

2023 -- H 6391

LC002919

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2023

A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- REGISTRATION OF VOTERS

Introduced By: Representative P. Morgan

Date Introduced: May 10, 2023

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 17-9.1-34 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-9.1 entitled  
2 "Registration of Voters" is hereby amended to read as follows:

3 **17-9.1-34. Electronic registration of voters.**

4 (a) The secretary of state shall establish, maintain, and administer a portal for electronic  
5 voter registration. An applicant may use such portal to register to vote, or to update existing voter  
6 registration information, provided:

7 (1) The applicant's information is verifiable in the manner described in subsection (b) of  
8 this section;

9 (2) The applicant's signature is in a database described in subsection (b) of this section;  
10 and

11 (3) Such signature may be imported into such system for electronic voter registration.

12 (b) Upon request of the secretary of state, a state agency, quasi-public agency, or  
13 municipality shall provide information to the secretary of state that the secretary of state deems  
14 necessary to maintain the system for electronic voter registration, and the information so obtained  
15 shall be used for no other purpose. The secretary of state shall verify applicant information by cross-  
16 referencing information submitted by applicants with data or information contained in any state  
17 agency's, quasi-public agency's, or municipality's database or a database administered by the  
18 federal government, or any voter registration database of another state. The secretary of state shall  
19 not use the information obtained from any such databases except to verify information submitted

1 by the applicant. The applicant's signature, if part of the data contained in the state agency's, quasi-  
2 public agency's, or municipality's database, shall be included as part of the applicant's information  
3 contained in the system for electronic voter registration. No information viewed or received by the  
4 secretary of state pursuant to this subsection may be transferred to, shared with, or otherwise  
5 conveyed to any other governmental or non-governmental entity for any reason except for voter  
6 registration purposes or pursuant to a court order.

7 (c) The submission of an electronic application shall contain all of the information that is  
8 required for an application under § 17-9.1-9, with the exception of the signature, which shall be  
9 obtained from another state agency, quasi-public agency, or municipality's database pursuant to  
10 subsection (b) of this section.

11 (d) An applicant using the system shall mark the box associated with the following  
12 statement included as part of the electronic application:

13 "By clicking on the box below, I swear or affirm all of the following under penalty of  
14 perjury:

15 (1) I am the person whose name and identifying information is provided on this form, and  
16 I desire to register to vote or update my voter registration information in the state of Rhode Island.

17 (2) All of the information I have provided on this form is true and correct as of the date I  
18 am submitting this form.

19 (3) I authorize a Rhode Island state agency, quasi-public agency, or municipality to  
20 transmit, for voter registration purposes, to the secretary of state and my city's/town's board of  
21 canvassers my signature that is on file with such state agency, quasi-public agency, or municipality.  
22 I understand that the secretary of state and my city's/town's board of canvassers will use such  
23 signature on this electronic voter registration application as if I had signed this form personally."

24 (e) Upon approval of such application, the boards of canvassers shall send a confirmation  
25 notice to the applicant.

26 (f) ~~The secretary of state may enter into an agreement and exchange information or data  
27 with any other state exclusively for the purposes of updating the statewide central voter register  
28 and registering voters, provided such activities are performed under the supervision of the secretary  
29 of state and the secretary of state enters into an agreement to protect the confidentiality of such  
30 information or data. A Rhode Island state agency shall provide the secretary of state with  
31 information or data to be used exclusively for voter registration purposes and shall advise the  
32 secretary of state if such information or data is held confidential. The secretary of state shall not  
33 use or transmit the information or data for any purpose except for voter registration purposes or  
34 pursuant to a court order.~~

1           (g) To ensure full, equal, and independent access to all voters with disabilities, any internet  
2 site and voter registration form created to register voters electronically or allow voters to update  
3 their voter registration shall comply with all requirements under Title II of the Americans with  
4 Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 12131-12165, and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)  
5 2.0 compliance level AA. Experts concerning disability and usability access to websites shall be  
6 included in the development of any voter registration website and voter registration form, and shall  
7 verify accessibility and usability before the website, or an updated version of the website, is made  
8 available to the general public.

9           (h) The website and form shall be available in any language required by federal or state  
10 voting rights laws.

11           SECTION 2. 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 take away from the secretary of state the statutory power to enter into an  
2 agreement and exchange information or data with other states, with the electronic registration  
3 information center.

4           This act would take effect upon passage.

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