

**2026 -- H 7091**

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LC003855

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**S T A T E   O F   R H O D E   I S L A N D**

**IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026**

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**A N   A C T**

**RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- GENERAL PROVISIONS**

Introduced By: Representatives Felix, Cruz, McNamara, Kislak, Diaz, Giraldo, Stewart, Donovan, Morales, and Furtado

Date Introduced: January 14, 2026

Referred To: House State Government & Elections

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

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

3        **17-1-3. Eligibility to vote.**

4            (a) Every citizen of the United States who is at least eighteen (18) years of age, whose  
5        residence as defined in § 17-1-3.1 has been in this state for at least thirty (30) days, and in the town  
6        or city and voting district in which that person desires to cast his or her vote at least thirty (30) days  
7        next preceding the election, and who is registered in that city or town and voting district at least  
8        thirty (30) days next preceding any election, shall be entitled to vote in the election; provided, a  
9        person may vote in a primary election only if that person is eligible under the provisions of this  
10      title. A person who has not registered to vote, or whose registration has been canceled pursuant to  
11      § 17-10-1, may cast a vote for president and vice-president on election day at the person's city or  
12      town hall or at an alternate location designated by the board of canvassers, and approved by the  
13      board of elections, where such location is deemed necessary to better accommodate such voters.  
14      The casting of that vote shall commence the process of voter registration and subject the person  
15      voting to the requirements and penalties of this chapter.

16            (b) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, any person who has  
17        not yet reached age eighteen (18), but will be age eighteen (18) at the time of a general election,  
18        may vote in a primary election, in which candidates are nominated for a general or special election.

19            (c) The provisions of subsection (b) shall not extend to any other elections.

1                   (d) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (a) of this section, any city or town with  
2    an elected school committee may provide by ordinance, referendum, or other mechanism at the  
3    municipality's discretion, that every citizen of the city or town, who is at least sixteen (16) years  
4    of age, and whose residence as defined in this section, has been in this state for at least thirty (30)  
5    days, may register to vote in school committee elections in the city or town in which they reside,  
6    and if registered at least thirty (30) days next preceding any school committee election, is entitled  
7    to vote in said election.

8                   SECTION 2. 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 -- GENERAL PROVISIONS

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- 1        This act would allow citizens of a city or town who are at least sixteen (16) years of age to
- 2        register to vote and to vote in school committee elections in municipalities where school
- 3        committees are elected entities.
- 4        This act would take effect upon passage.

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