

**JOINT COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAWS**  
**2025-2026 (194<sup>th</sup>) BILL SUMMARY**

**Bill Number:** H.832

**Title:** *An Act relative to uniformity of ballots in polling places*

**Sponsor(s):** Rep. Sean Garballey (*Arlington*)

**Hearing Date:** June 17, 2025

**Reporting Deadline:** August 16, 2025

**Prior History:** 2023-24 (H.3577); Redrafted by Election Laws (H.4689); reported favorably; referred to House Policy, Steering, and Scheduling; read second  
2021-22 (H4952); Ordered to study

**Similar Matters:** N/A

**CURRENT LAW:**

*M.G.L. c. 54 § 44 – Official ballots:* Sets formatting standards for official ballots. It specifies the size, paper type, ink color, text orientation, and font size for candidates' names, with larger capital letters required for certain high-profile offices like president, vice president, and U.S. senator.

**SUMMARY:**

This bill requires all ballots be uniform in size, material, and content for all voters, whether marked by hand or using a ballot-marking device. It also prohibits tabulating votes from barcodes, QR codes, or any non-human-readable marks, mandating that votes be counted only from the selections visibly marked by the voter, except in limited cases where non-uniform ballots are necessary to comply with federal law or specific counting methods.