.3), authorized the use of polling records
8 in place of duplicate permanent registration binders. In those counties,
9 such polling records shall be used to perform the comparison of voters'
10 signatures at school elections.

11 b. If one polling place is designated for two or more election
12 districts pursuant to subsection b. of section 3 of P.L.1995, c.278
13 (C.19:60-3), the provisions of this section shall apply to the members
14 of the district boards of election designated to serve as the election
15 officers at the polling place for those election districts. The signature
16 copy registers and poll lists, if appropriate, or the polling records, for
17 those election districts shall be provided to those election officers.
18 (cf: P.L.1996, c.3, s.2)

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20 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

21 22 23 STATEMENT

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25 This bill permits, in certain cases, the use at the annual school
26 election of the signature comparison record used at other elections,
27 rather than a special school election poll list, as the record to be signed
28 by each voter in the election so that the signature can be compared
29 with the signature on the voter's registration record before the voter
30 is allowed to vote.

31 By law, the signature comparison record contains space for entry
32 of a voter's signature only for the primary, the general, and one "other"
33 election. In municipalities that elect their officers on a nonpartisan
34 basis at the May municipal election, the signature space designated for
35 "other" elections is used for that municipal election. Voters at school
36 elections, therefore, are required to use a separate poll list to record
37 their signatures for purposes of comparison with the signatures on
38 their registration records. This use of separate poll lists in conjunction
39 with the signature copy register that contains the registration record
40 specimen has proven at times to be cumbersome for school elections
41 officials and confusing to voters.

42 This bill provides that if, in a given year, there is to be held in a
43 municipality an annual school election but no nonpartisan municipal
44 election, the municipal governing body may request that at polling
45 places in the municipality, the "other election" space in the signature
46 comparison record be used instead of the "poll list" as the place where

1 voters at that school election sign their names before voting. The
2 commissioner of registration would have to honor such a request.

3 The bill also clarifies that a 1994 law (N.J.S.A.19:31-3.3)
4 permitting use at the polls of computer-generated "polling records" in
5 place of the signature copy registers applies to school elections as well
6 as other elections, including school elections at which poll lists would
7 otherwise be used.

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12 Permits use of signature copy register for signature comparison at
13 school elections in certain cases; clarifies that electronically generated
14 polling record may be used at such elections.