ASSEMBLY, No. 1632

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

209th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2000 SESSION

Sponsored by:
Assemblyman KEVIN J. O'TOOLE
District 21 (Essex and Union)

SYNOPSIS

Permits simulated voting for minors at polling place.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.

AN ACT permitting simulated voting for minors at a polling place and amending R.S.19:15-8 and 19:34-6.

BE IT ENACTED *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State of New Jersey:*

1. R.S.19:15-8 is amended to read as follows:

19:15-8. a. No person shall be allowed or permitted to be present in the polling place or polling room during the progress of the election except the officers connected with the election, persons connected with the operation of a simulated election for minors as described in subsection b. of this section, the several candidates, the duly authorized challengers, such voters as are present for the purpose of voting and their dependent children, minors present for the purpose of voting in a simulated election, and such officers as may be duly detailed to be present, pursuant to this title, for preserving the peace or enforcing the provisions hereof.

b. A county board of elections may authorize a simulated election for minors at a polling place, provided the simulated election does not interfere with the orderly conduct of the official voting process.

(cf: P.L.1994, c.154, s.1)

2. R.S.19:34-6 is amended to read as follows:

19:34-6 a. If a person shall on election day tamper, deface or interfere with any polling booth or obstruct the entrance to any polling place, or obstruct or interfere with any voter, or loiter, or do any electioneering within any polling place or within one hundred feet thereof, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanor and shall be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars ($500.00) or by imprisonment not exceeding one year, or both.

b. This section shall not be construed to prohibit a minor from entering a polling place on the day of an election to vote in a simulated election at that polling place, or persons from supervising or working at a polling place in a simulated election in which minors vote, provided that the county board of elections has determined that the polling place can accommodate simulated election activities without interfering with the orderly conduct of the official voting process.

(cf: P.L.1948, c.438, s.12)

3. This act shall take effect on January 1st next after enactment.

EXPLANATION - Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

STATEMENT

This bill permits a county board of elections to authorize a simulated election for minors at a polling place, provided the simulated election activities do not interfere with the official voting process. The bill amends current law to allow minors to enter the polling place for the purpose of voting in a simulated election and to allow persons connected with the operation of a simulated election for minors to be present at the polling place.

This bill will allow for the implementation of the "Kids Voting" program in this State. Kids Voting is a private, nonpartisan, nonprofit, grassroots organization dedicated to educating youth about the importance of being an informed citizen and the responsibilities of voting to sustain democracy. Teachers in kindergarten through 12th grade incorporate Kids Voting lessons tailored to different ages in their curriculum, and students 'register' to vote in the classroom. On election day, students go to the polling place with a parent, guardian, or other adult to vote in a simulated election which closely approximates the official election.

Kids Voting began in 1988 in Arizona and has been expanding nationally since 1992. Over 40 states currently use the Kids Voting curriculum in their schools.