#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

### **SESSION 1995**

S 2

### SENATE BILL 1123\* House Committee Substitute Favorable 6/18/96

Short Title: National Voter Registration Act Corrections.	(Public)
Sponsors:	
Referred to:	

### May 14, 1996

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED 2 AN ACT TO CORRECT INADVERTENT ERRORS IN THE 1994 LEGISLATION 3 DESIGNED TO BRING NORTH CAROLINA INTO COMPLIANCE WITH THE NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT; TO SPECIFY THE KINDS OF 4 INFORMATION THAT THE COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS SHALL 5 PROVIDE TO THE PUBLIC FROM ITS VOTER REGISTRATION FILES AND 6 7 AT WHAT COSTS; TO REQUIRE THE UPDATING OF VOTER REGISTRATION 8 RECORDS TO REFLECT ADDRESS CHANGES RESULTING FROM 9 EXTENDED 911 SYSTEMS; TO REQUIRE COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS 10 TO PROVIDE TO THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SPECIFIED 11 INFORMATION ABOUT CANDIDATES AND ELECTION RESULTS; AND TO INCREASE THE RESTRICTIONS ON ELECTIONEERING AROUND THE 12 13 POLLING PLACE ON ELECTION DAY. 14

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

17 18

19

15 -TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS IN 1994 NVRA-COMPLIANCE LEGISLATION 16 Section 1. G.S. 163-22(e) reads as rewritten:

The State Board of Elections shall determine, in the manner provided by law, the form and content of ballots, instruction sheets, pollbooks, talley sheets, abstract and return forms, certificates of election, and other forms to be used in primaries and

- elections. The Board shall furnish to the county and municipal boards of elections the 1 2 registration application forms required pursuant to G.S. 163-67. 163-82.3. The State 3 Board of Elections shall direct the county boards of elections to purchase a sufficient quantity of all forms attendant to the registration and elections process. In addition, the 4 5 State Board shall provide a source of supply from which the county boards of elections 6 may purchase the quantity of pollbooks needed for the execution of its responsibilities. 7 In the preparation of ballots, pollbooks, abstract and return forms, and all other forms, the 8 State Board of Elections may call to its aid the Attorney General of the State, and it shall 9
  - be the duty of the Attorney General to advise and aid in the preparation of these books, ballots and forms."
    - Sec. 2. Article 4 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

### "§ 163-37. Duty of county board of commissioners.

The respective boards of county commissioners shall appropriate reasonable and adequate funds necessary for the legal functions of the county board of elections, including reasonable and just compensation of the director of elections."

Sec. 3. Article 12 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

### "§ 163-131. Accessible polling places.

- The State Board of Elections shall promulgate rules to assure that any disabled (a) or elderly voter assigned to an inaccessible polling place, upon advance request of such voter, will be assigned to an accessible polling place. Such rules should allow the request to be made in advance of the day of the election.
- Words in this section have the meanings prescribed by P.L. 98-435, except that (b) the term 'disabled' in this section has the same meaning as 'handicapped' in P.L. 98-435."

Sec. 4. G.S. 163-213.2 reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-213.2. Primary to be held; date; qualifications and registration of voters.

On the Tuesday after the first Monday in May, 1992, and every four years thereafter, the voters of this State shall be given an opportunity to express their preference for the person to be the presidential candidate of their political party.

Any person otherwise qualified who will become qualified by age to vote in the general election held in the same year of the presidential preference primary shall be entitled to register and vote in the presidential preference primary. Such persons may register not earlier than 60 days nor later than the last day for making application to register under G.S. 163-67-163-82.6 prior to the said primary. In addition, persons who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for which the primary is held, who do not register during the special period may register to vote after such period as if they were qualified on the basis of age, but until they are qualified by age to vote, they may vote only in primary elections."

Sec. 5. G.S. 163-227.2 reads as rewritten:

"\§ 163-227.2. Alternate procedures for requesting application for absentee ballot; 'one-stop' voting procedure in board office.

10

11 12

13

14

15

16 17

18

19

20

21

22 23

24

25

26

27

28 29

30

31

32 33

34 35

36 37

38

39

40

- (a) A person expecting to be absent from the county in which he is registered during the entire period that the polls are open on the day of an election in which absentee ballots are authorized or is eligible under G.S. 163-226(a)(2) or 163-226(a)(4) may request an application for absentee ballots, complete the application, receive the absentee ballots, vote and deliver them sealed in a container-return envelope to the county board of elections in the county in which he is registered under the provisions of this section.
- (b) Not earlier than the twenty-fourth day-first business day after the twenty-fifth day before an election, in which absentee ballots are authorized, in which he seeks to vote and not later than 5:00 P.M. on the Friday prior to that election, the voter shall appear in person only at the office of the county board of elections and request that the chairman, a member, or the director of elections of the board, or an employee of the board of elections, authorized by the board, furnish him with an application form as specified in G.S. 163-227. The voter shall complete the application in the presence of the chairman, member, director of elections or authorized employee of the board, and shall deliver the application to that person.
- If the application is properly filled out, the chairman, member, director of elections of the board, or employee of the board of elections, authorized by the board, shall enter the voter's name in the register of absentee ballot applications and ballots issued; shall furnish the voter with the instruction sheets called for by G.S. 163-229(c); shall furnish the voter with the ballots to which the application for absentee ballots applies; and shall furnish the voter with a container-return envelope. The voter thereupon shall comply with the provisions of G.S. 163-231(a) except that he shall deliver the container-return envelope to the chairman, member, director of elections of the board, or an employee of the board of elections, authorized by the board, immediately after making and subscribing the certificate printed on the container-return envelope as provided in G.S. 163-229(b). All actions required by this subsection shall be performed in the office of the board of elections. For the purposes of this section only, the chairman, member, director of elections of the board, or full-time employee, authorized by the board shall sign the application and certificate as the witness and indicate the official title held by him or her. Notwithstanding G.S. 163-231(a), in the case of this subsection, only one witness shall be required on the certificate.
- (d) Only the chairman, member or director of elections of the board shall keep the voter's application for absentee ballots and the sealed container-return envelope in a safe place, separate and apart from other applications and container-return envelopes. At the first meeting of the board pursuant to G.S. 163-230(2) held after receipt of the application and envelope, the chairman shall comply with the requirements of G.S. 163-230(1) and 163-230(2) b. and c. If the voter's application for absentee ballots is approved by the board at that meeting, the application form and container-return envelope, with the ballots enclosed, shall be handled in the same manner and under the same provisions of law as applications and container-return envelopes received by the board under other provisions of this Article. If the voter's application for absentee ballots is disapproved by the board, the board shall so notify the voter stating the reason for disapproval by first-class mail

10

24 25 26

27

32

33 34 35

36

37 38 39

40 41

42 43 addressed to the voter at his residence address or at the address shown in the application for absentee ballots; and the board chairman shall retain the container-return envelope in its unopened condition until the day of the primary or election to which it relates and on that day he shall destroy the container-return envelope and the ballots therein, without, however, revealing the manner in which the voter marked the ballots.

- The voter shall vote his absentee ballot in a voting booth and the county board of elections shall provide a voting booth for that purpose, provided however, that the county board of elections may in the alternative provide a private room for the voter adjacent to the office of the board, in which case the voter shall vote his absentee ballot in that room. The voting booth shall be in the office of the county board of elections. If the voter needs assistance in getting to and from the voting booth and in preparing and marking his ballots or if he is a blind voter, only a member of the county board of elections, the director of elections, an employee of the board of elections authorized by the board, a near relative of the voter as defined in G.S. 163-227(c)(4), or the voter's legal guardian shall be entitled to assist the voter.
- Notwithstanding the exception specified in G.S. 163-116-163-36 counties which operate a modified full-time office shall remain open five days each week during regular business hours consistent with daily hours presently observed by the county board of elections, commencing with the date prescribed in G.S. 163-227.2(b) and continuing until 5:00 P.M. on the Friday prior to that election or primary. The boards of county commissioners shall provide necessary funds for the additional operation of the office during such time."

Sec. 6. G.S. 163-253 reads as rewritten:

## "§ 163-253. Article inapplicable to persons after change of status; reregistration required.

Upon discharge from the armed forces of the United States or termination of any other status qualifying him to register and vote by absentee ballot under the provisions of this Article, the voter shall not be entitled to vote by military absentee ballot, and if he was registered under the provisions of this Article his registration shall become void and he shall be required to register under the provisions of Article 7-7A before being entitled to vote in any primary or election."

Sec. 7. G.S. 163-254 reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-254. Registration and voting on primary or election day.

Notwithstanding any other provisions of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes, any person entitled to vote an absentee ballot pursuant to G.S. 163-245 shall be permitted to register in person at any time including the day of a primary or election. Should such person's eligibility to register or vote as provided in G.S. 163-245 terminate after the registration records have closed twenty-fifth day prior to a primary or election, such person, if he appears in person, shall be entitled to register if otherwise qualified during the time the records are closed, after the twenty-fifth day before the primary or election, or on the primary or election day, and shall be permitted to vote if such person is otherwise qualified."

-PUBLIC INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED FROM REGISTRATION RECORDS

Sec. 8. G.S. 163-82.10 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-82.10. Official record of voter registration.

(a) Application Form Becomes Official Record. – A completed and signed registration application form described in G.S. 163-82.3, once approved by the county board of elections, becomes the official registration record of the voter. The county board of elections shall maintain custody of the official registration records of all voters in the county and shall keep them in a place where they are secure.

Access to Registration Records. – Upon request by that person, the county

board of elections shall provide to any person a list of the registered voters of the county or of any precinct or precincts in the county. The county board may furnish selective lists according to party affiliation, gender, race, date of registration, precinct name, precinct identification code, congressional district, senate district, representative district, and, where applicable, county commissioner district, school board district, city governing board district, fire district, soil and water conservation district, and voting history including primary, general, and special elections, or any other reasonable category. The following shall apply if a county maintains or has its voter registration list maintained on a computer:

(1) In addition to the typed, mimeographed, photocopied, computer printout or label lists, the county board of elections shall make the voter registration information available to the public on magnetic medium.

Magnetic medium for the purpose of this section shall consist of nine track tape or 3.5 inch diskettes or 5.25 inch diskettes readily accessible using IBM compatible operating systems; and

 (2) Information provided if requested on magnetic medium shall contain the following if known to the board of elections: voter name including courtesy title, county voter identification number, residential address, mailing address, sex, race, age or date of birth or both, party affiliation, precinct name, precinct identification code, congressional district, senate district, representative district, and, where applicable, county commissioner district, school board district, city governing board district, fire district, soil and water conservation district, and any other district information available, and voting history including primary, general, and special elections back as far as available but at least to the second most recent congressional general election, and any other reasonable category,

provided that this subsection shall not require a county to computerize or upgrade the computerization of its lists, but if a county does computerize or upgrade it shall comply with subdivisions (1) and (2) of this subsection. The county board shall require each person to whom a list is furnished to reimburse the board for the actual cost incurred in preparing it, except as provided in subsection (c) of this section.

 (b1) 'Actual cost' for the purpose of this section shall be as defined in G.S. 132-6.2, providing that the following shall apply under this section:

- (1) Actual cost for any paper list or computer list shall not include the cost of any equipment or any imputed overhead expenses. It may include the actual cost of paper, labels, and magnetic medium. The purchaser at its discretion may provide the magnetic medium.
  - When furnishing information under subsection (b) of this section to a purchaser on a magnetic medium provided by the county board or the purchaser, the county board may impose a special service charge if justified by actual cost as provided in G.S. 132-6.2(b), but that special service charge shall not exceed twenty-five dollars (\$25.00).
- (c) Free Lists. Free lists of all registered voters in the county shall be provided in the following cases:
  - (1) A county board that maintains voter records on computer shall provide, upon written request, one free list to:
    - a. The State chair of each political party; and
    - b. The county chair of each political party once in every odd-numbered year, once during the first six calendar months of every even-numbered year, and once during the latter six calendar months of every even-numbered year.
  - (2) A county board that does not maintain voter records on computer shall provide one free paper list every two years to the county chair of each political party.

Each free list shall include the name, address, gender, date of birth, race, political affiliation, voting history, and precinct precinct, precinct name, precinct identification code, congressional district, senate district, representative district, and, where applicable, county commissioner district, school board district, city governing board district, fire district, soil and water conservation district, and voting history including primary, general, and special elections back to the second most recent congressional general election of each registered voter. The free paper list to the county party chairs shall group voters by precinct. All free lists shall be provided as soon as practicable but no later than 30 days after written request. Each State party chair shall provide the discs or tapes received from the county boards to candidates of that party who request the discs or tapes in writing. Each State party chair shall return discs and tapes to the county boards within 30 days after receiving them. As used in this section, 'political party' means a political party as defined in G.S. 163-96."

-UPDATE OF VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS TO REFLECT ADDRESS CHANGES RESULTING FROM EXTENDED 911 SYSTEMS

Sec. 9. G.S. 163-82.15 reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-82.15. Change of address within the county.

(a) Registrant's Duty to Report Report Move. – No registered voter shall be required to re-register upon moving from one precinct to another within the same county. Instead, a registrant shall notify the county board of the change of address by the close of registration for an election as set out in G.S. 163-82.6(c). The registrant shall make the notification by means of a voter registration form as described in G.S. 163-82.3, or by

1

5

19 20 21

22 23

29

30

24

41 42 43 another written notice, signed by the registrant, that includes the registrant's full name, former residence address, new residence address, and date of moving from the old to the new address.

- Local Government's Duty to Report Change of Address Designation. If the (a1) voter has not moved but the voter's address has been changed by a unit of local government because of conversion to an extended emergency telephone system or for some other reason, that unit of local government shall supply the appropriate county board of elections with sufficient information for the county board of elections to comply with its duty under subsection (c) of this section to change the registration records as soon as practical to reflect the new address.
- Verification of New Address by Mail. When a county board of elections receives a notice that a registrant in that county has changed residence within the same county, the county board shall send a notice, by nonforwardable mail, to the registrant at the new address. The notice shall inform the registrant of any new precinct and voting place that will result from the change of address, and it shall state whether the registrant shall vote at the new voting place during the upcoming election or at a later election. If the Postal Service returns the county board's notice to the registrant as undeliverable, the county board shall either:
  - (1) Send a second notice by nonforwardable mail to the new address and, if it is returned as undeliverable, send to the registrant's old address a confirmation notice as described in G.S. 163-82.14(d)(2); or
  - Send to the registrant's old address a confirmation notice as described in (2) G.S. 163-82.14(d)(2) without first sending a second nonforwardable notice to the new address.

In either case, if the registrant does not respond to the confirmation notice as described in G.S. 163-82.14(d)(2), then the county board shall proceed with the removal of the registrant from the list of voters in accordance with G.S. 163-82.14(d).

- Board's Duty to Make Changes in Address. If the county board confirms the registrant's new address in accordance with subsection (b) of this section, the county board shall as soon as practical change the record to reflect the new address. If the county board of elections is notified by a unit of local government that the registrant's address has been given a new official designation even though the registrant has not moved, the county board of elections shall as soon as practical change the record to reflect the new address designation; if the registrant has not moved, the county board may, but is not required to, confirm the registrant's new address through the procedure set forth in subsection (b) of this section.
- Unreported Move Within the Same Precinct. A registrant who has moved from one address to another within the same precinct shall, notwithstanding failure to notify the county board of the change of address before an election, be permitted to vote at the voting place of that precinct upon oral or written affirmation by the registrant of the change of address before a precinct official at that voting place.
- Unreported Move to Another Precinct Within the County. If a registrant has moved from an address in one precinct to an address in another precinct within the same

county more than 30 days before an election and has failed to notify the county board of the change of address before the close of registration for that election, the county board shall permit that person to vote in that election. The county board shall permit the registrant described in this subsection to vote at the registrant's new precinct, upon the registrant's written affirmation of the new address, or, if the registrant prefers, at a central location in the county to be chosen by the county board. If the registrant appears at the old precinct, the precinct officials there shall send the registrant to the new precinct or, if the registrant prefers, to the central location, according to rules which shall be prescribed by the State Board of Elections. At the new precinct, the registrant shall be precessed by a precinct transfer assistant, according to rules which shall be prescribed by the State Board of Elections.

- (f) When Registrant Disputes Registration Records. If the registration records indicate that the registrant has moved outside the precinct, but the registrant denies having moved from the address within the precinct previously shown on the records, the registrant shall be permitted to vote at the voting place for the precinct where the registrant claims to reside, if the registrant gives oral or written affirmation before a precinct official at that voting place.
- (g) Precinct Transfer Assistants. The county board of elections shall either designate a board employee or appoint other persons to serve as precinct transfer assistants to receive the election-day transfers of the voters described in subsection (e) of this section. In addition, board members and employees may perform the duties of precinct transfer assistants. The State Board of Elections shall promulgate uniform rules to carry out the provisions of this section, and shall define in those rules the duties of the precinct transfer assistant."

-REQUIRING COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS TO PROVIDE TO THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS SPECIFIED INFORMATION ABOUT FILED CANDIDATES AND ELECTION RESULTS

Sec. 10. G.S. 163-33 reads as rewritten:

## "§ 163-33. Powers and duties of county boards of elections.

The county boards of elections within their respective jurisdictions shall exercise all powers granted to such boards in this Chapter, and they shall perform all the duties imposed upon them by law, which shall include the following:

- (1) To make and issue such rules, regulations, and instructions, not inconsistent with law or the rules established by the State Board of Elections, as it may deem necessary for the guidance of election officers and voters.
- (2) To appoint all chief judges, judges, assistants, and other officers of elections, and designate the precinct in which each shall serve; and, after notice and hearing, to remove any chief judge, judge of elections, assistant, or other officer of election appointed by it for incompetency, failure to discharge the duties of office, failure to qualify within the time prescribed by law, fraud, or for any other satisfactory cause. In exercising the powers and duties of this subdivision, the board may act

- only when a majority of its members are present at any meeting at which such powers or duties are exercised.
- (3) To investigate irregularities, nonperformance of duties, and violations of laws by election officers and other persons, and to report violations to the State Board of Elections. In exercising the powers and duties of this subdivision, the board may act only when a majority of its members are present at any meeting at which such powers or duties are exercised.
- (4) As provided in G.S. 163-128, to establish, define, provide, rearrange, discontinue, and combine election precincts as it may deem expedient, and to fix and provide for places of registration and for holding primaries and elections.
- (5) To review, examine, and certify the sufficiency and validity of petitions and nomination papers.
- (6) To advertise and contract for the printing of ballots and other supplies used in registration and elections; and to provide for the delivery of ballots, pollbooks, and other required papers and materials to the voting places.
- (7) To provide for the purchase, preservation, and maintenance of voting booths, ballot boxes, registration and pollbooks, maps, flags, cards of instruction, and other forms, papers, and equipment used in registration, nominations, and elections; and to cause the voting places to be suitably provided with voting booths and other supplies required by law.
- To provide for the issuance of all notices, advertisements, and (8) publications concerning elections required by law. In addition, the county board of elections shall give notice at least 20 days prior to the date on which the registration books or records are closed that there will be a primary, general or special election, the date on which it will be held, and the hours the voting places will be open for voting in that election. The notice also shall describe the nature and type of election, and the issues, if any, to be submitted to the voters at that election. Notice shall be given by advertisement at least once weekly during the 20-day period in a newspaper having general circulation in the county and by posting a copy of the notice at the courthouse door. Notice may additionally be made on a radio or television station or both, but such notice shall be in addition to the newspaper and other required notice. This subdivision shall not apply in the case of bond elections called under the provisions of Chapter 159.
- (9) To receive the returns of primaries and elections, canvass the returns, make abstracts thereof, transmit such abstracts to the proper authorities, and to issue certificates of election to county officers and members of the General Assembly except those elected in districts composed of more than one county.

- To appoint and remove the board's clerk, assistant clerks, and other (10)1 2 employees; and to appoint and remove precinct transfer assistants as 3 provided in G.S. 163-72.3. 4 To prepare and submit to the proper appropriating officers a budget (11)5 estimating the cost of elections for the ensuing fiscal year. 6 (12)To perform such other duties as may be prescribed by this Chapter or 7 the rules of the State Board of Elections. 8 (13)Notwithstanding the provisions of any other section of this Chapter, to 9 have access to any ballot boxes and their contents, any voting machines 10 and their contents, any registration records, pollbooks, voter authorization cards or voter lists, any lists of absentee voters, any lists of 11 12 presidential registrants under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 as amended, and any other voting equipment or similar records, books or 13 14 lists in any precinct or municipality over whose elections it has
  - (14) To provide to the State Board of Elections for each candidate who files for elective office in the county the following information: name, address, telephone number, party affiliation, and office sought. The county board shall send this information to the State Board within 10 days after the close of the candidate filing period. The method of transmittal shall be determined by the State Board of Elections.

jurisdiction or for whose elections it has responsibility.

- (15) To provide to the State Board of Elections the following information after every primary, second primary, and general election:
  - <u>a.</u> The name, address, telephone number, party affiliation, and office sought of each winner.
  - <u>b.</u> The results by precinct for each candidate for each office.

    The method and timing of transmittal shall be determined by the State Board of Elections."

Sec. 10.1. G.S. 163-147 reads as rewritten:

# "§ 163-147. No loitering or electioneering at voting place.

(a) No person or group of persons shall, while the polls are open at the voting place on the day of the primary or election, loiter about, congregate, distribute campaign material, or do any electioneering within the voting place, or within 50-200 feet in any direction of the entrance or entrances to the building in which the voting place is located. Notwithstanding the above provision, if the voting place is located in a large building, the chief judge and judges of the precinct may designate the entrance to the voting place within said building and none of the above activity shall be permitted within 50-200 feet of said entrance or entrances of said voting place. This section shall not, however, prohibit any candidate for nomination or election from visiting such voting place in person, provided he does not enter the voting enclosure except to cast his vote as a registered voter in said precinct. The county boards of elections and precinct chief judges shall have full authority to enforce the provisions of this section.

15

16

17

18

19 20

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28 29

30

31

3233

3435

36

3738

39

40

- (b) This section does not prohibit establishment of or approval by the county board of elections of a simulated election within the voting place or voting enclosure for persons ineligible to vote because of their age, but the prohibitions of this section as to activities within the voting place or within 50-200 feet apply to that simulated election.
- The State Board of Elections shall adopt rules to ensure that the simulated election is not
- 6 disruptive of the regular process of voting."
  - Sec. 11. This act is effective upon ratification.