

1 S.348

2 Introduced by Committee on Government Operations

3 Date: May 28, 2020

4 Subject: Elections; 2020 elections; Secretary of State; temporary elections
5 procedures

6 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: In response to COVID-19, this bill
7 proposes to amend 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 92, Sec. 3 to authorize the
8 Secretary of State, in consultation with the Governor, to order or permit
9 appropriate elections procedures for the purpose of protecting the health,
10 safety, and welfare of voters, elections workers, and candidates in carrying out
11 elections in the year 2020.

12 An act relating to temporary elections procedures in the year 2020

13 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

14 Sec. 1. 2020 Acts and Resolves No. 92, Sec. 3 is amended to read:

15 Sec. 3. ELECTIONS IN THE YEAR 2020; SECRETARY OF STATE;

16 GOVERNOR; TEMPORARY ELECTIONS PROCEDURES

17 (a) In the year 2020, the Secretary of State is authorized, in consultation
18 ~~and agreement~~ with the Governor, to order or permit, as applicable,
19 appropriate elections procedures for the purpose of protecting the health,

1 safety, and welfare of voters, elections workers, and candidates in carrying out
2 elections, including:

3 (1) requiring mail balloting by requiring town clerks to send ballots by
4 mail to all registered voters;

5 (2) creating early or mail ballot collection stations;

6 (3) permitting municipal clerks to process and begin counting ballots in
7 a 30-day window preceding the day of an election;

8 (4) permitting drive-up, car window collection of ballots by election
9 officials;

10 (5) extending the time for municipal clerks to process and count ballots;
11 and

12 (6) extending voting hours on the day of an election.

13 (b) For any temporary elections procedure the Secretary of State orders or
14 permits under this section, the Secretary shall adopt any necessary
15 corresponding procedures that ensure the public can monitor polling places
16 and the counting of votes.

(c) If the Secretary of State orders or permits the mailing of 2020 General Election ballots to all registered voters pursuant to subsection (a) of this section, the Secretary shall:

(1) inform the Governor as soon as reasonably practicable following the Secretary's decision to do so; and

(2) require the return of those ballots to be in the manner prescribed by 17 V.S.A. § 2543 (return of ballots) as set forth in Sec. 1a of this act, the provisions of which shall apply to that return.

1 Sec. 2. EFFECTIVE DATE

2 This act shall take effect on passage.