

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

**SENATE BILL**

**No. 344**      Session of  
2007

INTRODUCED BY BOSCOLA, FONTANA, LAVALLE, KITCHEN, WASHINGTON,  
MUSTO, WAUGH AND LOGAN, MARCH 12, 2007

REFERRED TO STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 12, 2007

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), entitled  
2 "An act concerning elections, including general, municipal,  
3 special and primary elections, the nomination of candidates,  
4 primary and election expenses and election contests; creating  
5 and defining membership of county boards of elections;  
6 imposing duties upon the Secretary of the Commonwealth,  
7 courts, county boards of elections, county commissioners;  
8 imposing penalties for violation of the act, and codifying,  
9 revising and consolidating the laws relating thereto; and  
10 repealing certain acts and parts of acts relating to  
11 elections," setting forth a concise statement of voter's  
12 rights; requiring that the statement of voter's rights be  
13 visible in voter registration offices and polling places;  
14 providing for polling place accessibility; further providing  
15 for qualifications of electors at primaries and for only  
16 enrolled electors to vote at primaries or hold party offices;  
17 providing for procedure for unenrolled electors to cast  
18 primary ballots and for form of declaration of party  
19 enrollment; and further providing for persons entitled to  
20 vote and challenges and for voting check lists.

21 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
22 hereby enacts as follows:

23 Section 1. The act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known  
24 as the Pennsylvania Election Code, is amended by adding a  
25 section to read:

26 Section 107. Voter's Bill of Rights.--(a) The following

1 rights are guaranteed to all registered voters in this

2 Commonwealth:

3 (1) A voter who is in line at the correct polling place  
4 during the hours it is required by law to be open may vote, even  
5 if the voter's turn to vote does not come until after those  
6 hours expire.

7 (2) If a voter has moved from the voter's original polling  
8 district to another, the voter may return to the original  
9 polling district to vote for as long as the voter remains  
10 qualified there. To be eligible to vote in the new polling  
11 district, the voter must either file a notice of removal with  
12 the voting registrar or register anew.

13 (3) A voter who has a physical disability or who cannot read  
14 or write may apply to the voting registrar for a special needs  
15 ballot, but this must be done at least ten days before the  
16 election.

17 (4) A voter may bring his children who are not yet eighteen  
18 years of age into the voting booth with him.

19 (5) A voter has the right to vote without being intimidated  
20 or forced to vote for someone the voter does not wish to vote  
21 for.

22 (6) A voter who believes that any of the voter's rights  
23 under this act have been violated may call the voter's local law  
24 enforcement officers.

25 (b) A listing of the rights set forth under subsection (a)  
26 shall be posted publicly in each voter registration office and,  
27 on election days, polling place.

28 Section 2. Section 527(a) of the act, amended May 12, 2006  
29 (P.L.178, No.45), is amended to read:

30 Section 527. Public Buildings to Be Used Where Possible;

1 Portable Polling Places.--(a) In selecting polling places, the  
2 county board of elections shall, wherever possible and  
3 practicable, select schoolhouses, municipal buildings or rooms,  
4 or other public buildings for that purpose and shall ensure that  
5 the places selected are accessible by persons with physical  
6 disabilities. Any board of public education or school directors,  
7 or county or the municipal authorities shall, upon request of  
8 the county board, make arrangements for the use of school  
9 property, or of county or municipal property for polling places.  
10 In selecting polling places, the county board of elections shall  
11 make every effort to select polling places that provide all  
12 electors with an environment that is free from intimidation and  
13 violence.

14 In the event no available public building as contemplated  
15 under this section is situated within the boundaries of any  
16 election district, the county board of elections may, not less  
17 than twenty days prior to any election, designate as the polling  
18 place for such election district any such public building  
19 situated in another election district within the same or  
20 immediately adjacent ward, or, if there are no wards, then  
21 within the same borough or township as the case may be, provided  
22 such other building is located in an election district which is  
23 immediately adjacent to the boundary of the election district  
24 for which it is to be the polling place and is directly  
25 accessible therefrom by public street or thoroughfare. Two or  
26 more polling places may be located in the same public building  
27 under this section. A polling place may be selected and  
28 designated hereunder less than twenty days prior to any  
29 election, with the approval of a court of competent  
30 jurisdiction.

1 \* \* \*

2 Section 3. Sections 702 and 802 of the act are amended to  
3 read:

4 Section 702. Qualifications of Electors at Primaries.--The  
5 qualifications of electors entitled to vote at primaries shall  
6 be the same as the qualifications of electors entitled to vote  
7 at elections within the election district where the primary is  
8 held, provided that no elector who is not registered [and  
9 enrolled as a member of a political party], in accordance with  
10 the provisions of this act, shall be permitted to vote the  
11 ballot of [such party or] any [other] party [ballot] at any  
12 primary.

13 Section 802. Only Enrolled Electors to Vote at Primaries or  
14 Hold Party Offices.--No person who is not registered and  
15 enrolled as a member of a political party shall be entitled to  
16 [vote at any primary of such party or to] be elected or serve as  
17 a party officer, or a member or officer of any party committee,  
18 or delegate or alternate delegate to any party convention.

19 Section 4. Section 902 of the act, amended May 23, 1949  
20 (P.L.1656, No.504), is amended to read:

21 Section 902. Candidates to Be Nominated and Party Officers  
22 to Be Elected at Primaries.--All candidates of political  
23 parties, as defined in section 801 of this act, for the offices  
24 of United States Senator, Representative in Congress and for all  
25 other elective public offices within this State, except that of  
26 presidential electors, shall be nominated, and party delegates  
27 and alternate delegates, committeemen and officers who, under  
28 the provisions of Article VIII of this act or under the party  
29 rules, are required to be elected by the party electors, shall  
30 be elected at primaries held in accordance with the provisions

1 of this act, except as otherwise provided in this act. In the  
2 years when candidates for the office of President of the United  
3 States are to be nominated, every registered [and enrolled  
4 member of a political party] elector shall have the opportunity  
5 at the Spring primary in such years to vote [his] a preference  
6 for one person to be the candidate of [his] a political party  
7 for President.

8 Section 5. The act is amended by adding sections to read:

9 Section 902.1. Procedure for Unenrolled Electors to Cast  
10 Primary Ballots.--If a person is not enrolled in a political  
11 party, the elections officer shall ask the person in which  
12 political party's primary that person desires to vote and the  
13 elections officer upon reply shall record the voter's selection  
14 upon the voter's certificate and for the purpose of that ballot  
15 shall be enrolled in that party. The person shall remain  
16 unenrolled for party designation unless the person completes a  
17 declaration of enrollment as described in section 902.2.

18 Section 902.2. Form of Declaration of Party Enrollment.--If  
19 after a person has cast a political party ballot, as prescribed  
20 in section 902.1, and the person wishes to remain enrolled in  
21 that party the person shall complete a declaration of enrollment  
22 which shall be made available within the polling place and shall  
23 be in a form approved by the Secretary of the Commonwealth  
24 substantially as follows:

25 Declaration of Enrollment

26 Name .....

27 \_\_\_\_\_ (Print)

28 Date .....

29 Address .....

30 I hereby request that my political party enrollment be

1 as follows:

2 Party .....

3 Signed under penalty of perjury.

4 .....

5 \_\_\_\_\_ (Signature)

6 The elections officer shall then include the person's  
7 declaration of enrollment with the voter's certificate and  
8 insert both into the voting check list as provided for in  
9 section 1212. Once processed, the county board shall then send a  
10 new certificate of registration, with the declared party  
11 enrollment listed, to the person requesting enrollment.

12 Section 6. Section 1210(d) of the act, amended October 8,  
13 2004 (P.L.807, No.97), is amended to read:

14 Section 1210. Manner of Applying to Vote; Persons Entitled  
15 to Vote; Voter's Certificates; Entries to Be Made in District  
16 Register; Numbered Lists of Voters; Challenges.--\* \* \*

17 (d) No person, except a qualified elector who is in actual  
18 military or naval service under a requisition of the President  
19 of the United States or by the authority of this Commonwealth,  
20 and who votes under the provisions of Article XIII of this act,  
21 shall be entitled or permitted to vote at any primary or  
22 election at any polling place outside the election district in  
23 which [he] the person resides, nor shall [he] the person be  
24 permitted to vote in the election district in which [he] the  
25 person resides, unless [he] the person has been personally  
26 registered as an elector and [his] the person's registration  
27 card appears in the district register of such election district,  
28 except by order of the court of common pleas as provided in this  
29 act, and any person, although personally registered as an  
30 elector, may be challenged by any qualified elector, election

1 officer, overseer, or watcher at any primary or election as to  
2 [his] identity, as to [his] continued residence in the election  
3 district or as to any alleged violation of the provisions of  
4 section 1210 of this act, and if challenged as to identity or  
5 residence, [he] the person shall produce at least one qualified  
6 elector of the election district as a witness, who shall make  
7 affidavit of his identity or continued residence in the election  
8 district: Provided, however, That no person shall be entitled to  
9 vote as a member of a party at any primary, unless [he] the  
10 person is:

11       (1) registered and enrolled as a member of such party  
12 upon the district register, which enrollment shall be  
13 conclusive as to [his] party membership and shall not be  
14 subject to challenge on the day of the primary[.]; or

15       (2) registered as an independent or nonparty voter, in  
16 which case the person may vote for the candidates of the  
17 party of the voter's choice, the choice to be made at the  
18 polling place on the day of the primary election. The voter's  
19 choice of parties at one primary election shall not preclude  
20 the voter from choosing a different party at a subsequent  
21 primary election.

22 Section 7. Section 1212 of the act is amended to read:

23 Section 1212. Voting Check List.--After each elector has  
24 been admitted to vote, [his] each voter's certificate and, where  
25 applicable, each declaration of enrollment shall be inserted in  
26 the file or binder provided therefor by the county board, and  
27 known as the "Voting Check List," and the [said] voter's  
28 certificate and declaration of enrollment so bound shall  
29 constitute the official list of electors voting at such primary  
30 or election. All voter's certificates prepared by persons

1 applying to vote whose applications to vote are refused by the  
2 election officer shall be carefully preserved and returned to  
3 the county board with the other papers. Within ninety days of  
4 such return, the voting check list shall be reviewed by the  
5 county board and all persons wishing to be enrolled in a party,  
6 as prescribed in sections 902.1 and 902.2, shall be processed  
7 accordingly.

8 Section 8. This act shall take effect immediately.