

2023 -- H 6240

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LC002483  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- VOTING DISTRICTS AND OFFICIALS

Introduced By: Representatives Baginski, and Noret

Date Introduced: March 30, 2023

Referred To: House State Government & 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 or at which officials will be elected,  
6 shall have the authority to combine two (2) or more voting districts, when in its judgment the  
7 combination is advisable, ~~and when combined shall be treated as a voting district,~~ The local board  
8 may by unanimous vote make such designation for any special election, but only upon the approval  
9 of the board of elections.

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

13 (c) [Deleted by P.L. 2019, ch. 69, § 1 and P.L. 2019, ch. 79, § 1.]

14 (d) ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of subsections (a) and (b), the board of canvassers of~~  
15 ~~the town of Bristol may combine two (2) or more voting districts for the representative district 68~~  
16 ~~special election in March, 2019, and when combined shall be treated as a voting district, but only~~  
17 ~~upon the approval of the board of elections.~~

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

1           **17-15-5. Combination of voting districts.**

2           Local boards shall have the power to combine two (2) or more voting districts within the  
3 same ward, and senatorial or representative district ~~and the combined district shall be treated as a~~  
4 ~~voting district,~~ if applicable. The local board may by unanimous vote make such designation for  
5 any special primary, or presidential preference primary, but only upon the approval of the board of  
6 elections.

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

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- VOTING DISTRICTS AND OFFICIALS

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1           This act would require a unanimous vote of the local board of canvassers for the  
2 combination of voting districts for any special election and would require a unanimous vote of the  
3 local board of canvassers for the combination of voting districts for any special election or  
4 presidential preference primary.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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