

ASSEMBLY APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 4814

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: JUNE 16, 2021

The Assembly Appropriations Committee reports favorably Assembly Bill No. 4814.

This bill allows a mail-in voter to cure their mail-in ballot due to a missing mail-in voter certificate.

Under current law, each mail-in voter is required to complete the Certificate of Mail-in Voter that is attached to the flap of the mail-in ballot inner envelope. By completing the certificate, the mail-in voter certifies, subject to the penalties for fraudulent voting: the voter's address, that the voter is the person who applied for the enclosed ballot, that the voter marked the ballot in secret, and that a family member may provide assistance to the voter. The mail-in voter is required to sign the certificate. Furthermore, the certificate requires any person who provided assistance to the voter in marking the ballot to complete a portion of the certificate on which that person certifies that the person assisted the voter, and declares that the person will maintain the secrecy of the voter's ballot. The person who provided assistance is also required to provide the person's signature, printed name, and address on the certificate.

Under this bill, when the voter failed to include the Certificate of Mail-in Voter, the county board of elections would be required to provide the voter, along with the Cure Letter and Cure Form, with a substantially similar certificate for the voter to complete in order to cure the voter's mail-in ballot in accordance with the same requirements, procedures, and timeframes specified for ballot curing due to a missing or discrepant signature.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The Office of Legislative Services (OLS) finds that the ballot cure provisions of this bill will result in an indeterminate cost increase for the State and county boards of elections. The bill expands the ballot curing provisions under current law to include the ability of voters to cure ballots rejected due to a missing Certificate of Mail-in Voter. The county boards of elections will incur costs to produce, process, and mail cure letters to voters whose ballots contained discrepancies, re-process returned cure letters, and any additional workload and overtime costs.

The OLS notes that the implementation costs of this bill are likely to vary from year to year, depending on the type of elections held

(such as local, gubernatorial, legislative, congressional or presidential), the number voters who vote by mail in any given year, and the missing certificate error rate.

The OLS notes that this fiscal estimate assumes the State will reimburse county boards elections for the costs of administering cure letters.