

2025 -- H 5137

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

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A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- GENERAL PROVISIONS

Introduced By: Representatives J. Brien, Chippendale, Corvese, Noret, Read, Azzinaro,
Hopkins, Costantino, and Baginski

Date Introduced: January 22, 2025

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) It shall be unlawful for any individual who is not a citizen of the United States to vote
2 in any and all public elections on any and all matters. This includes, but is not limited to, any
3 primary election, general election, election for federal office, election for state office, election for
4 local office, and any public election that includes voting on constitutional amendments, ballot
5 initiatives, or referenda.

6 (e) Only a citizen of the United States shall be registered to vote in this state pursuant to
7 the provisions of subsection (a) of this section. The state board of elections shall verify the
8 citizenship status of all persons on the voter registration list of this state, by comparing the current
9 voter registrations with the citizenship data available from the state's department of motor vehicles
10 and the Help America Vote Verification (HAVV) information system maintained by the Social
11 Security Administration. The board of elections shall also make use of other available databases
12 containing citizenship status in order to ensure that only United States citizens are registered to
13 vote in the state.

14 (f) Any registrant in the state's voter registration list whose status as a United States citizen
15 cannot be confirmed from a comparison with one or more state, multistate, or federal databases
16 shall be removed from the list of eligible voters. The individual shall be notified in writing of the
17 inability of the board of elections to confirm the individual's citizenship status and shall be provided
18 the opportunity to present evidence or documentary proof of citizenship to be restored to the eligible
19 voter list.

20 (g) Before any voter registration application is accepted and added to a city, town or
21 statewide voter registration list, the applicant's citizenship status shall be confirmed through one or
22 more of the databases described in subsection (e) of this section.

23 (h) Any willful infraction of this law shall constitute the crime of fraudulent voting in
24 violation of § 17-23-4.

25 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 provide that the state board of elections shall verify the citizenship status
- 2 of all persons on the voter registration list.
- 3 This act would take effect upon passage.

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