

SENATE, No. 323

STATE OF NEW JERSEY
219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator PATRICK J. DIEGNAN, JR.

District 18 (Middlesex)

SYNOPSIS

Decreases from 55 days to 21 days minimum time required to change political party affiliation prior to primary.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** concerning changing political party affiliation prior to a
2 primary and amending R.S.19:23-45.

3

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

6

7 1. R.S.19:23-45 is amended to read as follows:

8 19:23-45. No voter shall be allowed to vote at the primary
9 election unless his name appears in the signature copy register.

10 A voter who votes in a primary election of a political party or
11 who signs and files with the municipal clerk or the county
12 commissioner of registration a declaration that he desires to vote in
13 the primary election of a political party, or who indicates on a voter
14 registration form the voter's choice of political party affiliation and
15 submits the form to the commissioner of registration of the county
16 wherein the voter resides, to the employees or agents of a public
17 agency, as defined in subsection a. of section 15 of P.L.1974, c.30
18 (C.19:31-6.3), or a voter registration agency, as defined in
19 subsection a. of section 26 of P.L.1994, c.182 (C.19:31-6.11), or to
20 the Secretary of State, shall be deemed to be a member of that party
21 until the voter signs and files with the municipal clerk or the
22 commissioner of registration a declaration that he desires to vote in
23 the primary election of another political party at which time he shall
24 be deemed to be a member of such other political party. The
25 Secretary of State shall cause to be prepared political party
26 affiliation declaration forms and shall provide such forms to the
27 commissioners of registration of the several counties and to the
28 clerks of the municipalities within such counties.

29 No voter, except a newly registered voter at the first primary at
30 which he is eligible to vote, or a voter who has not previously voted
31 in a primary election, may vote in a primary election of a political
32 party unless he was deemed to be a member of that party on the
33 **【55th】** 21st day next preceding such primary election.

34 A member of the county committee of a political party and a
35 public official or public employee holding any office or public
36 employment to which he has been elected or appointed as a member
37 of a political party shall be deemed a member of such political
38 party.

39 A voter may declare the voter's party affiliation or change the
40 voter's party affiliation, or declare that the voter is unaffiliated with
41 any party regardless of any previously declared party affiliation, by
42 so indicating on a political party declaration form filed with the
43 municipal clerk or the county commissioner of registration. A voter
44 may also indicate that the voter wishes to declare a political party
45 affiliation or that the voter does not want to declare a political party

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 affiliation on a voter registration form filed at the time of initial
2 registration.

3 Any person voting in the primary ballot box of any political
4 party in any primary election in contravention of the election law
5 shall be guilty of a disorderly persons offense, and any person who
6 aids or assists any such person in such violation by means of public
7 proclamation or order, or by means of any public or private
8 direction or suggestions, or by means of any help or assistance or
9 cooperation, shall likewise be guilty of a disorderly persons offense.
10 (cf: P.L.2011, c.134, s.27)

11

12 2. This act shall take effect immediately.

13

14

15

STATEMENT

16

17 This bill would decrease, from 55 days to 21 days, the minimum
18 time required to change one's political party affiliation prior to a
19 primary election.

20 This bill would make the minimum time required to change
21 one's political party affiliation prior to a primary election identical
22 to the minimum time required to register to vote prior to an
23 election.