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1 TO THE HONORABLE SENATE:

2 The Committee on Government Operations to which was referred Senate
3 Bill No. 107 entitled “An act relating to elections corrections” respectfully
4 reports that it has considered the same and recommends that the bill be
5 amended by striking out all after the enacting clause and inserting in lieu
6 thereof the following:

7 * * * Ratification of Articles of Amendment to the Vermont Constitution * * *

8 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. chapter 32 is amended to read:

9 CHAPTER 32. PUBLICATION AND RATIFICATION OF ARTICLES OF
10 AMENDMENT TO VERMONT CONSTITUTION

11 * * *

12 § 1842. TIME OF VOTING; WARNING

13 (a) The people shall be assembled for the purpose of voting on the article of
14 amendment in their respective towns and cities at the same time and place as
15 for the general election, on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in
16 November, in even-numbered years, and the warning for each meeting shall
17 contain an article, in substance as follows:

18 “To see if the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters will vote to accept or reject
19 the proposed article of amendment to the Constitution of Vermont.”

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1 (b) The omission of that article from the warning shall not invalidate nor
2 affect the vote on the proposed article of amendment, and the ~~freemen and~~
3 ~~freewomen~~ voters of each town or city shall vote on the article of amendment
4 whether the warning contains the foregoing article or not.

5 § 1843. PROCESS OF VOTING; MAKING RETURNS; CONDUCT OF
6 MEETINGS

7 (a)(1) At those meetings the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters may vote by
8 ballot for or against the article of amendment.

9 (2) The same officer shall preside in each such meeting as provided in
10 section 2680 of this title.

11 (b) The board of civil authority shall, in open meeting, receive, sort, and
12 count the votes of the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters for and against the article
13 of amendment and the result shall be declared by the presiding officer. That
14 result shall be recorded by the clerk of the town or city and true returns thereof
15 shall be made, sealed up and sent by the clerk by mail or otherwise to the
16 Secretary of State as provided in section 2588 of this title.

17 (c) The ~~ballot boxes for the reception of votes~~ polls for voting on the article
18 of amendment shall be ~~opened and shall close~~ open as provided in section 2561
19 of this title.

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1 § 1844. PUBLICATION IN NEWSPAPERS AND ON STATE WEBSITES;
2 BALLOTS

3 (a)(1) The Secretary of State shall, between September 25 and October 1 in
4 any year in which a vote on ratification of an article of amendment is taken,
5 prepare copies of the proposal of amendment and forward them, with a
6 summary of proposed changes, for publication in at least two newspapers
7 having general circulation in the State, as determined by the Secretary of State.

8 (2) The proposal shall be so published once each week for three
9 successive weeks in each of the papers at the expense of the State and on the
10 websites of the General Assembly and the Office of the Secretary of State.

11 (b) The Secretary of State shall cause ballots to be prepared for a vote by
12 the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters of the State upon the proposal of
13 amendment.

14 § 1845. QUALIFICATIONS OF VOTERS; CHECKLISTS, BOOTHS,
15 CLERKS

16 The qualifications of voters on the proposal of amendment, the checklist
17 requirements for the election, and all other provisions relating to the conduct of
18 the election shall be the same as those required ~~of voters~~ at general elections
19 ~~under sections 2121-2126 of this title and sections 2141-2150 of this title~~
20 ~~relating to checklists shall apply, but the checklist specified in section 2141 of~~

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1 ~~this title to be used at the meetings under this act shall be prepared and posted~~
2 ~~at least 30 days before the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November, in~~
3 ~~even-numbered years. Voting booths shall be prepared and the ballot clerks~~
4 ~~and assisting clerks shall be appointed, as in case of general elections.~~

5 § 1846. FAILURE TO POST CHECKLISTS

6 The failure of the selectboard of any town, or the proper officers of any city,
7 to prepare and post checklists of the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters of the
8 town or city ~~at least 30 days before the first Tuesday after the first Monday in~~
9 ~~November, in even-numbered years,~~ as provided by section ~~1845~~ 2141 of this
10 title, shall not invalidate the votes given by the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters
11 of the town or city upon the proposed article of amendment.

12 * * *

13 § 1848. TABULATION OF RETURNS; RECORD OF AMENDMENTS

14 The Governor and Secretary of State shall, on the second Tuesday of
15 December, of the year in which a vote on ratification of an article of
16 amendment is taken, open and tabulate the returns made under section 1843 of
17 this ~~title~~ chapter; and if it appears therefrom that the article of amendment has
18 been ratified and adopted by a majority of the ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters
19 voting thereon, the amendment shall be enrolled on the parchment and
20 deposited in the office of the Secretary of State as a part of the Constitution of

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1 this State and shall, in all future official revisions of the laws, be published in
2 immediate connection therewith.

3 § 1849. PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR

4 The Governor shall thereupon forthwith issue his or her proclamation,
5 attested by the Secretary of State, reciting the article of amendment and
6 announcing the ratification and adoption of it by the people of this State under
7 this chapter and that the amendment has become a part of the Constitution
8 thereof and requiring all ~~magistrates and~~ officers, and all citizens of the State
9 to take notice thereof and govern themselves accordingly; or that the article of
10 amendment has been rejected, as the case may be.

11 § 1850. TRANSMISSION OF COPIES OF ~~ACT~~ CHAPTER AND FORMS
12 TO CLERKS

13 (a) The Secretary of State shall send to the clerk of each city and town a
14 copy of this ~~act~~ chapter at least two months before the vote on the ratification
15 of an article of amendment.

16 (b) In any year in which a vote on ratification of an article of amendment is
17 taken, the Secretary of State shall, within the period prescribed by section 1844
18 of this ~~title~~ chapter, send to the clerk of each city and town ballots provided for
19 in that section ~~1844 of this title~~ and blank forms for the returns of votes on the
20 article of amendment.

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1 Sec. 3. 17 V.S.A. § 1901 is amended to read:

2 § 1901. PURPOSE

3 (a) The Supreme Court of the United States has ruled that the Equal
4 Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
5 requires all state legislative bodies to be apportioned in such manner as to
6 achieve substantially equal weighting of the votes of all voters in the choice of
7 legislators.

8 (b) To comply with such requirement it will be necessary to reapportion the
9 House of Representatives and Senate at periodic intervals, so that changes may
10 be recognized in legislative apportionment.

11 (c) It is the purpose of this chapter to achieve such reapportionment in an
12 orderly and impartial manner.

13 Sec. 4. 17 V.S.A. § 1909 is amended to read:

14 § 1909. REVIEW

15 (a) Within 30 days of the effective date of any apportionment bill enacted
16 pursuant to section 1906b, 1906c, or 1907 of this ~~title~~ chapter, any five or more
17 ~~freemen and freewomen~~ voters of the State aggrieved by the plan or act may
18 petition the Supreme Court of Vermont for review of same.

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1 (D) The applicant's street address or a description of the physical
2 location of the applicant's residence. The description must contain sufficient
3 information so that the town clerk can determine whether the applicant is a
4 resident of the town.

5 (E) The voter's oath.

6 (F) The applicant's e-mail address, which shall be optional to
7 provide.

8 (2) A motor vehicle driver's license or nondriver identification card
9 application shall provide the following statements:

10 (A) "By signing and submitting this application, you are authorizing
11 the Department of Motor Vehicles to transmit this application to the Secretary
12 of State for voter registration purposes. **YOU MAY DECLINE TO**
13 **REGISTER.** Both the office through which you submit this application and
14 your decision of whether or not to register will remain confidential and will be
15 used for voter registration purposes only."

16 (B) "In order to be registered to vote, you must: (1) be a U.S. citizen;
17 (2) be a resident of Vermont; (3) have taken the voter's oath; and (4) be 18
18 years of age or older. Any person meeting the requirements of (1)-(3) who will
19 be 18 years of age on or before the date of a general election may register and
20 vote in the primary election immediately preceding that general election.

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1 Failure to decline to register is an attestation that you meet the requirements to
2 vote.”

3 (3) A motor vehicle driver’s license or nondriver identification card
4 application shall provide the penalties provided by law for submission of a
5 false voter registration application and shall require the signature of the
6 applicant, under penalty of perjury.

7 (c) An application for voter registration under this section shall update any
8 previous voter registration by the applicant. Any change of address form
9 submitted to the Department of Motor Vehicles in connection with an
10 application for a motor vehicle driver’s license shall serve to update voter
11 registration information previously provided by the voter, unless the voter
12 states on the form that the change of address is not for voter registration
13 purposes.

14 (d)(1) The Department of Motor Vehicles shall transmit motor vehicle
15 driver’s license and nondriver identification card applications received under
16 this section to the Secretary of State not later than five days after the date the
17 application was accepted by the Department, or before the date of any primary
18 or general election, whichever is sooner.

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1 ~~(3) accept completed voter registration applications and transmit~~
2 ~~completed applications to the Secretary of State not later than 10 days after the~~
3 ~~date of acceptance, or before the date of any primary or general election,~~
4 ~~whichever is sooner.~~

5 ~~(b) The Secretary shall promptly transmit applications received under this~~
6 ~~section to the clerks of the appropriate municipalities.~~

7 ~~(c)(1) A voter registration agency shall provide each applicant who does~~
8 ~~not decline to register to vote the same degree of assistance with regard to the~~
9 ~~completion of the voter registration application that the office provides with~~
10 ~~regard to the completion of its own forms, unless the applicant refuses such~~
11 ~~assistance.~~

12 ~~(2) If an agency provides services to a person with a disability at~~
13 ~~the person's home, the agency shall provide the services described in~~
14 ~~subsection (a) of this section at the person's home.~~

15 ~~(d) The Secretary of State shall designate voter registration agencies that~~
16 ~~shall provide qualified applicants for such agency's services, or qualified~~
17 ~~inmates within the custody of the Department of Corrections, with automatic~~
18 ~~voter registration as an integrated option on application forms for services or~~
19 ~~benefits provided by those agencies. Prior to making any designation under~~
20 ~~this subsection, the Secretary of State shall consult with the secretary or~~

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1 ~~commissioner of each voter registration agency to determine the feasibility of~~
2 ~~integrating automatic voter registration into that voter registration agency's~~
3 ~~normal course of business and to determine a reasonable timetable to complete~~
4 ~~such integration where the Secretary deems appropriate.~~

5 ~~(1) Such designations shall be limited to those voter registration~~
6 ~~agencies or specific programs administered by such agencies that, in the~~
7 ~~regular course of such agency's business, already collect and verify documents~~
8 ~~necessary to provide proof of an individual's eligibility to vote under~~
9 ~~subchapter 1 of this chapter.~~

10 ~~(2) On or before January 1 of each year, the Secretary shall:~~

11 ~~(A) publish on his or her official website a list of voter registration~~
12 ~~agencies designated under this subsection;~~

13 ~~(B) specify which programs or services offered by each agency are~~
14 ~~included within the designation; and~~

15 ~~(C) establish for each such newly designated agency the date by~~
16 ~~which its specified programs or services must comply with requirements of this~~
17 ~~subsection.~~

18 ~~(3) Following the date for compliance established by the Secretary for~~
19 ~~an agency's specified programs or services established under subdivision~~
20 ~~(2)(C) of this subsection, an application for services or benefits and any change~~

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1 ~~of address form related to those services or benefits provided by the agency~~
2 ~~shall provide and request the following information and shall be in the form~~
3 ~~approved by the Secretary of State:~~

4 ~~(A) The applicant's citizenship.~~

5 ~~(B) The applicant's date of birth.~~

6 ~~(C) The applicant's town of legal residence.~~

7 ~~(D) The applicant's street address or a description of the physical~~
8 ~~location of the applicant's residence. The description must contain sufficient~~
9 ~~information so that the town clerk can determine whether the applicant is a~~
10 ~~resident of the town.~~

11 ~~(E) The voter's oath.~~

12 ~~(F) The applicant's e-mail address, which shall be optional to provide.~~

13 ~~(4) An application for a designated automatic voter registration agency's~~
14 ~~services shall provide the following statements:~~

15 ~~(A) "By signing and submitting this application, you are authorizing~~
16 ~~the Department of Motor Vehicles to transmit this application to the Secretary~~
17 ~~of State for voter registration purposes. **YOU MAY DECLINE TO**~~
18 ~~**REGISTER.** Both the office through which you submit this application and~~
19 ~~your decision of whether or not to register will remain confidential and will be~~
20 ~~used for voter registration purposes only."~~

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1 ~~Administration shall provide the Secretary of State any assistance that is~~
2 ~~necessary to ensure the cooperation of voter registration agencies in~~
3 ~~implementing any remedial measures the Secretary of State requires under this~~
4 ~~subsection.~~

5 Sec. 7. 17 V.S.A. § 2150 is amended to read:

6 § 2150. REMOVING NAMES FROM CHECKLIST

7 * * *

8 (d) Except as provided in subsection (a) of this section, a board of civil
9 authority shall only remove a name from the checklist in accordance with the
10 following procedure:

11 (1) If the board of civil authority is satisfied that a voter whose
12 eligibility is being considered is still qualified to vote in the municipality, the
13 voter's name shall remain on the checklist, and no further action shall be taken.

14 (2)(A)(i) If the board of civil authority does not immediately know that
15 the voter is still qualified to vote in the municipality, the board shall attempt to
16 determine with certainty what the true status of the voter's eligibility is.

17 (ii) The board of civil authority may consider and rely upon
18 official and unofficial public records and documents, including telephone
19 directories, city directories, newspapers, death certificates, obituary (or other

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1 public notice of death), tax records, and any checklist or checklists showing
2 persons who voted in any election within the last four years.

3 (iii) The board of civil authority may also designate one or more
4 persons to attempt to contact the voter personally.

5 (B) Any voter whom the board of civil authority finds through such
6 inquiry to be eligible to remain on the checklist shall be retained without
7 further action being taken.

8 (C) The name of any voter proven to be deceased shall be removed
9 from the checklist.

10 (3)(A)(i) If after conducting its inquiry the board of civil authority or
11 town clerk is unable to locate a voter whose name is on the checklist, or if the
12 inquiry reveals facts indicating that the voter may no longer be eligible to vote
13 in the municipality, the board of civil authority or, upon request of the board,
14 the town clerk shall send a written notice to the voter.

15 (ii) The notice shall be sent by first-class mail to the most recent
16 known address of the voter, asking the voter to verify his or her current
17 eligibility to vote in the municipality.

18 (iii) The notice shall be sent with the required U.S. Postal Service
19 language for requesting change of address information.

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1 (B) Enclosed with the notice shall be a postage paid pre-addressed
2 return form on which the voter may reply swearing or affirming the voter's
3 current place of residence as the municipality in question or alternatively
4 consenting to the removal of the voter's name.

5 (C) The notice required by this subsection shall also include the
6 following:

7 ~~(A)~~(i) A statement informing the voter that if the voter has not
8 changed his or her residence, or if the voter has changed his or her residence
9 but the change was within the area covered by the checklist, the voter should
10 return the form to the town clerk's office. The statement shall also inform the
11 voter that if he or she fails to return the form as provided in this subdivision,
12 written affirmation of the voter's address shall be required before the voter is
13 permitted to vote.

14 ~~(B)~~(ii) Information concerning how the voter can register to vote in
15 another state or another municipality within this State.

16 (4) If the voter confirms in writing that the voter has changed his or her
17 residence to a place outside the area covered by the checklist, the board of civil
18 authority shall remove the voter's name from the checklist.

19 (5) In the case of voters who failed to respond to the notice sent
20 pursuant to subdivision (3) of this subsection, the board of civil authority shall

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1 remove the voter's name from the checklist on the day after the second general
2 election following the date of such notice, if the voter has not voted or
3 appeared to vote in an election since the notice was sent or has not otherwise
4 demonstrated his or her eligibility to remain on the checklist.

5 (6)(A) Notwithstanding the provisions of subdivision (5) of this
6 subsection, if at any time subsequent to removal of a person's name from the
7 checklist, the board determines that the person was still qualified to vote and
8 that the voter's name should not have been removed, the board shall add the
9 person's name to the checklist as provided in section 2147 of this ~~title~~ chapter.

10 (B) The provisions of this chapter shall be liberally construed, so that
11 if there is any reasonable doubt whether a person's name should have been
12 removed from the checklist, the person shall have the right to have the person's
13 name immediately returned to the checklist.

14 (7)(A) The board of civil authority shall keep detailed records of its
15 proceedings under this subchapter for at least two years. These records, except
16 records relating to a person's decision not to register to vote or to the identity
17 of the voter registration agency through which any particular voter registered,
18 shall be public records and shall be available for inspection and copying at
19 actual cost. The records shall include:

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1 ~~(A)~~(i) in the case of each name removed from the checklist, a clear
2 statement of the reason or reasons for which the name was removed;

3 ~~(B)~~(ii) in the case of the updating of the checklist required by
4 subsection (c) of this section, the working copy or copies of the checklist used
5 in the name by name review conducted to ascertain continued eligibility to
6 vote;

7 ~~(C)~~(iii) the total number of new registrations occurring during the
8 period between general elections;

9 ~~(D)~~(iv) the total number of persons removed from the checklist
10 during the period between general elections; and

11 ~~(E)~~(v) lists of the names and addresses of all persons to whom notices
12 were sent under this subsection, and information concerning whether or not
13 each person to whom a notice was sent responded to the notice as of the date
14 that inspection of the records is made.

15 (B)(i) A letter certifying compliance with this section shall be filed
16 with the Secretary of State by September 20 of each odd-numbered year.

17 (ii) Upon request of any Superior judge or upon request of the
18 Secretary of State, the town clerk shall forward a certified copy of the records
19 of checklist maintenance.

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1 a caucus on the day designated by the State chair, in some public place within
2 the town and shall set the hour of the caucus.

3 (b)(1) At least five days before the day of the caucus, the town chair shall
4 post a notice of the date, purpose, time, and place of the caucus in the town
5 clerk's office and in at least one other public place in town.

6 (2) In towns of ~~3,000~~ 5,000 or more population, he or she shall also
7 publish the notice:

8 (A) in a newspaper having general circulation in the town; or

9 (B) in a nonpartisan electronic news media website or online forum
10 that specializes in news of the State or the community.

11 (c) If three voters arrange to call the caucus, the voters shall designate one
12 person among them to perform the duties prescribed in subsection (b) of this
13 section for the town chair.

14 § 2304. TOWN CAUCUS

15 (a)(1) At the time and place set for the town caucus, the voters of the party
16 residing in the town shall meet in caucus and proceed to elect a town
17 committee, consisting of such number of voters of the town as the caucus
18 deems necessary, to serve during the following two years or until their
19 successors are elected or appointed.

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1 (2) Additional members of a town committee may be elected by the
2 town committee at any meeting, and may be eligible to vote on matters before
3 the town committee at that meeting or at the next meeting, as determined by
4 the members of the committee before the election.

5 (b) The voter checklist used by the caucus shall be the most recent
6 checklist approved by the board of civil authority.

7 § 2305. FIRST MEETING OF TOWN COMMITTEE

8 (a)(1) The first meeting of the town committee shall be held immediately
9 following adjournment of the caucus.

10 (2) At this meeting, members of the town committee shall elect
11 committee officers and delegates to the county committee.

12 (b) All officers and other members of the town committee and all delegates
13 to the county committee shall be voters of the town.

14 § 2306. PROCEDURE UPON FAILURE TO HOLD CAUCUS

15 If the voters of the party residing in any town fail to hold a caucus on the
16 day designated by the State ~~chairman~~ chair, any three or more voters of the
17 party residing in the town may call and hold a caucus at any time thereafter, in
18 the manner provided ~~above~~ in sections 2303 through 2305 of this chapter.

19 Those voters calling the caucus shall designate one ~~of their number~~ person

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1 among them to perform the duties prescribed ~~above~~ in section 2303 for the
2 town chair.

3 § 2307. CERTIFICATION OF OFFICERS AND COUNTY COMMITTEE

4 DELEGATES

5 (a) Within 72 hours after the caucus, the chair and secretary of the town
6 committee shall ~~mail~~ submit to the ~~Secretary of State and the~~ chairs of the
7 State and county committees a copy of the notice calling the meeting and a
8 certified list of the names, ~~and~~ mailing addresses, phone numbers, and emails
9 of the officers and members of the town committee and of the delegates to the
10 county committee.

11 (b) A committee is not considered organized until a certificate of
12 organization is filed by the State committee with the Secretary of State
13 pursuant to section 2313 of this chapter. ~~it has filed the material required by~~
14 ~~this section.~~

15 (c) The Secretary of State shall furnish forms for this purpose to the chair
16 of the State committee of a political party.

17 § 2308. COMPOSITION OF COUNTY COMMITTEE

18 (a) The number of delegates to the county committee that each town caucus
19 is entitled to elect shall be apportioned by the State committee, ~~based upon the~~

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1 ~~number of votes cast for the party's candidate for Governor in the last election,~~
2 provided that each town caucus shall be entitled to elect at least two delegates.

3 (b) Delegates to the county committee shall be voters of the town, but need
4 not be members of the town committee; ~~they.~~

5 (c) Delegates shall serve ~~during the following~~ for two years following their
6 election or until their successors are elected or appointed.

7 § 2309. FIRST MEETING OF COUNTY COMMITTEE

8 (a)(1) The chair of the State committee shall set a date, ~~not more than 45~~
9 ~~days after the date of the party's caucuses,~~ for the first meeting of each county
10 committee.

11 (2) The State chair shall notify the chairs of the county committees of
12 the date of the meeting.

13 (3)(A) The chair of the county committee shall set the hour and place of
14 the meeting and shall notify all delegates-elect by mail or electronic mail not
15 less than 10 days prior to the meeting.

16 (B) If the chair of the county committee receives notice that a town
17 committee within the county has organized 10 or fewer days before the date of
18 the first meeting of the county committee, the chair ~~must~~ shall notify the newly
19 elected members within 48 hours of receiving notice of the organized town
20 committee.

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1 (b)(1) At the time and place set for the meeting, the delegates shall proceed
2 to elect their officers and perfect an organization of the county committee for
3 the ensuing two years.

4 (2) All officers and other members of the county committee and all
5 delegates to the State committee shall be voters of the county.

6 § 2310. ELECTION OF STATE COMMITTEE

7 (a)(1) The chair of the county committee shall be a member of the State
8 committee.

9 (2) Each county committee shall be entitled to elect at least two
10 additional members of the State committee. These delegates need not be
11 members of the county committee.

12 (3) If the rules or bylaws of a State committee provide for
13 apportionment of additional members of the State committee to come from the
14 county, the county committee also shall elect those additional members.

15 (b) All county committee members and officers and all persons elected to
16 the State committee shall be voters in the county from which they are elected.

17 (c) County committee members and delegates to the State committee shall
18 serve for ~~the following~~ two years following their election or until their
19 successors are elected or appointed.

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1 § 2311. CERTIFICATION OF COUNTY OFFICERS AND STATE
2 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

3 (a) Within 72 hours of the first meeting of the county committee, its chair
4 and secretary shall ~~mail~~ submit to ~~the Secretary of State and~~ the chair of the
5 State committee a copy of the notice calling the meeting and a certified list of
6 the names, ~~and mailing addresses,~~ phone numbers, and emails of the officers of
7 the county committee and of the members elected by the county committee to
8 the State committee.

9 (b) A committee is not considered organized until a certificate of
10 organization is filed by the State committee with the Secretary of State
11 pursuant to section 2313 of this chapter. ~~it has filed the material required by~~
12 ~~this section.~~

13 (c) The Secretary of State shall prescribe and furnish forms for this
14 purpose.

15 § 2312. FIRST MEETING OF THE STATE COMMITTEE

16 (a) The chair of the State committee shall name an hour and place of
17 meeting ~~on a day not less than 15 nor more than 30 days after the day set for~~
18 ~~the first meeting of the county committee of the party,~~ at which time the

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1 members-elect of the State committee shall meet and perfect an organization of of
2 the State committee for the ensuing two years.

3 (b) The chair of the State committee shall notify all members-elect of the
4 State committee in writing, at least ~~seven~~ ten days before the day set for the
5 meeting.

6 § 2313. FILING OF CERTIFICATE OF ORGANIZATION

7 (a)(1) Within 10 days after the first meeting of the State committee of a
8 party, the chair and secretary shall file in the office of the Secretary of State a
9 certificate stating that the party has completed its organization for the ensuing
10 two years and has substantially complied with the provisions of this chapter.

11 (2) However, no State committee shall be eligible to file a certificate of
12 organization unless it has town committees organized in at least 30 towns in
13 this State and county committees organized in at least seven counties by
14 January 1 of the year of the general election.

15 (b) The certificate of organization shall:

16 (1) set forth the names, ~~and~~ mailing addresses, phone numbers, and
17 emails of the officers and members of the State committee, together with the
18 counties that they represent. ~~It shall also;~~

19 (2) contain a listing of the towns and counties in which committees have
20 organized

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1 the platform of the party. ~~In presidential years, the convention shall be the~~
2 ~~same convention held to nominate presidential electors.~~

3 * * *

4 * * * Nominations * * *

5 Sec. 9. 17 V.S.A. chapter 49 is amended to read:

6 CHAPTER 49. NOMINATIONS

7 Subchapter 1. Primary Elections

8 * * *

9 § 2353. PETITIONS TO PLACE NAMES ON BALLOT

10 (a) The name of any person shall be printed upon the primary ballot as a
11 candidate for nomination by any major political party for ~~any~~ the office
12 indicated, if ~~petitions~~ a petition containing the requisite number of signatures
13 made by registered voters, in substantially the following form, ~~are~~ is filed with
14 the proper official, together with the person's written consent to having his or
15 her name printed on the ballot:

16 * * *

17 (b)(1) A person's name shall not be listed as a candidate on the primary
18 ballot of more than one party in the same election.

19 (2) A single petition shall contain only one office for which a person
20 seeks to be a candidate.

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1 (1) The canvassing committee for State and national offices and
2 statewide public questions shall meet at 10 a.m. one week after the day of the
3 election.

4 (2) The canvassing committee for county offices ~~and~~, countywide public
5 questions, and State Senator shall meet at 10 a.m. on the third day following
6 the election.

7 (3) The canvassing committees for local offices ~~and~~, local public
8 questions, ~~including~~ and State Representative, shall meet at 10 a.m. on the day
9 after the election, except that in the case of canvassing committees for State
10 Representative in multi-town representative districts, the committees shall
11 meet at 10 a.m. on the third day after the election.

12 § 2369. DETERMINING WINNER; TIE VOTES

13 (a) A person who receives a plurality of all the votes cast by a party in a
14 primary shall be a candidate of that party for the office designated on the
15 ballot.

16 (b)(1) If, after the period for requesting a recount under section 2602 of this
17 title has expired, no candidate has requested a recount and two or more
18 candidates of the same party are tied for the same office, or if the results of any
19 recount result in a tie the choice among those tied shall be determined upon
20 five days' notice and not later than 10 days following the primary election by

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1 the committee of that party, which shall meet to nominate a candidate from
2 among the tied candidates. The committee that nominates a candidate shall be
3 as follows:

- 4 (A) the State committee of a party for a State or congressional office;
5 (B) the senatorial district committee for State Senate;
6 (C) the county committee for county office; or
7 (D) the representative district committee for a Representative to the
8 General Assembly.

9 (2) The committee chair shall certify the candidate nomination for the
10 general election to the Secretary of State within 48 hours of the nomination.

11 * * *

12 § 2370. WRITE-IN CANDIDATES

13 (a)(1) In order to have votes counted for a write-in candidate under section
14 2587 of this title, not later than 5:00 p.m. on the ~~second~~ Friday preceding the
15 primary election, a write-in candidate shall file with the Secretary of State a
16 form consenting to candidacy for office. The consent form shall set forth the
17 name of the write-in candidate, the name of the office for which he or she
18 consents to be a candidate, the candidate's town of residence, and his or her
19 correct mailing address.

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1 (d)(1) A statement of nomination and a completed and signed consent form
2 shall be filed:

3 * * *

4 (C) in the case of any other independent candidate, not earlier than
5 the fourth Monday in April and not later than 5:00 p.m. on the ~~Thursday~~
6 ~~preceding~~ Friday following the primary election prescribed by section 2351 of
7 this chapter, and not later than 5:00 p.m. ~~of the third day prior to~~ on the day of
8 Friday following a special primary election.

9 * * *

10 **§ 2403. NUMBER OF CANDIDATES; PARTY NAMES**

11 (a) A statement of nomination shall contain the name of only one
12 candidate, except in the case of presidential and vice presidential candidates,
13 who may be nominated by means of the same statement of nomination. ~~A~~
14 ~~person shall not sign more than one statement of nomination for the same~~
15 ~~office.~~

16 * * *

17 Subchapter 4. Miscellaneous Provisions

18 * * *

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1 ~~§ 2412a. INCOMPATIBLE OFFICES; CHOICE OF CANDIDACY~~

2 ~~(a) A candidate who has been validly nominated by one of the methods~~
3 ~~prescribed in this chapter for two or more offices that are incompatible under~~
4 ~~Vt. Const. Ch. II, § 54 shall be required to choose the one incompatible office~~
5 ~~for which he or she will be a candidate. A person may be a candidate for only~~
6 ~~one incompatible office.~~

7 ~~(b)(1) Such a candidate shall notify the Secretary of State of the candidate's~~
8 ~~choice on or before 5:00 p.m. on the tenth day following the primary.~~

9 ~~(2) If a candidate fails to notify the Secretary by that deadline, the~~
10 ~~Secretary shall provide on the ballot that the person is a candidate for the first~~
11 ~~incompatible office named in the list set forth in Vt. Const. Ch. II, § 54 for~~
12 ~~which the candidate was validly nominated.~~

13 * * *

14 § 2414. CANDIDATES FOR STATE AND LEGISLATIVE OFFICE;

15 DISCLOSURE FORM

16 * * *

17 (d)(1) A senatorial district clerk or representative district clerk who
18 receives a disclosure form under this section shall forward a copy of the
19 disclosure to the Secretary of State within three business days of receiving it.

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1 ~~Sec. 12. 17 V.S.A. § 2474 is amended to read:~~

2 ~~§ 2474. CHOICE OF PARTY~~

3 ~~(a)(1) A person nominated by any means for the same office by more than~~
4 ~~one political party may shall elect, not later than 5:00 p.m. on the tenth day~~
5 ~~following the primary election, the party or parties in for which the nominee~~
6 ~~will be a candidate. A person may only be a candidate for one political party.~~
7 ~~The nominee shall notify in writing the Secretary of State or town clerk, as the~~
8 ~~case may be, of such choice by that deadline, and only the party or parties that~~
9 ~~the nominee so elects shall be printed next to the nominee's name on the ballot.~~

10 ~~(2) If the nominee does not notify the Secretary of State or the town~~
11 ~~clerk of his or her choice of party, the Secretary of State shall print on the~~
12 ~~ballot those parties next to the nominee's name by listing the first party that~~
13 ~~would apply as set forth in this order:~~

14 ~~(A) the major political party for which the nominee had his or her~~
15 ~~name printed on the ballot in the primary;~~

16 ~~(B) any the major political parties party that nominated the nominee~~
17 ~~by the party committee, in the order in which the nominations were submitted~~
18 ~~to the Secretary of State;~~

19 ~~(C) any the major political parties party for which the nominee~~
20 ~~received write in votes, in an order from highest to lowest vote counts; and~~

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1 ~~(D) any the minor political parties party that nominated the nominee~~
2 ~~by party committee, in the order in which the nominations were submitted to~~
3 ~~the Secretary of State.~~

4 ~~(b)(1) A candidate for State office who is the nominee of two or more~~
5 ~~political parties shall file with the Secretary of State, not later than 5:00 p.m.~~
6 ~~the tenth day following the primary election, a statement designating for which~~
7 ~~party the votes cast for him or her shall be counted for the purposes of~~
8 ~~determining whether his or her designated party shall be a major political~~
9 ~~party. The party so designated shall be the first party to be printed~~
10 ~~immediately after the candidate's name on the ballot.~~

11 ~~(2) If a candidate does not file the statement by that deadline, the~~
12 ~~Secretary of State shall designate the party for which the votes cast shall be~~
13 ~~counted as provided in subdivision (a)(2) of this section. [Repealed.]~~

14 Sec. 13. 17 V.S.A. § 2508 is amended to read:

15 § 2508. CAMPAIGNING DURING POLLING HOURS; VOTER ACCESS

16 (a)(1) The presiding officer shall ensure during polling hours on the day of
17 the election that:

18 (A) within the building containing a polling place, no campaign
19 literature, stickers, buttons, name stamps, information on write-in candidates,
20 or other political materials ~~containing a reference to~~ **that display the name of a**

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1 candidate on the ballot or an organized political party; or that demonstrate
2 support or opposition to a question the ballot; ~~or organized political party~~ are
3 displayed, placed, handed out, or allowed to remain;

4 (B) within the building containing a polling place, no candidate,
5 election official, or other person distributes election materials, solicits voters
6 regarding an item or candidate on the ballot, or otherwise campaigns; and

7 (C) on the walks and driveways leading to a building in which a
8 polling place is located, no candidate or other person physically interferes with
9 the progress of a voter to and from the polling place.

10 (2) The provisions of subdivision (1) of this subsection shall apply to the
11 town clerk's office during any period of early or absentee voting.

12 (b) During polling hours, the presiding officer shall control the placement
13 of signs on the property of the polling place in a fair manner.

14 (c) The provisions of this section shall be posted in the notice required by
15 section 2521 of this ~~title~~ chapter.

16 * * * Early or Absentee Voters * * *

17 Sec. 14. 17 V.S.A. chapter 51, subchapter 6 is amended to read:

18 Subchapter 6. Early or Absentee Voters

19 § 2531. APPLICATION FOR EARLY VOTER ABSENTEE BALLOT

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1 (a) Deadline to file.

2 (1)(A) A voter who expects to be an early or absentee voter, or an
3 authorized person on behalf of such voter, may apply for an early voter
4 absentee ballot until 5:00 p.m. or the closing of the town clerk's office on the
5 day preceding the election.

6 ~~(2)(B)~~ If a town clerk does not have regular office hours on the day
7 before the election and his or her office will not otherwise be open on that day,
8 an application may be filed until the closing of the clerk's office on the last day
9 that office has hours preceding the election.

10 (2)(A) In cases of emergency, including unanticipated illness or injury,
11 at his or her discretion the town clerk may accept a request for an absentee
12 ballot after the deadline set forth in subdivision (1) of this subsection.

13 (B) In such cases of emergency, the ballot may be mailed,
14 electronically delivered, or delivered by two justices of the peace as set forth in
15 subsection 2539(b) of this subchapter.

16 (b) Place of filing.

17 (1) All applications shall be filed with the town clerk of the town in
18 which the early or absentee voter is registered to vote.

19 (2) The town clerk shall file written applications and memoranda of
20 verbal applications in his or her office, and shall retain the applications and

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1 memoranda for 90 days following the election, at which time they may be
2 destroyed.

3 (c) Australian ballot. Voting by early voter absentee ballot shall be allowed
4 only in elections using the Australian ballot system.

5 § 2532. ~~APPLICATIONS~~ AUTHORIZED APPLICANTS; APPLICATION
6 FORM; DUPLICATES

7 (a) Authorized applicants.

8 (1)(A) An early or absentee voter, or an authorized family member or
9 health care provider acting in the voter's behalf, may apply for an early voter
10 absentee ballot by telephone, in person, or in writing. "Family member" here
11 means a person's spouse, children, brothers, sisters, parents, spouse's parents,
12 grandparents, and spouse's grandparents.

13 (B) Any other authorized person may apply in writing or in person;
14 provided, however, that voter authorization to such a person shall not be given
15 by response to a robotic phone call.

16 (b)(2) Form of application.

17 (1) The application shall be in substantially the following form:

18 REQUEST FOR EARLY VOTER ABSENTEE BALLOT

19 Name of early or absentee voter: _____

20 Voter's Town of Residence: _____

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1 Current physical address (address where you reside): _____

2 _____

3 Telephone Number: _____ E-mail Address: _____

4 Date: _____

5 I request early voter absentee ballot(s) for the election(s) checked below:

6 (1) Annual Town Meeting;

7 (2) All other local elections;

8 (3) August Primary Election;

9 (4) Presidential Primary (YOU MUST SELECT PARTY);

10 (5) November General Election;

11 (6) All elections in this calendar year.

12 Please deliver the ballot(s) as indicated below (check one):

13 (1) Mail to voter at: _____

14 _____ Street or P.O. Box Town/City State Zip Code

15 (2) Delivery by two Justices of the Peace (this may only be selected if

16 you are ill ~~or if you~~, injured, or have a ~~physical~~ disability).

17 If applicant is other than early or absentee voter:

18 Name of applicant: _____

19 Address of applicant: _____

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1 Relationship to early or absentee voter: _____

2 Organization, if applicable: _____

3 Date: _____ Signature of applicant: _____

4 ~~(3)~~(2) If the application is made by telephone or in writing, the
5 information supplied ~~must~~ shall be in substantial conformance with the
6 information requested on this form.

7 ~~(b) A person temporarily residing in a foreign country who is eligible to~~
8 ~~register to vote in this State, or a military service absentee voter who is eligible~~
9 ~~to register to vote in this State, may apply for early voter absentee ballots in the~~
10 ~~same manner and within the same time limits that apply for other early or~~
11 ~~absentee voters. An official federal postcard application shall suffice as a~~
12 ~~simultaneous request for an application for addition to the checklist and for an~~
13 ~~early voter absentee ballot, when properly submitted. Any other person also~~
14 ~~may make a simultaneous request for an application for addition to the~~
15 ~~checklist and for an early voter absentee ballot.~~

16 (c) Simultaneous voter registration.

17 (1) If a person makes a simultaneous request to register to vote and to
18 apply for an early voter absentee ballot or if the request for an early voter
19 absentee ballot is made for a person who is not yet registered, and the ~~request~~
20 ~~is received by the town clerk~~ receives the request prior to the deadline ~~for~~

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1 ~~requesting to apply for~~ early voter absentee ballots set forth in section 2531 of
2 this ~~chapter~~ subchapter, the town clerk shall mail a blank voter registration
3 application ~~for addition to the checklist~~, together with a full set of early voter
4 absentee ballots, to that person.

5 (2) An official federal postcard application shall suffice as a
6 simultaneous application to register to vote and for an early voter absentee
7 ballot.

8 (3)(A) All ~~such~~ voter registration applications ~~for addition to the~~
9 ~~checklist~~ that are returned to the town clerk before the close of the polls on
10 election day shall be considered and acted upon by the board of civil authority
11 before the ballots are counted.

12 (B) If the voter registration application is approved and the voter's
13 name added to the checklist, the early voter absentee ballots cast by that voter
14 shall be treated as other valid early voter absentee ballots.

15 (d) Application timeframe.

16 (1) An application for an early voter absentee ballot shall be valid for
17 the elections or the time frame specified by the applicant.

18 ~~(e)~~(2) A single application shall only be valid for any elections within the
19 same calendar year.

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1 ~~(f) A person residing in a State institution may apply for early voter~~
2 ~~absentee ballots in the same manner and within the same time limits that apply~~
3 ~~for other early or absentee voters.~~

4 ~~(g)~~(e) Duplicate early voter absentee ballots.

5 (1)(A) The town clerk may, upon application, issue a duplicate early
6 voter absentee ballot if the original ballot is not received by the voter within a
7 reasonable period of time after mailing.

8 (B) The application may be made by a person entitled to apply for an
9 early voter absentee ballot under subsection (a) of this section and shall be
10 accompanied by a sworn statement affirming that the voter has not received the
11 original ballot.

12 (2) If a duplicate early voter absentee ballot is issued and both the
13 duplicate and original early voter absentee ballots are received before the close
14 of the polls on election day, the ballot with the earlier postmark shall be
15 counted.

16 ~~(h)~~(f) Unauthorized applicants.

17 (1) Any person who applies for an early voter absentee ballot knowing
18 the person is without authorization from the early or absentee voter shall be
19 fined not more than \$100.00 per violation for the first three violations; not

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1 more than \$500.00 per violation for the fourth through ninth violations; and
2 not more than \$1,000.00 per violation for the tenth and subsequent violations.

3 (2) The Attorney General or a State's Attorney, whenever he or she has
4 reason to believe any person to be or to have been in violation of this
5 provision, shall conduct a civil investigation in accordance with the procedures
6 set forth in section 2904 of this title.

7 * * *

8 § 2537. EARLY OR ABSENTEE VOTING IN THE TOWN CLERK'S
9 OFFICE

10 (a)(1) A voter may, if he or she chooses, apply in person to the town clerk
11 for the early voter absentee ballots and envelopes ~~rather than having them~~
12 ~~mailed as required by section 2539 of this subchapter.~~

13 (2) In this case, the clerk shall furnish the early voter absentee ballots
14 and envelopes when a valid application has been made, or at such time as the
15 clerk receives the ballots, whichever comes first.

16 (3) The voter may:

17 (A) mark his or her ballots, place them in the envelope, sign the
18 certificate, and return the ballots in the envelope containing the certificate to
19 the town clerk or an assistant town clerk without leaving the office of the town
20 clerk; ~~or the voter may~~

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1 (B) take the ballots and return them to the town clerk in the same
2 manner as if the ballots had been received by mail.

3 (b) ~~No person, except~~ Except for justices of the peace as provided in
4 section 2538 of this subchapter, ~~may a person shall not~~ take any ballot from the
5 town clerk on behalf of any other person.

6 § 2538. DELIVERY OF BALLOTS BY JUSTICES OF THE PEACE

7 (a)(1) In the case of persons who are early or absentee voters due to illness,
8 injury, or ~~physical~~ disability, ballots shall be delivered in the following
9 manner, unless the early or absentee voter has requested pursuant to section
10 2539 of this ~~title~~ subchapter that the early voter absentee ballots be mailed or
11 electronically delivered.

12 (2) Not later than three days prior to the election, the board of civil
13 authority or, upon request of the board, the town clerk, shall designate in pairs
14 justices of the peace in numbers sufficient to deliver early voter absentee
15 ballots to the applicants for early voter absentee ballots who have stated in
16 their applications that they are unable to vote in person at the polling place due
17 to illness, injury, or ~~physical~~ disability ~~but who have not requested in their~~
18 ~~applications that early voter absentee ballots be mailed to them.~~ A pair
19 shall not consist of two justices from the same political party.

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1 (3) If there shall not be available a sufficient number of justices to make
2 up the required number of pairs, a member of each remaining pair shall be
3 designated by the board, to be selected from lists of registered voters submitted
4 by the chairs of the town committees of political parties, and from among
5 registered voters who in written application to the board state that they are not
6 affiliated with any political party.

7 (4) ~~No~~ A candidate or spouse, parent, or child of a candidate shall not be
8 eligible to perform the duties prescribed by this section unless the candidate
9 involved is not disqualified by section 2456 of this ~~title~~ chapter from serving as
10 an election official. ~~This shall not prevent a candidate for a district office from~~
11 ~~serving as a justice in another district.~~

12 (5) The compensation of justices and voters designated under this
13 subsection shall be fixed by the board of civil authority and shall be paid by the
14 town.

15 (6) The justices may, but shall not be required to, deliver ballots outside
16 of the town.

17 (b)(1) The town clerk shall divide the list of applicants who have an illness,
18 injury, or ~~physical~~ disability into approximately as many equal parts as there
19 are pairs of justices so designated, having regard to the several parts of the
20 town in which the applicants may be found.

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1 (2) As soon as early voter absentee ballots are available, the clerk shall
2 deliver to each pair of justices one part of the list, together with early voter
3 absentee ballots and envelopes for each applicant.

4 (3) When justices receive ballots and envelopes prior to election day,
5 they shall receive only the ballots and envelopes they are assigned to deliver on
6 that day.

7 (c)(1) Each pair of justices on the days they are assigned to deliver the
8 ballots and envelopes shall call upon each of the early or absentee voters
9 whose name appears on the part of the list furnished to them and shall deliver
10 early voter absentee ballots and envelopes to each early or absentee voter.

11 (2) The early or absentee voter shall then proceed to mark the ballots
12 alone or in the presence of the justices, but without exhibiting them to the
13 justices or to any other person, except that when the early or absentee voter is
14 blind or physically unable to mark his or her ~~ballet~~ ballots, they may be
15 marked by one of the justices in full view of the other.

16 § 2539. MAILING DELIVERY OF EARLY VOTER ABSENTEE

17 ~~BALLOTS; VOTERS WHO ARE PERMANENTLY DISABLED~~

18 (a) Default; town office or mail.

19 (1) ~~Unless~~ Except as provided in subsections (b) and (c) of this section,
20 unless the early or absentee voter votes in the town clerk's office as set forth in

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1 ~~section 2537 of this subchapter, or unless the justices are to deliver the early~~
2 ~~voter absentee ballots to the early or absentee voter,~~ the town clerk shall
3 provide to the early or absentee voter who comes to the town clerk's office a
4 complete set of early voter absentee ballots or mail a complete set of early
5 voter absentee ballots to each early or absentee voter for whom a valid
6 application has been filed.

7 (2) The early voter absentee ballots shall be mailed forthwith upon the
8 filing of a valid application, or upon the town clerk's receipt of the necessary
9 ballots, whichever is later.

10 (b) Voters who are ill, injured, or have a disability. In the case of persons
11 who are early or absentee voters due to illness, injury, or ~~physical~~ disability, if
12 the voter or authorized person requests in his or her application or otherwise
13 that early voter absentee ballots be mailed ~~rather than delivered by justices of~~
14 the peace or electronically delivered , the town clerk shall mail or
15 electronically deliver the ballots; otherwise the ballots shall be delivered to
16 ~~such voters~~ the voter by justices of the peace as set forth in section 2538 of this
17 subchapter. ~~In the case of all other early or absentee voters, the town clerk~~
18 ~~shall mail the early voter absentee ballots, unless the voter chooses to apply~~
19 ~~and vote in person at the town clerk's office.~~

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1 (c) Military or overseas voters.

2 (1) Early voter absentee ballots ~~to~~ for military or overseas voters shall
3 be sent air mail, first class, postpaid when such service is available, or they
4 may be ~~sent by email~~ electronically delivered when requested by the voter.

5 (2)(A) The town clerk's office shall be open on the 46th day before any
6 election that includes a federal office and the town clerk shall send on or
7 before that day all absentee ballots to any military or overseas voter who
8 requested an early voter absentee ballot on or before that day.

9 (B) On that day the town clerk shall complete any reporting
10 requirements and any other responsibilities regarding the mailing of early voter
11 absentee ballots to military or overseas voters, as directed by the Secretary of
12 State.

13 § 2540. INSTRUCTIONS TO BE SENT WITH BALLOTS

14 (a) The town clerk shall send with all early voter absentee ballots and
15 envelopes printed instructions, which may be included on the envelope, in
16 substantially the following form:

17 INSTRUCTIONS FOR EARLY OR ABSENTEE VOTERS

- 18 1. Mark the ballots.
- 19 2. Place them in this envelope.
- 20 3. Fill out and sign the certificate on the envelope.

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1 4. Mail or deliver the envelope containing the ballots to the town clerk of the
2 town where you are a registered voter in time to arrive not later than election
3 day.

4 Note: If these ballots have been brought to you personally by two
5 justices of the peace because of your illness, injury or ~~physical~~ disability, just
6 return them to the justices after you have signed the envelope. YOU HAVE
7 THE RIGHT TO MARK YOUR BALLOTS IN PRIVATE - but if you ask for
8 help in filling out the ballots, they will give it to you.

9 BE SURE TO FILL OUT AND SIGN THE CERTIFICATE ON THIS
10 ENVELOPE OR YOUR VOTE WILL NOT COUNT!

11 (b) In the case of early absentee voting in a primary, the instructions shall
12 also include appropriate instructions prepared by the Secretary of State for
13 separating and depositing unvoted ballots in a separate envelope provided and
14 clearly marked for that purpose.

15 § 2541. MARKING OF BALLOTS

16 (a) An early or absentee voter to whom ballots, envelopes, and instructions
17 are mailed shall mark the ballots in accordance with the instructions.

18 (b) ~~When an early or absentee voter is blind or is physically unable to go to~~
19 ~~the polls to vote in person or to mark his or her ballots, they may be marked by~~
20 ~~one of the officers who delivers the ballots, in the presence of the other officer.~~

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1 A person who gives assistance to a voter in the marking or registering of
2 ballots shall not in any way divulge any information regarding the choice of
3 the voter or the manner in which the voter's ballot was cast.

4 (c) If an early or absentee voter makes an error in marking a ballot, the
5 voter may return that ballot by mail or in person to the town clerk and receive
6 another ballot, consistent with the provisions of section 2568 of this ~~title~~
7 chapter.

8 * * *

9 **§ 2646b. EARLY VOTING IN TOWN CLERK'S OFFICE; DEPOSIT INTO**
10 **VOTE TABULATOR**

11 **(a)(1) A registered early or absentee voter may vote in the town clerk's**
12 **office in the same manner as those voting on election day by marking his or**
13 **her early voter absentee ballot and deposit it into a vote tabulator.**

14 **(b)(1) During business hours in the town clerk's office, the vote tabulator**
15 **and ballot bin shall be in a secured area accessible only to election officials and**
16 **voters. The vote tabulator unit shall be secured with an identifiable seal and**
17 **the ballot box containing voted ballots shall remain locked at all times and**
18 **secured with an identifiable seal. Neither seal shall be broken prior to the time**
19 **of closing the polls on election day. Ballots shall be comingled with those**

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1 voted at the polls on election day prior to being examined for the purpose of
2 identifying write-in votes.

3 (2) When an election official is not present or at times other than
4 business hours, the sealed vote tabulator and ballot box shall be secured in the
5 town clerk's office vault. The sealed vote tabulator and sealed ballot boxes
6 shall be transferred to the polling place on election day by two election
7 officials and shall not be opened until the polls have closed on election day.

8 (3) Once early voting has commenced in the town clerk's office, the
9 clerk or designee shall certify each day in a record prepared for this purpose
10 that the seals on the vote tabulator and ballot box are intact.

11 (c) The town clerk shall maintain a record of those voting early voter
12 absentee ballots in person. Prior to opening the polls on election day, the
13 number of early voters who vote in person shall match the number of voted
14 ballots displayed on the vote tabulator.

15 (d) The Secretary of State shall adopt guidelines that towns shall use to
16 administer the provisions of this section.

17 § 2547. DEFECTIVE BALLOTS

18 (a) If upon examination by the election officials it shall appear that any of
19 the following defects is present, either the ballot or the unopened certificate
20 envelope shall be marked "defective" and the ballot shall not be counted:

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1 containing a candidate's name upon the ballot, without other indications of the
2 voter's intent, shall constitute a vote for that candidate, even though the voter
3 did not fill in the square or oval after the name.

4 (2)(A) A vote for a write-in candidate shall be counted as ~~blank~~ **an**
5 **"undeclared write-in"**, unless the write-in candidate filed with the Secretary of
6 State not later than 5:00 p.m. on the ~~second~~ Friday preceding the general
7 election a form consenting to candidacy for that office. The consent form shall
8 set forth the name of the candidate, the name of the office for which he or she
9 consents to be a candidate, the candidate's town of residence, and his or her
10 correct mailing address.

11 (B) The Secretary of State shall prepare and furnish forms for this
12 purpose.

13 (3) The election officials counting ballots and tallying results shall only
14 list every person those write-in candidates who receives received a "write-in"
15 vote and who complied with subdivision (2) of this subsection, and the number
16 of votes received.

17 (A) On each tally sheet, the counters shall add together the names of
18 candidates that are clearly the same person, even though a nickname or last
19 name is used.

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1 (B) Names of fictitious or deceased persons shall not be listed and
2 shall be recorded on the tally sheet as a blank vote.

3 * * *

4 * * * Recounts * * *

5 Sec. 17. 17 V.S.A. § 2601 is amended to read:

6 § 2601. RECOUNT THRESHOLD

7 (a)(1) In an election for federal office, statewide office, county office, or
8 State Senator, if the difference between the number of votes cast for a winning
9 candidate and the number of votes cast for a losing candidate is two percent or
10 less of the total votes cast for all the candidates for an office, divided by the
11 number of persons to be elected, that losing candidate shall have the right to
12 have the votes for that office recounted.

13 (2) In an election for State Representative, if the difference between the
14 number of votes cast for a winning candidate and the number of votes cast for
15 a losing candidate is five percent or less of the total votes cast for all the
16 candidates for an office, divided by the number of persons to be elected, that
17 losing candidate shall have the right to have the votes for that office recounted.

18 (b) In the case of a recount for a local election, the threshold and
19 procedures for conducting the recount shall be as provided in chapter 55,
20 subchapter 3 of this title.

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1 Sec. 18. 17 V.S.A. § 2602k is amended to read:

2 § 2602k. RECOUNT TIES

3 (a)(1) If a recount of a primary election results in a tie, the provisions of
4 subsection 2369(b) of this title shall apply.

5 (2) If a recount of a public question results in a tie, a runoff election
6 shall not be held, and the question shall be certified not to have passed.

7 (3) If ~~the~~ a recount of a general election results in a tie, the provisions of
8 this section shall apply, and the court shall order a runoff election to be held,
9 within three weeks of the recount, on a date set by the court.

10 (b) The only candidates who shall appear on the ballot at the runoff
11 election shall be those who tied in the previous election.

12 (c) The runoff election shall be considered a separate election for the
13 purpose of voter registration under chapter 43 of this title.

14 ~~(d) If the recount confirms a tie as to any public question, a runoff election~~
15 ~~shall not be held, and the question shall be certified not to have passed.~~

16 [Repealed.]

17 (e) Warnings for a runoff election shall be posted as required by subchapter
18 5 of this chapter, except that the warnings shall be posted not less than 10 days
19 before the runoff election.

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1 (f) The conduct of a runoff election shall be as provided in this chapter for
2 general elections.

3 * * * Special Election for Congressional Vacancies * * *

4 Sec. 19. 17 V.S.A. § 2621 is amended to read:

5 § 2621. VACANCY IN OFFICE OF U.S. SENATOR OR
6 REPRESENTATIVE

7 (a) If a vacancy occurs in the office of U.S. Senator or U.S. Representative,
8 the Governor shall call a special election to fill the vacancy. His or her
9 proclamation shall specify a day for the special election and a day for a special
10 primary, pursuant to section 2352 of this title.

11 (b) The special election shall be held not more than ~~three~~ six months
12 from the date the vacancy occurs, except that if the vacancy occurs within
13 six months of a general election, the special election may be held the same day
14 as the general election so long as the ballots for the special election are able to
15 be distributed by the deadline set forth in section 2479 of this title.

16 * * * Local Elections * * *

17 Sec. 20. 17 V.S.A. § 2681 is amended to read:

18 § 2681. NOMINATIONS; PETITIONS; CONSENTS

19 (a)(1)(A) Nominations of the municipal officers shall be by petition. The
20 petition shall be filed with the municipal clerk, together with the endorsement,

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1 if any, of any party or parties in accordance with the provisions of this title, not
2 later than 5:00 p.m. on the sixth Monday preceding the day of the election,
3 which shall be the filing deadline.

4 * * *

5 (3) A petition shall contain the name of only one candidate, ~~and the~~
6 ~~candidate's name shall appear on the petition as it does on the voter checklist.~~
7 ~~A voter shall not sign more than one petition for the same office, unless more~~
8 ~~than one nomination is to be made, in which case the voter may sign as many~~
9 ~~petitions as there are nominations to be made for the same office.~~

10 * * *

11 ~~Sec. 21. 17 V.S.A. § 2681a is amended to read:~~

12 ~~§ 2681a. LOCAL ELECTION BALLOTS~~

13 ~~(a)(1) Ballots Except as provided in subdivision (2) of this subsection,~~
14 ~~ballots for local officers and local public questions shall be prepared at town~~
15 ~~expense, under the direction of the town clerk, not later than 20 days before the~~
16 ~~local election.~~

17 ~~(2) If a local election is being held on the same day as a statewide~~
18 ~~primary or general election, excluding the presidential primary, ballots for that~~
19 ~~local election shall be prepared at town expense, under the direction of the~~
20 ~~town clerk, not later than 46 days before the local election.~~

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1 ~~(3) These Local election ballots may be any color and the printing shall~~
2 ~~be black; in other respects, they shall conform as nearly as may be practicable~~
3 ~~to the form of the consolidated ballot in chapter 51, subchapter 2 of this title,~~
4 ~~except as otherwise provided in this section.~~

5 ~~(b)(1) On the local election ballot, the candidate's name shall appear as~~
6 ~~provided in his or her consent form.~~

7 ~~(2) The board of civil authority may vote to list a street address for each~~
8 ~~candidate, or the town of residence of each candidate, or no residence at all for~~
9 ~~each candidate.~~

10 ~~(c) No A political party or other designation shall not be listed unless the~~
11 ~~municipal charter provides for such listing, the town has voted at an earlier~~
12 ~~election to provide such a listing or, in the absence of previous consideration of~~
13 ~~the question by the town, the legislative body decides to permit listing. If~~
14 ~~political party or other designations are permitted, no a candidate shall not use~~
15 ~~the name of a political party whose certificate of organization has been filed~~
16 ~~properly with the Secretary of State unless the candidate has been endorsed by~~
17 ~~a legally called town caucus of that political party for the office in question. In~~
18 ~~any event, the candidate must still file the petition and consent form required~~
19 ~~by section 2681 of this title chapter.~~

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1 * * *

2 § 1243. METHOD OF VOTING

3 ~~When the question of the adoption or rejection of A town may vote at an~~
4 ~~annual or special meeting to adopt or rescind the provisions of this chapter is~~
5 ~~submitted to a meeting wherein the Australian ballot system is used for the~~
6 ~~election of officers, there. A vote on the question shall be ~~printed upon the~~~~
7 ~~ballots below the list of candidates the following question in substantially the~~
8 ~~following form:~~

9 ~~““Will Shall the [town name] ~~vote to take advantage of [adopt/rescind] the~~~~
10 ~~town manager form of governance in accordance with the provisions of chapter~~
11 ~~37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated ~~and authorize the selectboard~~~~
12 ~~to employ a town manager?””~~

13 ~~Yes —No~~

14 ~~And the voter shall make a cross or X in the blank space against the answer~~
15 ~~he or she desires to give concerning such question. ~~The ballots shall be~~~~
16 ~~counted forthwith by the board of civil authority and the result announced by~~
17 ~~the presiding officer.~~

18 * * *

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1 * * * Campaign Finance; Reporting Dates * * *

2 Sec. 23. 17 V.S.A. § 2964 is amended to read:

3 § 2964. CAMPAIGN REPORTS; CANDIDATES FOR STATE OFFICE,

4 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, AND COUNTY OFFICE;

5 POLITICAL COMMITTEES; POLITICAL PARTIES

6 (a)(1) Each candidate for State office, the General Assembly, or a two-
7 year-term county office who has rolled over any amount of surplus into his or
8 her new campaign or who has made expenditures or accepted contributions
9 of \$500.00 or more during the two-year general election cycle and, except as
10 provided in subsection (b) of this section, each political committee that has not
11 filed a final report pursuant to subsection 2965(b) of this chapter, and each
12 political party required to register under section 2923 of this chapter shall file
13 with the Secretary of State campaign finance reports as follows:

14 (A) in the first year of the two-year general election cycle, on
15 July ~~15~~ 1; and

16 (B) in the second year of the two-year general election cycle:

17 (i) on March 15;

18 (ii) on July ~~15~~ 1 and August ~~15~~ 1;

19 (iii) on September 1;

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* * * Effective Dates * * *

Sec. 24. EFFECTIVE DATES

This act shall take effect on July 1, 2019, except that:

(1) this section and Sec. 23, 17 V.S.A. § 2964 (campaign finance reports), shall take effect on passage; and

(2) In Sec. X, 17 V.S.A. § 2646b (early voting in town clerk's office; deposit into vote tabulator) shall take effect on July 1, 2020, except that the Secretary of State shall create the guidelines set forth in subsection (d) of that section by January 1, 2020.

(Committee vote: _____)

Senator _____

FOR THE COMMITTEE