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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

A N A C T

RELATING TO ELECTIONS -- PRIMARIES FOR ELECTION OF DELEGATES TO
NATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND FOR PRESIDENTIAL PREFERENCE

Introduced By: Senators Ciccone, Tikoian, Burke, DiPalma, and Rogers

Date Introduced: January 23, 2026

Referred To: Senate Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Sections 17-12.1-6 and 17-12.1-7 of the General Laws in Chapter 17-12.1
2 entitled "Primaries for Election of Delegates to National Conventions and for Presidential
3 Preference" are hereby amended to read as follows:

4 **17-12.1-6. Number of signers required.**

5 The nomination papers of a candidate for delegate to a national convention shall be signed,
6 in the aggregate, by at least ~~one hundred fifty (150)~~ fifty (50) eligible voters.

7 **17-12.1-7. Checking and certification of nomination papers.**

8 (a) Each nomination paper of a candidate for delegate shall be submitted on or before four
9 o'clock (4:00) p.m. in the afternoon of the ~~fifty-sixth (56th)~~ fifty-fourth day before the presidential
10 preference primary to the local board of the city or town where the signers appear to be voters, and
11 the nomination papers shall be checked, processed, and certified to the secretary of state by the
12 local boards before four o'clock (4:00) p.m. in the afternoon of the fifty-third (53rd) day before the
13 presidential preference primary. In addition, each candidate for delegate to a national convention
14 may, on or before four o'clock (4:00) p.m. in the afternoon of the ~~fifty-third (53rd)~~ fiftieth day
15 before the presidential primary, submit to the secretary of state documentation from a candidate, as
16 set forth in § 17-12.1-4, that he or she has the approval of the candidate for presidential nominee
17 or approval from the steering/screening committee to name the candidates' delegates to be
18 identified with him or her. Names of delegates pledged to a presidential candidate who do not

1 receive approval of the candidate for presidential nominee or approval from the steering/screening
2 committee to name the candidates' delegates to be identified with him/her, who are otherwise
3 qualified, shall appear on the ballot in accordance with party rules.

4 (b) When nomination papers have been duly certified by the appropriate local boards of
5 canvassers, they shall be conclusively presumed to be valid, unless written objections to them are
6 made as to the eligibility of the candidate or the sufficiency of the nomination papers or the
7 signatures on them. All objections shall be filed with the state board of elections by four o'clock
8 (4:00) p.m. on the next business day after the last day fixed for local boards to file nomination
9 papers with the secretary of state. Nothing in this section shall be construed to prevent the secretary
10 of state from disqualifying a candidate based on the determination of the secretary of state that the
11 nomination papers or the signatures on them are invalid or insufficient.

12 (c) The decision of the state board shall be rendered not later than four o'clock (4:00) p.m.
13 on the forty-seventh (47th) day before the presidential preference primary and shall immediately
14 be certified by the state board to the secretary of state.

15 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 reduce the number of signatures needed on nomination papers for a
2 candidate to be a delegate to a national presidential convention to 50 voters. This act would also
3 amend and reduce the number of days before an election for which nomination papers must be
4 submitted before a presidential preference primary to 54 days, and would reduce the number of
5 days by which the local board of canvassers would need to certify the signatures to the secretary of
6 state to 50 days before the presidential preference primary.
- 7 This act would take effect upon passage.

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