

# ASSEMBLY, No. 2763

## STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 13, 2020

**Sponsored by:**

**Assemblyman ANDREW ZWICKER**

**District 16 (Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex and Somerset)**

**Assemblywoman LISA SWAIN**

**District 38 (Bergen and Passaic)**

**Assemblyman JAMEL C. HOLLEY**

**District 20 (Union)**

**Co-Sponsored by:**

**Assemblywomen Vainieri Huttler, Speight, Dunn, Murphy, McKnight,  
Assemblymen Karabinchak and Stanley**

**SYNOPSIS**

“New Voter Empowerment Act”; permits 17 year olds to vote in primary election if they turn 18 years old before next succeeding general election.

**CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT**

As introduced.



**(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 12/2/2021)**

1 AN ACT concerning eligibility to vote in a primary election for the  
2 general election and designated as the “New Voter  
3 Empowerment Act,” amending R.S.19:31-5, and supplementing  
4 chapter 23 of Title 19 of the Revised Statutes.

5  
6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State  
7 of New Jersey:

8  
9 1. (New section) Notwithstanding the provisions of R.S.19:4-1, or  
10 any other law, rule, or regulation to the contrary, any registered voter  
11 who is 17 years of age prior to the date on which a primary election for  
12 the general election is held shall be permitted to vote in that primary  
13 election if the registered voter attains 18 years of age on or before the  
14 day of the next succeeding general election.

15  
16 2. R.S.19:31-5 is amended to read as follows:

17 19:31-5. Each person, who is at least 17 years of age at the time he  
18 or she applies for registration, who resides in the district in which he or  
19 she expects to vote, who will be of the age of 18 years or more on or  
20 before the first election in which he or she expects to vote, who is a  
21 citizen of the United States, and who, if he or she continues to reside in  
22 the district until that election, will at the time have fulfilled all the  
23 requirements as to length of residence to qualify him or her as a legal  
24 voter, shall, unless otherwise disqualified, be entitled to be registered  
25 in such district. Each 17-year-old registrant shall be designated in the  
26 Statewide voter registration system as temporarily ineligible to vote  
27 until the registrant's 18th birthday , except as provided pursuant to  
28 section 1 of P.L. , c. (C. ) (pending before the Legislature as this  
29 bill).

30 Whenever an individual registers by mail after January 1, 2003 to  
31 vote for the first time in his or her current county of residence, that  
32 individual shall provide either the individual's New Jersey driver's  
33 license number or the last four digits of the individual's Social Security  
34 Number, or shall submit with the voter registration form a copy of: (1)  
35 a current and valid photo identification card; (2) a current utility bill,  
36 bank statement, government check or pay check; (3) any other  
37 government document that shows the individual's name and current  
38 address; or (4) any other identifying document that the Attorney  
39 General has determined to be acceptable for this purpose. If the  
40 individual does not provide his or her New Jersey driver's license  
41 number or Social Security Number information or submit a copy of  
42 any one of these documents, either at the time of registration or at any  
43 time thereafter prior to attempting to vote, the individual shall be asked  
44 for identification when voting for the first time starting at the first  
45 election held after January 1, 2004 at which candidates are seeking

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

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

1 federal office or thereafter. This requirement shall not apply to any  
2 individual entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the "Uniformed  
3 and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act" (42 U.S.C. 1973ff-1 et  
4 seq.) or to any individual who is provided the right to vote other than  
5 in person under section 3 of Pub.L.98-435, the "Voting Accessibility  
6 for the Elderly and Handicapped Act," or any other voter entitled to  
7 vote otherwise than in person under any other federal law. This  
8 requirement shall also not apply to any individual who registers to vote  
9 by appearing in person at any voter registration agency or to any  
10 individual whose voter registration form is delivered to the county  
11 commissioner of registration or to the Attorney General, as the case  
12 may be, through a third party by means other than by mail delivery.

13 Once registered, the registrant shall not be required to register  
14 again in such district as long as he or she resides therein, except when  
15 required to do so by the commissioner, because of the loss of or some  
16 defect in his or her registration record.

17 The registrant, when registered as provided in this Title, shall be  
18 eligible to vote at any election to be held subsequent to such  
19 registration, if he or she shall be a citizen of the United States of the  
20 age of 18 years , except as provided pursuant to section 1 of P.L. , c.  
21 (C. ) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), and shall have been  
22 a resident of the State for at least 30 days and of the county at least 30  
23 days, when the same is held, subject to any change in his qualifications  
24 which may later disqualify him. No registrant shall lose the right to  
25 vote, and no registrant's name shall be removed from the registry list  
26 of the county in which the person is registered, solely on grounds of  
27 the person's failure to vote in one or more elections.

28 (cf: P.L.2015, c.222, s.1)

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30 3. This act shall take effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> next following the  
31 date of enactment.

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#### STATEMENT

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36 This bill, designated as the "New Voter Empowerment Act," permits  
37 any registered voter who is 17 years of age prior to the date on which a  
38 primary election for the general election is held to vote in that primary  
39 election if the registered voter attains 18 years of age on or before the day  
40 of the next succeeding general election.

41 Current law permits a person who is at least 17 years of age to register  
42 to vote if the person will be at least 18 at the time of the election.  
43 However, the person is designated in the Statewide Voter Registration  
44 System as temporarily ineligible to vote until that person's 18th birthday.  
45 This bill would permit that person to vote in a primary election  
46 notwithstanding that the person is not yet 18 years of age, as long as the  
47 person attains 18 years of age on or before the next general election.