

SENATE No.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Joseph A. Boncore

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act concerning ballots.

PETITION OF:

NAME:

Joseph A. Boncore

DISTRICT/ADDRESS:

First Suffolk and Middlesex

SENATE No.

By Mr. Boncore, a petition (accompanied by bill) (subject to Joint Rule 12) of Joseph A. Boncore for legislation concerning ballots. Election Laws.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act concerning ballots.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Chapter 54 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding at the end of
2 section 86 the following:-

3 A voter in any city or town within the Commonwealth that requires bilingual ballots shall
4 be entitled to apply for and receive papers, explanatory matter, and instructions in bilingual form
5 as provided in section eight-seven. For all translated ballots in languages that do not use the
6 Roman alphabet, including but not limited to Chinese and Khmer, the state secretary shall
7 provide for the transliteration of all candidates' names as part of the bilingual ballot in
8 consultation with language-minority community groups and media. Transliteration means the
9 representation of a candidate's name with non-alphabetic characters, in a language that does not
10 use the Roman alphabet, according to the same standards used to transliterate city, county or
11 state names on the bilingual ballot: 1) Standard representations of common names shall be used
12 as can be found in dictionaries; 2) Less common names shall be represented by characters that

13 approximate the phonetics of a name in consultation with language-minority civic organizations
14 or the media.

15 All candidates shall be provided with a written copy of the proposed transliteration of
16 such candidate's name. Within seven days of receiving the proposed transliterations of such
17 candidate's name, that candidate may provide written notice to the state secretary of a
18 modification of the proposed transliteration of candidate's own name or decline to have
19 candidate's own name transliterated on the ballot. If a candidate does not respond, the state
20 secretary shall proceed to use the transliterated name assigned. The state secretary shall have
21 final approval of the transliteration and provide public notice of official transliterated names as
22 soon as practicable to relevant civic organizations and ethnic media to ensure consistency.

23 SECTION 2. Chapter 54 of the General Laws is hereby amended by adding at the end of
24 section 87 the following:-

25 Upon application by a voter who resides in any city or town within the Commonwealth
26 that requires bilingual ballots, the state secretary shall prepare and furnish all papers, explanatory
27 matter, and instruction required by this section in bilingual form. Transliteration of all
28 candidates' names shall be completed as provided for in section eighty-six.