

2019 -- H 5864 SUBSTITUTE A

LC002173/SUB A

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2019

A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS - VOTING DISTRICTS AND OFFICIALS

Introduced By: Representatives Phillips, Millea, Hawkins, Shanley, and Edwards

Date Introduced: March 15, 2019

Referred To: House Judiciary

(Board of Elections)

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-11-1.1 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-11 entitled "Voting  
2 Districts and Officials" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-11-1.1. Combination of voting districts for special election.**

4 (a) The board of canvassers of any city or town at which there shall be submitted to the  
5 voters a question or questions for their approval or rejection ~~but~~ or at which ~~no state or local~~  
6 officials will be elected, shall have the authority to combine two (2) or more voting districts,  
7 when in its judgment the combination is advisable, and when combined shall be treated as a  
8 voting district, but only upon the approval of the board of elections.

9 (b) If voting districts are combined as provided in subsection (a) of this section, the local  
10 board must advertise the combination of districts in a newspaper of general circulation in the city  
11 or town no less than seven (7) days and no more than twenty-one (21) days before the special  
12 election.

13 ~~(c) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b) of this section, the board of~~  
14 ~~canvassers of the city of Woonsocket or the town of Cumberland may combine two (2) or more~~  
15 ~~voting districts for the senate district 20 special election in April, 2008 and when combined shall~~  
16 ~~be treated as a voting district, but only upon the approval of the board of elections.~~

17 ~~If voting districts are combined pursuant to this subsection, the local board must advertise~~  
18 ~~the combination of districts in a newspaper of general circulation in the city or town no less than~~  
19 ~~three (3) days before the special election.~~

1 SECTION 2. Section 17-15-5 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-15 entitled "Primary  
2 Elections" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-15-5. Combination of voting districts.**

4 Local boards shall have the power to combine two (2) or more voting districts within the  
5 same ward, and senatorial or representative district, ~~when the absence of local contests within the~~  
6 ~~combined voting districts makes this combination possible,~~ and the combined district shall be  
7 treated as a voting district, but only upon the approval of the board of elections.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
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1           This act would allow local boards of canvassers to combine voting districts in special  
2 elections for approval/rejection of questions or when officials will be elected or in primary  
3 elections but only with board of election approval.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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