

Board of Election Commissioners Meeting

Wednesday, June 10, 2020

6:30 p.m.

(VIRTUAL MEETING)

Levi Lincoln Chamber, City Hall

Call to Order by the Chairperson

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call

Approval of the Minutes of the May 20th Meeting

New Business

- 1. Request from the Worcester City Council to hold a hearing to explore the preparations for the upcoming 2020 elections in September and November, including the feasibility of an all vote-by-mail election due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and that representatives from the Secretary of State's office, the Worcester Elections Department, other relevant State and City departments, voting advocacy organizations, and members of the public be invited to testify.**

Old Business

- 1. Preparation for the September 1, 2020 State Primary.**
- 2. Preparation for In-Person and Mail-In Early voting for the State Primary.**
- 3. Discussion concerning the recent legislation pertaining to Covid-19.**
- 4. Discussion concerning a review of polling locations for the 2020 Election Season.**
- 5. Discussion concerning poll workers for the September 1, 2020 Election.**

Adjournment:

Next Meeting Date:

Ward	Precinct	Location	Address
1	1	UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH, HALL	90 HOLDEN ST
1	2	THE WILLOWS AT WORCESTER, GREAT RM	101 BARRY RD
1	3	ASSUMPTION COLLEGE, LA MAISON FRANCAIS	500 SALISBURY ST
1	4	CONGREGATION BETH ISRAEL	15 JAMESBURY DR
1	5	PRICE CHOPPER SUPERMARKET, LEFT FRONT DR	72 PULLMAN ST
2	1	SALEM COVENANT CHURCH, REAR	215 MOUNTAIN ST EAST
2	2	ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH, LEEDS ST SIDE	41 WHITMARSH AVE
2	3	BURNCOAT HIGH SCHOOL	179 BURNCOAT ST
2	4	LINCOLN VLG TENANTS ASSN, VICKSBURG SIDE	116 COUNTRY CLUB BLVD
2	5	GREAT BROOK VALLEY MULTI-PURPOSE CTR	180 CONSTITUTION AVE
3	1	BURNCOAT HIGH SCHOOL	179 BURNCOAT ST
3	2	WORCESTER ART MUSEUM, RENAISSANCE COURT	55 SALISBURY ST
3	3	WORCESTER CENTER FOR CRAFTS, LOBBY	25 SAGAMORE RD
3	4	WORCESTER TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL, LOBBY	1 SKYLINE DR
3	5	FIRST ASSEMBLY OF GOD, CHURCH HALL	30 TYLER PRENTICE RD
4	1	MT CARMEL APARTMENTS	50 SHREWSBURY ST
4	2	AMERICAN LEGION EAST POST	326 PLANTATION ST
4	3	BELMONT APARTMENTS, REAR, COMMUNITY RM	40 BELMONT ST
4	4	FRIENDLY HOUSE, REAR, GYM	36 WALL ST
4	5	LINCOLN PARK TOWER, COMMUNITY RM	11 LAKE AVE
5	1	ADDISON APARTMENTS, COMMUNITY RM	6 ADDISON ST
5	2	OUR LADY OF LORETO, REAR, PARISH CTR	33 MASSASOIT RD
5	3	LAKE PARK COMM HOUSE, HAMILTON ST SIDE	300 LAKE AVE
5	4	MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY	414 MASSASOIT RD
5	5	MASSACHUSETTS AUDUBON SOCIETY	414 MASSASOIT RD
6	1	WORCESTER SENIOR CENTER, LUNCH RM	128 PROVIDENCE ST
6	2	WORCESTER SENIOR CENTER, LUNCH RM	128 PROVIDENCE ST
6	3	BLACKSTONE CORRIDOR VISITOR CENTER*	3 PAUL CLANCY WAY
6	4	BLACKSTONE CORRIDOR VISITOR CENTER*	3 PAUL CLANCY WAY
6	5	EMANUEL LUTHERAN CHURCH	200 GREENWOOD ST
7	1	BEAVER BROOK COMMUNITY BUILDING	15 MANN ST
7	2	STEARNS TAVERN	140 MILL ST

7	3	COES POND VILLAGE, LOWER LEVEL	39 FIRST ST
7	4	SHAW'S SUPERMARKET	68 STAFFORD ST
7	5	HADWEN PARK CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH	6 CLOVER ST
8	1	DEPT OF INSPECTIONAL SVCS, LOWER LEVEL	25 MEADE ST
8	2	ST PETER'S CHURCH, GYMNASIUM	929 MAIN ST
8	3	ST PETER'S CHURCH, GYMNASIUM	929 MAIN ST
8	4	WEBSTER SQUARE TOWERS, COMMUNITY RM	1050 MAIN ST
8	5	SOUTH WORC. NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER*	47 CAMP ST
9	1	WORC STATE UNIV, MAY ST BLDG, AUDITORIUM	280 MAY ST
9	2	WORC STATE UNIV, MAY ST BLDG, AUDITORIUM	280 MAY ST
9	3	WORC STATE UNIV, MAY ST BLDG, AUDITORIUM	280 MAY ST
9	4	WORCESTER SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH	2 AIRPORT DR
9	5	FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, LOWER LEVEL	1070 PLEASANT ST
10	1	ELM PARK TOWER, COMMUNITY RM	425 PLEASANT ST
10	2	ORDER OF AHEPA LODGE	68 CEDAR ST
10	3	MURRAY AVENUE APARTMENTS, COMMUNITY RM	50 MURRAY AVE
10	4	MAYSIDE APARTMENTS, COMMUNITY RM	26 MAYSIDE LN
10	5	YMCA	766 MAIN ST

Election Commission Meeting- May 20, 2020

Chairperson Commissioner Kimberly Vanderspek
Vice Chairperson Commissioner Winifred Octave
Commissioner John Stewart
Commissioner Danaah McCallum
Commissioner Richard Duffy

City Clerk Nikolin Vangjeli

Call to order by the Chairperson

Roll Call of Attendance 5 Yeas and 0 Nays

Pledge of Allegiance

Approval of the Minutes- the Board of Election Commissioners hereby approves the minutes of the Election Commissioners Meeting of April 22, 2020, Roll Call 5 Yeas and 0 Nays.

New Business

1. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item. The City Clerk stated they were waiting for the local political parties to distribute their list of recommended poll workers for the upcoming elections. He also spoke about how Covid-19 may affect the responses of poll workers.
2. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized Commissioner McCallum who also spoke concerning on the Item. It was decided that an Election Commission staff member would take on the responsibility of taking the minutes instead of someone on the board, Roll Call 4 Yeas and 1 Nay.

Old Business

1. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item. The City Clerk gave an overview of the state procedures, along with ideas for plans/procedures for the upcoming elections.

Chairperson Vanderspek recognized Commissioner Stewart who spoke concerning the Item, and shared his concerns with some of the polling locations during the time of Covid-19. Commissioner Stewart also gave recommendations for alternative polling locations. Chairperson Vanderspek and Vice Chairperson Octave also spoke concerning the Item.

Commissioner McCallum shared her concerns of voting outside, due to weather related issues, which could prevent people from voting.

2. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item. The City Clerk also communicated that they are still waiting for the finalized plan that is coming out of the legislator.
3. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item, and stated that they are planning to finalize all changes for the upcoming elections by June, however, they have to wait and make decisions based on the legislation.

Chairperson Vanderspek recognized Commissioner Stewart who spoke concerning the state of a current polling location. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized Commissioner McCallum who asked if the Director of Health and Human Rights for the City could be present at the next commission meeting and/or before the next election.

4. Chairperson Vanderspek recognized the City Clerk who spoke concerning the Item. They City Clerk updated the Commission by stating the school has not made a decision concerning the Item. Commissioner Stewart also spoke concerning the Item.

Motion to Adjourn, Roll Call: 5 Yeas and 0 Nays.

Next Meeting Date: June 10, 2020

HOUSE No. 4768

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

An Act relative to voting options in response to COVID-19.

Whereas, The deferred operation of this act would tend to defeat its purpose, which is to forthwith provide for increased voting options in response to COVID-19, therefore it is hereby declared to be an emergency law, necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health and convenience.

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

SECTION 1. Subsection (b) of section 25B of chapter 54 of the General Laws, as appearing in the 2018 Official Edition, is hereby amended by striking out the last sentence and inserting in place thereof the following sentence:- No application shall be deemed to be seasonably filed unless it is received in the office of the city or town clerk or registrars of voters before 5 P.M. on the seventh day preceding the election.

SECTION 2. Said section 25B of said chapter 54, as so appearing, is hereby further amended by striking out subsection (c) and inserting in place thereof the following subsection:-

(c) The voting period for in person early voting shall run from the eleventh business day preceding the general election until the close of business on the business day preceding the business day before the election; provided, however, that if the eleventh business day before the election falls on a legal holiday the early voting period shall begin on the first business day prior to the legal holiday. The voting period for early voting by mail shall begin as soon as all necessary early voting materials have been received by the local election official pursuant to subsection (h).

SECTION 3. Section 89 of said chapter 54, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out the first paragraph and inserting in place thereof the following paragraph:-

Any form of written communication evidencing a desire to have an absent voting ballot be sent for use for voting at an election shall be given the same effect as an application made in the form prescribed by the state secretary. No application for an absent voting ballot to be sent by mail shall be deemed to be seasonably filed unless it is received in the office of the city or town clerk or registrars of voters on or before the seventh day preceding the election for which the ballot is being requested; provided, however, that if the seventh day preceding such election is a Sunday or a legal holiday, then it shall be received by such clerk or registrars before 5 P.M. on the last previous day on which such office is open. No application for an absent voting ballot to be voted in person shall be deemed to be seasonably filed unless it is received in the office of the city or town clerk or registrars of voters on or before noon on the day preceding the election for which such absent voting ballot is requested; provided, however, that if the day preceding such election is a Sunday or legal holiday, then it shall be received by such clerk or registrars before 5 P.M. on the last previous day on which such office is open. An application by a voter admitted to a health care facility after noon of the seventh day before the relevant election, as provided in subsection (c) of section 91B, may be received up until the time the polls close.

SECTION 4. Section 91B of said chapter 54, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 21, the words “after noon of the fifth” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- on or after the seventh.

SECTION 5. Section 92 of said chapter 54, as so appearing, is hereby amended by striking out, in line 11, the words “eighty-seven, or” and inserting in place thereof the following words:- 87; via a secured municipal drop box, where provided; or.

SECTION 6. (a) As used in sections 6 to 14, inclusive, the following words shall, unless the context clearly requires otherwise, have the following meanings:-

“Application”, an application to vote early by mail.

“Central registry”, the central registry of voters established pursuant to section 47C of chapter 51 of the General Laws.

“General election” or “election”, the general election scheduled for November 3, 2020.

“Primary election” or “primary”, the primary election scheduled for September 1, 2020.

“Qualified voter” or “voter”, a voter qualified pursuant to section 1 of chapter 51 of the General Laws.

“State secretary,” the secretary of the commonwealth.

(b) Notwithstanding section 25B of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, there shall be early voting by mail for the primary election and general election.

(c) The election officers and registrars of every city or town shall allow any qualified voter to cast an early ballot by mail for the primary election and general election and any city or town election held at the same time.

(d)(1) The state secretary shall, no later than July 15, 2020, mail to all registered voters who registered to vote before July 15 at their residential addresses listed in the central registry an application for said voter to be permitted to vote early by mail for the primary election.

(2) The state secretary shall, no later than September 14, 2020, mail to all registered voters who registered to vote before September 14 at their residential addresses listed in the central registry an application for said voter to be permitted to vote early by mail in the general election.

(3) (i) The state secretary or the election officers and registrars of every city or town shall mail to any person registering to vote on or after July 15, 2020 and on or before August 12, 2020, an application for said voter to be permitted to vote early by mail for the primary election.

(ii) The state secretary or the election officers and registrars of every city or town shall mail to any person registering to vote on or after September 14, 2020 and on or before October 14, 2020, an application for said voter to be permitted to vote early by mail for the general election.

(4) The applications required pursuant to this subsection shall be in a form prescribed by the state secretary in accordance with state and federal law; provided, however, that said applications shall include: (i) clear instructions for completing and returning the application; and (ii) an envelope that is addressed to the local election official with postage guaranteed.

(5) Each application required pursuant to this subsection shall include an option, which shall appear prominently on the application, to request a ballot printed in the language of the ballot available at the voter's polling location pursuant to the bilingual election requirements of the federal Voting Rights Act, 52 USC § 10503, chapter 166 of the acts of 2014 or any other applicable federal or state law.

(6) The applications required pursuant to this subsection shall be made available on the websites of the state secretary and the election officers and registrars of every city or town.

(e)(1) A voter wishing to vote early by mail in the primary election shall complete the application to vote early by mail and shall return said application to the appropriate city or town clerk. Any form of written communication evidencing a desire to have an early voting ballot be sent for use for voting for the primary election shall be given the same effect as an application made in the form prescribed by the state secretary. Applications to vote early by mail for the primary election shall be acceptable if they are signed or submitted electronically.

(2) No application to vote early by mail in the primary election shall be deemed to be seasonably filed unless it is received in the office of the local election official before noon on Tuesday, August 25, 2020.

(f)(1) A voter wishing to vote early by mail in the general election shall complete the application and shall return said application to the appropriate city or town clerk. Applications to vote early by mail for the general election shall be acceptable if they are signed or submitted electronically.

(2) No application to vote early by mail in the general election shall be deemed to be seasonably filed unless it is received in the office of the local election official before noon on Tuesday, October 27, 2020.

(g)(1) Early voting ballots authorized pursuant to this section shall be mailed by the city or town clerk to voters as soon as such materials are available; provided, however, that said mailing shall include: (i) instructions for early voting; (ii) instructions for completing the ballot; (iii) an inner envelope where the ballot is placed after voting which contains an affidavit of compliance to be filled out by the voter; and (iv) an outer envelope that is addressed to the local election official with postage guaranteed; provided, that a voter who has seasonably filed an application may receive an early voting ballot in person at the office of the city or town clerk.

(2) Each early voting ballot authorized pursuant to this section shall be provided to the voter in the language selected by the voter pursuant to paragraph (5) of subsection (d); provided, that if the voter did not select a language, the ballot shall be provided in English.

(h)(1) A voter in receipt of an early voting ballot for the primary election pursuant to this section may complete and return the ballot by: (i) delivering it in person to the office of the appropriate city or town clerk; (ii) dropping it in a secured municipal drop box; or (iii) mailing it to the appropriate city or town clerk.

(2) A voter in receipt of an early voting ballot for the general election pursuant to this section may complete and return the ballot by: (i) delivering it in person to the office of the appropriate city or town clerk; (ii) dropping it in a secured municipal drop box; or (iii) mailing it to the appropriate city or town clerk.

(i) All early voting ballots submitted by mail, delivered in person to the office of the city or town clerk or returned to a secured municipal drop box as provided by this section shall be received by the city or town clerk before the hour fixed for closing the polls on the day of the primary election or general election.

SECTION 7. (a) Notwithstanding section 25B of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, there shall be early voting in person for the primary election and the general election.

(b)(1) The election officers and registrars of every city or town shall allow any qualified voter to cast an early ballot in person for the primary election during the early voting period, which shall begin on Saturday, August 22, 2020 and end on Friday, August 28, 2020. Early voting in person shall also apply to any city or town election held at the same time.

(2) The election officers and registrars of every city or town shall allow any qualified voter to cast a ballot in person for the general election during the early voting period, which shall begin on Saturday, October 17, 2020 and end on Friday, October 30, 2020. Early voting in person shall also apply to any city or town election held at the same time.

(3) Any qualified voter wishing to vote early in person in the primary or general election may do so at the time, manner and location prescribed in this section.

(c)(1) Early voting in person for the primary election shall be conducted on Saturday, August 22, 2020 and Sunday, August 23, 2020, as follows: (i) for municipalities with fewer than 5,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 2 hours each day; (ii) for municipalities with 5,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 20,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 4 hours each day; (iii) for municipalities with 20,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 40,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 5 hours each day; (iv) for municipalities with 40,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 75,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 6 hours each day; and (v) for municipalities with 75,000 or more registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 8 hours each day. For each other day during the early voting period, early voting shall be conducted during the usual business hours of each city or town clerk. A city or town may, in its discretion, provide for additional early voting hours beyond the hours required by this paragraph.

(2) Early voting for the general election shall be conducted on Saturday, October 17, 2020, Sunday, October 18, 2020, Saturday, October 24, 2020 and Sunday, October 25, 2020 as follows: (i)

for municipalities with fewer than 5,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 2 hours each day; (ii) for municipalities with 5,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 20,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 4 hours each day; (iii) for municipalities with 20,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 40,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 5 hours each day; (iv) for municipalities with 40,000 or more registered voters but fewer than 75,000 registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 6 hours each day; and (v) for municipalities with 75,000 or more registered voters, for a period of a minimum of 8 hours each day. For each other day during the early voting period, early voting shall be conducted during the usual business hours of each city or town clerk. A city or town may, in its discretion, provide for additional early voting hours beyond the hours required by this paragraph.

(d)(1) Each city and town shall establish an early voting site for the primary election and an early voting site for the general election that shall include the election office for the city or town; provided, however, that if the city or town determines that the office is unavailable or unsuitable for early voting in either the primary election or general election, the registrars of each city or town shall identify and provide for an alternative centrally-located, suitable and convenient public building within that city or town as an early voting site. A city or town may also provide for additional early voting sites for the primary election or general election at the discretion of the registrars for that city or town. Each early voting site shall be accessible to persons with disabilities.

(2) The designation of early voting sites for the primary election shall be made no later than August 7, 2020. No later than August 14, 2020, and at least once during the voting period, the registrars for each city or town shall post the location of the early voting sites as well as the applicable dates and hours. Notice shall be conspicuously posted: (i) in the office of the city or town clerk or on the principal official bulletin board of each city or town; (ii) on any other public building considered necessary; (iii) on the city or town's website, if any; and (iv) on the website of the state secretary.

(3) The designation of early voting sites for the general election shall be made no later than October 2, 2020. No later than October 9, 2020, and at least once during the voting period, the registrars for each city or town shall post the location of the early voting sites as well as the applicable

dates and hours. Notice shall be conspicuously posted: (i) in the office of the city or town clerk or on the principal official bulletin board of each city or town; (ii) on any other public building considered necessary; (iii) on the city or town's website, if any; and (iv) on the website of the state secretary.

(e) A qualified voter voting early in person shall be provided with a ballot and an envelope where the ballot is placed after voting which contains an affidavit of compliance to be filled out by the voter. A qualified voter voting early in person shall complete an affidavit under the regulations promulgated pursuant to this act, which shall include a notice of penalties under section 26 of chapter 56 of the General Laws.

(f) Prior to the beginning of early voting, the registrars for each city or town shall prepare a list for the early voting sites, containing the names and residences of all persons qualified to vote at each voting site, as the names and residences appear upon the annual register, and shall reasonably transmit the applicable list to the election officers at each early voting site designated by the registrars.

(g) The registrar or presiding official at the early voting site shall cause to be placed on the voting lists opposite the name of a qualified voter who participates in early voting the letters "EV" designating an early voter.

(h) The registrars shall prepare lists of all voters casting ballots pursuant to this section or section 6 during the early voting period and update the voter list in a manner prescribed by the state secretary.

(i) A city or town may opt to detail a sufficient number of police officers or constables for each early voting site for the primary election at the expense of the city or town to preserve order, protect the election officers and supervisors from any interference with their duties and aid in enforcing the laws relating to elections.

(j) No early voting ballot cast under this section or section 6 shall be counted if the officer charged with the duty of counting the ballot is cognizant of the fact that the voter has died prior to the opening of the polls on the day of the primary election.

SECTION 8. (a) No later than August 3, 2020, the state secretary shall deliver to each city or town, in quantities as the state secretary determines necessary, the following papers: (i) official absentee and early voting ballots for the primary election, similar to the official ballot to be used at the primary election; provided, that a sufficient quantity of such ballots are printed in the languages necessary to accommodate the selection of a bilingual ballot by voters pursuant to paragraph 5 of subsection (d) of section 6; (ii) envelopes of sufficient size to contain the ballots specified in clause (i) bearing on their reverse the voter's affidavit in compliance with the requirements of subsection (j) of section 25B of chapter 54 of the General Laws; (iii) return envelopes for any ballot requested for voting by mail pre-addressed to the local election official with postage guaranteed; and (iv) instructions for voting by mail to be sent to each voter who requests to cast a ballot by mail.

(b) No later than October 9, 2020, the state secretary shall deliver to each city or town, in quantities as the state secretary determines necessary, the following papers: (i) official absentee and early voting ballots, for the general election, similar to the official ballot to be used at the general election; provided, that a sufficient quantity of such ballots are printed in the languages necessary to accommodate the selection of a bilingual ballot by voters pursuant to paragraph 5 of subsection (d) of section 6; (ii) envelopes of sufficient size to contain the ballots specified in clause (i) bearing on their reverse the voter's affidavit in compliance with the requirements of subsection (j) of said section 25B of said chapter 54; (iii) return envelopes for any ballot requested for voting by mail pre-addressed to the local election official with postage guaranteed; and (iv) instructions for voting by mail to be sent to each voter who requests to cast a ballot by mail.

SECTION 9. (a) Sections 37 and 38 of chapter 53 of the General Laws shall apply to unenrolled voters and voters enrolled in political designations voting early in the primary election. The registrar or presiding official at the early voting site shall cause the name of the party of the ballot being voted to be recorded on the voting list. Once the party selection has been recorded on the voting list, a voter cannot request or vote on the ballot of another party.

(b) The counting of early voting ballots including, but not limited to, informing election officers and any challengers present under section 85A of chapter 54 of the General Laws shall be set

by 950 C.M.R. § 47.00, so far as applicable. All envelopes referred to in this section shall be retained with the ballots cast at the primary election and shall be preserved and destroyed in the manner provided by law for the retention, preservation or destruction of official ballots.

(c) The provisions of 950 C.M.R. § 47.00 shall apply to early voting at the primary election to the extent feasible; provided, however, that the state secretary shall promulgate rules to accommodate the dates set forth herein.

SECTION 10. Notwithstanding section 25B of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, the election officers and registrars of every city or town shall allow any qualified voter to vote early by mail for any city or town election held on or before December 31, 2020.

SECTION 11. Notwithstanding section 24 of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, the select board, board of selectmen, town council or city council may vote to change any polling place to be used at the primary election or the general election at least 10 days prior to the date of the primary election or general election. If the select board, board of selectmen, town council or city council determines that the public convenience would be better served, they may house all polling places in a single building within the municipality, if such building is suitably equipped. In cities, the city council may designate polling places in non-adjacent precincts if they determine the public convenience would be better served. When the polling places have been designated pursuant to this section, the board of registrars shall post on the municipal website and at other such places as it may determine, a description of the polling places and shall notify voters by using an electronic means, to the extent available, such as via email or reverse 911 call.

SECTION 12. Notwithstanding section 29 of chapter 53 of the General Laws and sections 11, 11B, 12 and 13 of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, for the primary election and general election, the town or city clerk, mayor, select board, board of selectmen or other appointing authority may appoint election officers without regard to political party

membership, voter status, residence in the city or town or inclusion on a list filed by a political party committee pursuant to said sections 11B and 12 of said chapter 54.

SECTION 13. Notwithstanding sections 67 and 83 of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, for the primary election and general election, the city or town clerk may eliminate the requirement that a voter provide their name or residence to an election officer at the ballot box and that the election officer mark the name off a voting list before the voter may deposit the ballot in the ballot box.

SECTION 14. Notwithstanding any general or special law to the contrary, the state secretary, in consultation with the registry of motor vehicles, shall implement a system to allow a qualified voter to request an early or absentee ballot on the secretary of state's website, to be mailed to the qualified voter's home address or, at the qualified voter's request, to receive at the office of the town or city clerk. No later than August 15, 2020, the state secretary shall submit to the house and senate chairs of the joint committee on election laws a report detailing the efforts taken and progress made on the implementation of such system for qualified voters.

SECTION 15. For an election held on or before December 31, 2020, any person taking precaution related to COVID-19 in response to a declared state of emergency or from guidance from a medical professional, local or state health official or any civil authority shall be deemed to be unable by reason of physical disability to cast their vote in person at a polling location.

SECTION 16. Notwithstanding sections 25B and 89 of chapter 54 of the General Laws or any other general or special law to the contrary, applications for early and absentee ballots for all elections held on or before December 31, 2020 shall be acceptable if they are signed or submitted electronically; provided, that any electronic signature shall be written in substantially the same manner as a handwritten signature.

SECTION 17. Notwithstanding any other general or special law to the contrary, subsection (c) of section 91B of chapter 54 of the General Laws shall apply to voters who have been instructed by a

medical professional or a local or state health official to self-quarantine in their home beginning after noon on the seventh day before the any election held on or before December 31, 2020.

SECTION 18. The state secretary shall promulgate emergency regulations for the administration and enforcement of this act including, after consulting with the commissioner of the department of public health, regulations requiring public health safeguards at early voting sites and polling places, including required distancing of voters and election officers, frequent use of sanitizers, appropriate clothing and use of marking pens.