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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- SECRETARY OF STATE

Introduced By: Senators Bates, E O'Neill, Lombardo, Kettle, and Hodgson

Date Introduced: January 16, 2013

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-6-3 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-6 entitled "Secretary of
2 State" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-6-3. Computer ballots and sample ballots.** – (a) The secretary of state shall be
4 responsible for the arrangement, preparation, printing, and provision of all computer ballots, to be
5 used in conjunction with the optical scan voting equipment authorized pursuant to this title, and
6 sample ballots to be used at any election. The secretary of state shall deliver to the state board a
7 sufficient quantity of sample ballots to be used by the board in the preparation of voting
8 equipment for each election.

9 (b) The secretary of state shall ensure that no ballot, whether a paper ballot or a ballot that
10 shall be used in any optical scanning device or otherwise, shall include any option to permit any
11 voter to vote for all candidates of one of the respective parties by means of a single mark.

12 SECTION 2. Section 17-19-15 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-19 entitled "Conduct
13 of Election and Voting Equipment, and Supplies" is hereby amended to read as follows:

14 **17-19-15. Party levers.** -- In the preparation of the voting equipment for use in any
15 election, ~~excluding a primary election,~~ the board of elections shall confirm that the voting
16 equipment is programmed to ~~permit~~ prevent any voter ~~to vote~~ from voting for all candidates of
17 one of the respective parties by means of a single mark on the computer ballot. ~~The voting~~
18 ~~equipment shall also permit the voter casting a straight party vote to individually vote for~~
19 ~~candidates, and in doing so, the straight party vote will not be counted for that office, and the~~

1 ~~individual vote, or votes in the case where more than one candidate will be elected for an office,~~
2 ~~will override the straight party vote for that office.~~

3 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL
OF
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1 This act would require that voting machines be programmed to prevent a voter from
2 voting for a straight party ticket by simply checking one mark on the ballot. The act would also
3 require the board of elections to program the ballot scanning machines to prevent straight party
4 voting by means of a single mark, and would require the secretary of state to produce ballots that
5 do not have an option to vote for a straight party ticket by checking a single box.

6 This act would take effect upon passage.

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