

# SENATE STATE GOVERNMENT, WAGERING, TOURISM & HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

## STATEMENT TO **SENATE, No. 3322**

with committee amendments

# STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: FEBRUARY 11, 2021

The Senate State Government, Wagering, Tourism and Historic Preservation Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments Senate Bill No. 3322.

As amended by the committee, this bill allows county boards of elections to determine the location of ballot drop boxes in each county by majority vote of its members.

Under current law, at least one ballot drop box must be placed at each of the following locations: any county government building in which the main office of the county clerk is located; any municipal government building in which the main office of the municipal clerk is located in municipalities with populations larger than 5,000 residents; the main campus of each county community college; the main campus of each State college or university; and the main campus of each independent four-year college or university with enrollments larger than 5,000 students. The bill removes these specific locational requirements.

Under the bill, as amended, each county board of elections would instead be allowed to determine the location of the ballot drop boxes. The locations would require approval by the majority of the board members. If there is a tie in the votes cast by the members of the board of elections, the county clerk would cast the deciding vote. Whenever possible, at least one ballot drop box would be located in a municipality with an average per capita income or a median family income at or below 250% of the federal poverty guideline according to the most recent federal American Community Survey. The bill prohibits a ballot drop box from being located inside, or within 100 feet of an entrance or exit, of a law enforcement agency.

The ballot drop box locations would be in compliance with existing provisions, such as the requirement to establish at least 10 ballot drop boxes and the provisions concerning drop box security, accessibility, population, and geographic distribution. The bill, as amended, adds travel time to the location, proximity to other voting locations and ballot drop boxes, and commuter traffic patterns to

the criteria required to be considered in the placement of ballot drop boxes to ensure adequate access in various geographic areas of the county.

COMMITTEE AMENDMENTS

The committee amended the bill to:

(1) require, whenever possible, at least one ballot drop box to be located in a municipality with an average per capita income or a median family income at or below 250% of the federal poverty guideline according to the most recent federal American Community Survey;

(2) prohibit a ballot drop box from being located inside, or within 100 feet of an entrance or exit, of a law enforcement agency; and

(3) add travel time to the location, proximity to other voting locations and ballot drop boxes, and commuter traffic patterns to the criteria required to be considered in the placement of ballot drop boxes to ensure adequate access in various geographic areas of the county.