

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 576**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the Year Two Thousand Nine**  
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An Act to establish election day registration..

*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. Section 1 of chapter 51 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2006  
2 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the last sentence and inserting in place  
3 thereof the following sentence:- A person otherwise qualified to vote for national or state  
4 officers shall not, by reason of a change of residence within the commonwealth, be disqualified  
5 from voting for such national or state officers in the city or town from which he has removed his  
6 residence until the expiration of 6 months from such removal, provided further, that a person  
7 having changed his residence shall be eligible to register under section 34A..

8           SECTION 2. Section 3 of said chapter 51, as so appearing, is hereby amended, by  
9 inserting, after the word, “registration” in lines 7 and 16, the following words:- , or in accordance  
10 with the provisions of section 34A.

11           SECTION 3. Section 26 of said chapter 51, as so appearing, is hereby amended by  
12 striking out, in lines 9 and 10, the words “eight o’clock in the evening” and inserting in place  
13 thereof, in each instance, the following figure:- 5:00 pm.

14 SECTION 4. Said chapter 51 is hereby further amended by striking out section 28, as so  
15 appearing, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

16 Section 28. Registrars shall hold a continuous session from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm on the  
17 last day for registration prescribed under section 26. For those towns having less than 1,500  
18 voters, such session shall be sufficient if it includes the time from 9:00 until 11:00 am and from  
19 2:00 until 5:00 pm.

20 SECTION 5. Said chapter 51 is hereby further amended by striking out section 34, as  
21 appearing in the 2006 Official Edition, and inserting in place thereof the following section:-

22 Section 34. Except as otherwise provided in section 34A, after 5:00 pm of a day on  
23 which registration is to cease, the registrars shall not register any person to vote in the next  
24 election, except that they shall furnish, or cause to be furnished, to each person waiting in line at  
25 the hour of 5:00 pm for the purpose of being registered, a card or slip of identification bearing  
26 such person's name and shall, before registration ceases, permit such person to register. The  
27 registrars may, however, enter or correct on the registers the names of persons who have  
28 registered as voters between December 31st preceding and the close of registration.

29 SECTION 6. Said chapter 51 is hereby further amended by inserting after section 34 the  
30 following section:-

31 Section 34A. (a) An individual who is eligible to vote may register on the day of an  
32 election by appearing in person at the polling place, during the hours it is open for voting, for the  
33 precinct in which the individual maintains residence, by completing a registration application in  
34 a form prescribed by the state secretary which complies with identity requirements of 42 U.S.C.  
35 section 15483, by presenting to the appropriate election official proof of residency and by

36 making a written oath which shall be as follows: I certify that I: am a citizen of the United  
37 States; am at least 18 years old; am not under guardianship or otherwise prohibited from voting;  
38 am not temporarily or permanently disqualified by law because of corrupt practices in respect to  
39 elections; have read and understand this statement: I further understand that giving false  
40 information is a felony punishable by not more than 5 years imprisonment or a fine of not more  
41 than \$10,000, or both.

42 (b) For purposes of this section, the term “proof of residence” shall mean 1 of the  
43 following, so long as it includes the name of the applicant and the address from which he or she  
44 is registering:

45 (i) a valid photo identification including, but not limited to, a Massachusetts’  
46 driver’s license or other state-issued identification card; or

47 (ii) other documentation demonstrating the name and address where the applicant  
48 maintains residence and seeks to register including, but not limited to, a copy of a current utility  
49 bill, bank statement, government check, residential lease agreement , wireless telephone  
50 statement, paycheck, other government document or correspondence , a current student fee  
51 statement or other document from a post-secondary educational institution that verifies the  
52 student’s current address.

53 (c) Upon meeting the identity requirements of subsection (a), production of proof of  
54 residence, and the making of an oath sufficient to support registration, the ballot clerk or his  
55 designee shall permit the applicant to vote on the day of an election and the registrar or his or her  
56 designee shall place the applicant’s name and address on the annual register of voters as soon as  
57 reasonably practicable following the date of the election as prescribed by the state secretary.

58 Any person who registers to vote on the day of an election in accordance with this section shall,  
59 absent disqualification, be registered to vote at all subsequent primaries and elections.

60 (d) The state secretary shall make available, to the election officers, to the extent  
61 possible, at each polling place, access to the central registry of voters set forth in section 47C.

62 For the purposes of this section, a printed copy of all voters registered to vote in that precinct as  
63 of the last day of the registration period, as required by sections 55 and 60, shall be sufficient.

64 (e) This section shall not apply to an individual seeking to register to vote in any town for  
65 the purposes of voting at annual town meeting or special town meeting.

66 (f) A registered voter shall not re-register on the day of an election for the exclusive  
67 purpose of altering his party affiliation.

68 (g) The state secretary shall adopt regulations to implement the relevant provisions of this  
69 chapter.

70 (h) Upon credible information or allegation of illegal voter registration, or credible  
71 information or allegation of illegal multiple voting, there shall be an investigation upon the  
72 merits of said information or allegation by the attorney general, or by the district attorney having  
73 jurisdiction over the municipality in which the alleged illegal registration or illegal multiple  
74 voting occurred. Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as excluding enforcement of this  
75 section by any means otherwise provided by law.

76 (i) Violations of this section shall be punishable under sections 8, 26 and 27, of chapter  
77 56.

78           SECTION 7. There shall be an advisory committee on the implementation of election  
79 day registration. Among other issues it may consider, the advisory committee shall study the  
80 resources necessary for, costs associated with, and feasibility of providing every polling location  
81 with real-time electronic access to the central registry of voters. The advisory committee shall be  
82 comprised of the secretary of state, or a designee, who shall chair the advisory committee, the  
83 attorney general, or a designee, the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on election  
84 laws, or their designees, 2 representatives of the Massachusetts Town Clerks Association, at least  
85 1 of whom shall be a town clerk from a town of under 5,000 residents, and 2 representatives of  
86 the Massachusetts City Clerks Association. The advisory committee shall complete its study on  
87 the implementation of election day registration and submit an interim report and  
88 recommendations for improving administration of election day registration, in writing, to the  
89 joint committee on election laws and the senate and house committees on ways and means on or  
90 before June 30, 2011, and the advisory committee shall submit its final report in writing to the  
91 joint committee on election laws and the senate and house committees on ways and means on or  
92 before June 30, 2013.