A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO RESTORE CONFIDENCE IN GOVERNMENT BY ESTABLISHING THE
VOTER INFORMATION VERIFICATION ACT TO PROMOTE THE ELECTORAL
PROCESS THROUGH EDUCATION AND INCREASED REGISTRATION OF
VOTERS AND BY REQUIRING VOTERS TO PROVIDE PHOTO IDENTIFICATION
BEFORE VOTING TO PROTECT THE RIGHT OF EACH REGISTERED VOTER TO
CAST A SECURE VOTE WITH REASONABLE SECURITY MEASURES THAT
CONFIRM VOTER IDENTITY AS ACCURATELY AS POSSIBLE WITHOUT
RESTRICTION.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. VIVA

SECTION 1. There is established a Voter Information Verification Advisory board
with at least three, but no more than five, members who are registered voters of the State and
appointed by the State Board of Elections. Appointments to the board shall include members of
more than one party affiliation and of no party affiliation. The State Board may not appoint
members in a manner that results in one political party affiliation having a majority on the
board. The Voter Information Verification Advisory board shall do all of the following:

(1) Promote voter registration.
(2) Assist in voter registration drives.
(3) Assist in recruiting poll workers for election day.
(4) Provide education to the public about voter registration and casting a ballot,
in accordance with Chapter 163 of the General Statutes. Education shall
include information about any identification requirements of voting, voting
by mail-in absentee ballot, and voting by early one-stop ballot.
(5) Assist, as requested, in other matters related to voter registration, voting,
counting of ballots, and candidacy for elected office. Assistance shall
include helping individuals registered to vote without photo identification to
obtain photo identification appropriate for voting.
(6) Develop a system of identifying and training volunteers in the counties in the
State to assist with its duties and responsibilities under this section.
(7) Attend training for county board of elections members under
G.S. 163-82.24.
(8) Reach out to State and local governmental agencies, political parties
established under Article 9 of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes, and
nonprofit organizations operating in this State to help identify registered voters without photo identification appropriate for voting and assist those voters in obtaining photo identification appropriate for voting.

SECTION 2. G.S. 163-82.20 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(i) Additional Public Agencies Permitted to Offer Registration. – If approved by the State Board of Elections, the county board of elections, and the county board of commissioners, a county may offer voter registration in accordance with this section through the following additional public offices:

(1) Senior centers or facilities operated by the county.
(2) Parks and recreation services operated by the county."

SECTION 3. The State Board of Elections may hire up to 14 persons to assist the Voter Information Verification Advisory Board established under this part, upon the instruction of the Executive Director. The State Board shall utilize the staff to disseminate information about photo identification requirements for voting, provide information on how to obtain photo identification appropriate for voting, and assist any registered voter without photo identification appropriate for voting with obtaining such photo identification. Information may be distributed through public service announcements, print, radio, television, online, and social media. The State Board, through its staff and the public records available to the State Board, shall work with public agencies, private partners, and nonprofits to identify voters without photo identification appropriate for voting and assist those voters in securing the photo identification appropriate for voting. All outreach efforts to notify voters of the photo identification requirements shall be accessible to the elderly and handicapped. All individuals shall be State employees, shall answer to the Executive Director, and the positions shall be time-limited and expire on December 31, 2016.

PART II. PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

SECTION 4. Article 14A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-166.13. Photo identification requirement for voting in person.

(a) Except as provided in this section, every individual voting in person shall present photo identification bearing any reasonable resemblance to that voter to a local election official at the voting place before voting.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, any voter without photo identification shall be permitted to vote a provisional official ballot in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1A.

(c) As used in this section, "photo identification" means any of the following that contain a photograph of the registered voter:

(1) An identification card that bears either a date of expiration or a date of issuance and that is not more than 10 years beyond the date of expiration or issuance, whichever is later, issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States, this State, or any other state, such as any of the following:

a. A North Carolina drivers license issued under Article 2 of Chapter 20 of the General Statutes, including a learner's permit or a provisional license.

b. A special identification card for nonoperators issued under G.S. 20-37.7.

c. A United States passport.

d. An employee identification.

e. A United States military identification card.
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f. An identification card issued by The University of North Carolina and its constituent institutions.

g. An identification card issued by a North Carolina community college.

h. An identification card issued to a fireman, EMS, hospital employee, or law enforcement officer.

(2) A tribal identification card.

(3) An identification card that bears a date of expiration and was not expired on the day the voter reached the age of 70 issued by a branch, department, agency, or entity of the United States, this State, or any other state.

(d) If the local election official determines that the voter's photo identification does not bear any reasonable resemblance to the voter, the local election official shall request the chief judge and judges of election to rule on the matter. In making a determination under this subsection, the chief judge and judges of election shall construe the evidence in the light most favorable to the voter. If the chief judge and judges of election do not unanimously agree that the voter's photo identification does not bear any reasonable resemblance to the voter, that voter shall be permitted to vote in accordance with subsection (a) of this section. Such a determination is dispositive of any challenge that may be entered in accordance with G.S. 163-85(c)(10). If the chief judge and judges of election unanimously agree that the voter's photo identification does not bear any reasonable resemblance to that voter, that voter may vote in accordance with G.S. 163-88.1.

(e) This section shall not apply to any of the following individuals voting in person:

(1) A registered voter who has filed an affidavit in accordance with G.S. 63-82.7A.

(2) A registered voter who has a permanent physical or mental disability recognized by a State or federal agency that makes such determinations for the purposes of determining eligibility for State or federal assistance under existing law. The State Board shall adopt rules for implementation of this subdivision."

SECTION 5. Article 7A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-82.7A. Declaration religious objection to photograph.

(a) At the time of approval of the application to register to vote, a voter with a sincerely held religious objection to being photographed may execute a declaration before an elections official to that effect to be incorporated as part of the official record of voter registration.

(b) At any time after the voter has registered to vote that the voter has determined the voter holds a sincerely held religious objection to being photographed, that voter may execute a declaration before an elections official to be incorporated as part of the official record of that voter's voter registration.

(c) At any time after a voter has executed a declaration before an elections official under this section and that voter no longer holds a sincerely held religious objection to being photographed, that voter may request the cancellation of the sworn affidavit in writing to the county board.

(d) All declarations under subsections (a) and (b) of this section shall include an attestation that the voter holds the sincerely held religious objection to being photographed and a requirement for the signature of the voter, under penalty of a Class I felony under G.S. 163-275(13).

(e) The State Board shall adopt rules to establish a standard form for implementation of this section."

SECTION 6. G.S. 163-82.6A(b) reads as rewritten:
"(b) Both Attestation and Proof of Residence Required. – To vote under this section, a voter must present photo identification as required by G.S. 163-166.13. This requirement is separate from the requirement to provide proof of residence under subdivision (2) of this subsection. If an individual does not present the required photo identification, that individual may vote a provisional official ballot. To register and vote under this section, the person shall do both of the following:

1. Complete a voter registration form as prescribed in G.S. 163-82.4, including the attestation requirement of G.S. 163-82.4(b) that the person meets each eligibility requirement. Such attestation is signed under penalty of a Class I felony under G.S. 163-275(13); and

2. Provide proof of residence by presenting any of the following valid documents that show the person’s current name and current residence address: a North Carolina drivers license, a photo identification from a government agency, or any of the documents listed in G.S. 163-166.12(a)(2). The State Board of Elections may designate additional documents or methods that suffice and shall prescribe procedures for establishing proof of residence."

SECTION 7. G.S. 163-166.7(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Checking Registration. – A person seeking to vote shall enter the voting enclosure through the appropriate entrance. A precinct official assigned to check registration shall at once ask the voter to state current name and residence address. The voter shall answer by stating current name and residence address and presenting photo identification in accordance with G.S. 163-166.13. If an individual does not present the required identification, that individual may vote a provisional official ballot. In a primary election, that voter shall also be asked to state, and shall state, the political party with which the voter is affiliated or, if unaffiliated, the authorizing party in which the voter wishes to vote. After examination, that official shall state whether that voter is duly registered to vote in that precinct and shall direct that voter to the voting equipment or to the official assigned to distribute official ballots. If a precinct official states that the person is duly registered, the person shall sign the pollbook, other voting record, or voter authorization document in accordance with subsection (c) of this section before voting."

SECTION 8. G.S. 163-227.2(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Not earlier than the third Thursday before an election, in which absentee ballots are authorized, in which a voter seeks to vote and not later than 1:00 P.M. on the last Saturday before that election, the voter shall appear in person only at the office of the county board of elections, except as provided in subsection (g) of this section. A county board of elections shall conduct one-stop voting on the last Saturday before the election until 1:00 P.M. and may conduct it until 5:00 P.M. on that Saturday. That voter shall enter the voting enclosure at the board office through the appropriate entrance and shall at once state his or her name and place of residence to an authorized member or employee of the board and present photo identification in accordance with G.S. 163-166.13. If an individual does not present the required identification, that individual may vote a provisional official ballot. In a primary election, the voter shall also state the political party with which the voter affiliates and in whose primary the voter desires to vote, or if the voter is an unaffiliated voter permitted to vote in the primary of a particular party under G.S. 163-119, the voter shall state the name of the authorizing political party in whose primary he wishes to vote. The board member or employee to whom the voter gives this information shall announce the name and residence of the voter in a distinct tone of voice. After examining the registration records, an employee of the board shall state whether the person seeking to vote is duly registered. If the voter is found to be registered that voter may request that the authorized member or employee of the board furnish the voter with an application form as specified in G.S. 163-227. The voter shall complete the
application in the presence of the authorized member or employee of the board, and shall deliver the application to that person."

**SECTION 9.** Article 15A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by
adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-182.1A. Counting of provisional official ballots cast because of failure to provide valid photo identification at the polls.

(a) A voter who cast a provisional official ballot wholly or partly as a result of the voter's inability or declination to provide photo identification shall, in person, provide the photo identification that bears any reasonable resemblance to the voter to the county board of elections not later than the time set for convening the election canvass pursuant to G.S. 163-182.5 in order to seek the counting of that voter's provisional official ballot as provided in subsection (b), (c), or (d) of this section.

(b) Unless the vote is disqualified for some other reason provided by law, the county board of elections shall find that the voter's provisional ballot is valid and direct that the provisional ballot be opened and counted in accordance with this Chapter if the voter provides valid photo identification to the county board of elections under the same standards set forth in G.S. 163-166.13(d).

(c) In lieu of providing valid photo identification under subsection (b) of this section, a voter who cast a provisional official ballot wholly or partly as a result of the voter's inability or declination to provide photo identification due to loss of the photo identification as a result of a natural disaster within the previous 60 days may execute an affidavit stating the voter does not possess proof of identification due to a natural disaster as declared by the President of the United States or the Governor of this State.

(d) In lieu of providing valid photo identification under subsection (b) of this section, a voter who cast a provisional ballot wholly or partly as a result of the voter's sincerely held religious objection to being photographed may bring any of the documents listed in G.S. 163-166.12(a). That voter shall be offered an opportunity to execute an affidavit under G.S. 163-82.7A.

(e) If the county board of elections determines that a voter described in subsections (b) through (d) of this section has also cast a provisional official ballot for a cause other than the voter's inability or declination to provide valid photo identification, the board shall do all of the following:

(1) Note on the envelope containing the provisional official ballot that the voter has complied with the proof of valid photo identification requirement.

(2) Proceed to determine any other reasons for which the ballot was cast provisionally before ruling on the validity of the voter's provisional ballot."

**SECTION 10.** G.S. 163-87 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-87. Challenges allowed on day of primary or election.

On the day of a primary or election, at the time a registered voter offers to vote, any other registered voter of the precinct may exercise the right of challenge, and when the voter does so may enter the voting enclosure to make the challenge, but the voter shall retire therefrom as soon as the challenge is heard.

On the day of a primary or election, any other registered voter of the precinct may challenge a person for one or more of the following reasons:

(1) One or more of the reasons listed in G.S. 163-85(c).

(2) That the person has already voted in that primary or election.

(3) Repealed by Session Laws 2009-541, s. 16.1(b), effective August 28, 2009.

(4) If the challenge is made with respect to voting in a partisan primary, that the person is a registered voter of another political party.

(5) The voter does not present proof of identification as required by G.S. 163-166.13.
The chief judge, judge, or assistant appointed under G.S. 163-41 or 163-42 may enter challenges under this section against voters in the precinct for which appointed regardless of the place of residence of the chief judge, judge, or assistant.

If a person is challenged under this subsection, and the challenge is sustained under G.S. 163-85(c)(3), the voter may still transfer his registration under G.S. 163-82.15(e) if eligible under that section, and the registration shall not be cancelled under G.S. 163-90.2(a) if the transfer is made. A person who has transferred his registration under G.S. 163-82.15(e) may be challenged at the precinct to which the registration is being transferred."

**PART III. IMPLEMENTATION**

**SECTION 11.** G.S. 20-37.7(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Expiration and Fee. – A special identification card issued to a person for the first time under this section expires when a drivers license issued on the same day to that person would expire. A special identification card renewed under this section expires when a drivers license renewed by the card holder on the same day would expire.

The fee for a special identification card is the same as the fee set in G.S. 20-14 for a duplicate license. The fee does not apply to a special identification card issued to a resident of this State who (i) is legally blind, (ii) is at least 70 years old, (iii) is registered to vote in this State and does not have photo identification acceptable under G.S. 163-166.13, (iv) is homeless, or (v) who has been issued a drivers license but the drivers license is cancelled under G.S. 20-15, in accordance with G.S. 20-9(e) and (g), as a result of a physical or mental disability or disease. To obtain a special identification card without paying a fee, a homeless person must present a letter to the Division from the director of a facility that provides care or shelter to homeless persons verifying that the person is homeless. To obtain a special identification card without paying a fee, a registered voter shall sign a sworn statement under penalty of perjury stating the registered voter is registered, does not have other photo identification acceptable under G.S. 163-166.13, and paying the fee would present a financial hardship to that registered voter."

**SECTION 12.** G.S. 130A-93.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(c) The State Registrar shall not charge any fee under subsection (a) of this section to a registered voter who signs a sworn statement under penalty of perjury stating the registered voter is registered to vote in this State, does not have a certified copy of that registered voter's birth certificate necessary to obtain photo identification acceptable under G.S. 163-166.13, and paying the fee would present a financial hardship to that registered voter."

**SECTION 12.** G.S. 161-10(a)(8) reads as rewritten:

"(8) Certified Copies of Birth and Death Certificates and Marriage Licenses. – For furnishing a certified copy of a death or birth certificate or marriage license ten dollars ($10.00). Provided however, a Register of Deeds or a Register of Deeds may issue without charge a certified Birth Certificate or Birth Certificate Birth Certificate to any person over the age of 62 years. Provided however, a register of deeds shall issue without charge a certified birth certificate or marriage license to any registered voter who signs a sworn statement under penalty of perjury stating the registered voter is registered to vote in this State, does not have a certified copy of that registered voter's birth certificate or marriage license necessary to obtain photo identification acceptable under G.S. 163-166.13, and paying the fee would present a financial hardship to that registered voter."

**SECTION 13.** G.S. 163-229(b) reads as rewritten:

"(b) Application on Container-Return Envelope. – In time for use not later than 60 days before a statewide general election in an even-numbered year, and not later than 50 days before a statewide primary, other general election or county bond election, the county board of
elected shall print a sufficient number of envelopes in which persons casting absentee ballots
can transmit their marked ballots to the county board of elections. However, in the case of
municipal elections, sufficient container-return envelopes shall be made available no later than
30 days before an election. Each container-return envelope shall have printed on it an
application which shall be designed and prescribed by the State Board of Elections, providing
for all of the following:

(1) The voter's certification of eligibility to vote the enclosed ballot and of
having voted the enclosed ballot in accordance with this Article.

(2) A space for identification of the envelope with the voter's
signature.

(3) A space for the identification of the two persons witnessing the casting
of the absentee ballot in accordance with G.S. 163-231 and those persons'
signatures.

(4) A space for the identification of any near relative or verifiable legal guardian
who assisted the voter if the voter is unable to complete and sign the
certification and that individual's signature.

(5) A space for approval by the county board of elections.

(6) The envelope shall have a space to allow reporting of a change of name as
provided by G.S. 163-82.16.

(7) A prominent display of the unlawful acts under G.S. 163-226.3.

The container-return envelope shall be printed in accordance with the instructions of the
State Board of Elections."

SECTION 13.(b) G.S. 163-230.1 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-230.1. Simultaneous issuance of absentee ballots with application.
(a) A qualified voter who is eligible to vote by absentee ballot under
G.S. 163-226(a), desires to vote by absentee ballot, or that voter's near relative or verifiable legal
guardian, shall complete a request form in writing an application for absentee ballots, an
absentee application and absentee ballot so that the county board of elections receives the that
completed request not later than 5:00 P.M. on the Tuesday before the election. That written
request shall be signed by the voter, the voter's near relative, or the voter's verifiable legal
guardian in compliance with G.S. 163-230.2. The county board of elections shall enter in the
register of absentee requests, applications, and ballots issued the information required in
G.S. 163-228 as soon as each item of that information becomes available. Upon receiving the
application, completed request form, the county board of elections shall cause to be mailed to
that voter in a single package: package that includes all of the following:

(1) The official ballots that voter is entitled to vote;

(2) A container-return envelope for the ballots, printed in accordance with
G.S. 163-229; and G.S. 163-299.

(3) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-455, s. 10.

(4) An instruction sheet.

The ballots, envelope, and instructions shall be mailed to the voter by the county board's
chairman, member, officer, or employee as determined by the board and entered in the register
as provided by this Article.

(a1) Absence for Sickness or Physical Disability. – Notwithstanding the provisions of
subsection (a) of this section, if a voter expects to be unable to go to the voting place to vote in
person on election day because of that voter's sickness or other physical disability, that voter or
that voter's near relative or verifiable legal guardian may make written the request under
subsection (a) of this section in person for absentee ballots to the board of elections of the
county in which the voter is registered after 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before the election but
not later than 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. The county board of elections shall treat
that completed request in the same manner as a request under subsection (a) of this
section enter in the register of absentee requests, applications, and ballots issued the
information required in G.S. 163-228 as soon as each item of that information becomes
available. The county board of elections shall personally deliver to the requester in a single
package:

(1) The official ballots the voter is entitled to vote;

(2) A container return envelope for the ballots, printed in accordance with
G.S. 163-229; and

(3) An instruction sheet.

(a2) Delivery of Absentee Ballots and Container-Return Envelope to Applicant. – When
the county board of elections receives a request for applications and absentee ballots, the board
shall promptly issue and transmit them to the voter in accordance with the following
instructions:

(1) On the top margin of each ballot the applicant is entitled to vote, the chair, a
member, officer, or employee of the board of elections shall write or type the
words "Absentee Ballot No. ____" or an abbreviation approved by the State
Board of Elections and insert in the blank space the number assigned the
applicant's application in the register of absentee requests, applications, and
ballots issued. That person shall not write, type, or print any other matter
upon the ballots transmitted to the absentee voter. Alternatively, the board of
elections may cause to be barcoded on the ballot the voter's application
number, if that barcoding system is approved by the State Board of
Elections.

(2) The chair, member, officer, or employee of the board of elections shall fold
and place the ballots (identified in accordance with the preceding
instruction) in a container-return envelope and write or type in the
appropriate blanks thereon, in accordance with the terms of G.S. 163-229(b),
the absentee voter's name, the absentee voter's application number, and the
designation of the precinct in which the voter is registered. If the ballot is
barcoded under this section, the envelope may be barcoded rather than
having the actual number appear. The person placing the ballots in the
envelopes shall leave the container-return envelope holding the ballots
unsealed.

(3) The chair, member, officer, or employee of the board of elections shall then
place the unsealed container-return envelope holding the ballots together
with printed instructions for voting and returning the ballots, in an envelope
addressed to the voter at the post office address stated in the request, seal the
envelope, and mail it at the expense of the county board of elections:
Provided, that in case of a request received after 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday
before the election under the provisions of subsection (a1) of this section, in
lieu of transmitting the ballots to the voter in person or by mail, the chair,
member, officer, or employee of the board of elections may deliver the
sealed envelope containing the instruction sheet and the container-return
envelope holding the ballots to a near relative or verifiable legal guardian of
the voter.

The county board of elections may receive written requests for applications at any time
prior to the election but shall not mail applications and ballots to the voter or issue applications
and ballots in person earlier than 60 days prior to the statewide general election in an
even-numbered year, or earlier than 50 days prior to any other election, except as provided in
G.S. 163-227.2. No election official shall issue applications for absentee ballots except in
compliance with this Article.
(b) The application shall be completed and signed by the voter personally, the ballots
marked, the ballots sealed in the container-return envelope, and the certificate completed as
provided in G.S. 163-231.

(c) At its next official meeting after return of the completed container-return envelope
with the voter's ballots, the county board of elections shall determine whether the
container-return envelope has been properly executed. If the board determines that the
container-return envelope has been properly executed, it shall approve the application and
deposit the container-return envelope with other container-return envelopes for the envelope to
be opened and the ballots counted at the same time as all other container-return envelopes and
absentee ballots.

(c1) Required Meeting of County Board of Elections. – During the period commencing
on the third Tuesday before an election, in which absentee ballots are authorized, the county
board of elections shall hold one or more public meetings each Tuesday at 5:00 p.m. for the
purpose of action on applications for absentee ballots. At these meetings, the county board of
elections shall pass upon applications for absentee ballots.

If the county board of elections changes the time of holding its meetings or provides for
additional meetings in accordance with the terms of this subsection, notice of the change in
hour and notice of the schedule of additional meetings, if any, shall be published in a
newspaper circulated in the county at least 30 days prior to the election.

At the time the county board of elections makes its decision on an application for absentee
ballots, the board shall enter in the appropriate column in the register of absentee requests,
applications, and ballots issued opposite the name of the applicant a notation of whether the
applicant's application was "Approved" or "Disapproved".

The decision of the board on the validity of an application for absentee ballots shall be final
subject only to such review as may be necessary in the event of an election contest. The county
board of elections shall constitute the proper official body to pass upon the validity of all
applications for absentee ballots received in the county; this function shall not be performed by
the chairman or any other member of the board individually.

(d) Repealed by Session Laws 1999-455, s. 10.

(e) The State Board of Elections, by rule or by instruction to the county board of
elections, shall establish procedures to provide appropriate safeguards in the implementation of
this section.

(f) For the purpose of this Article, "near relative" means spouse, brother, sister, parent,
grandparent, child, grandchild, mother-in-law, father-in-law, daughter-in-law, son-in-law,
steparent, or stepchild."

SECTION 13.(c) G.S. 163-230.2 reads as rewritten:


(a) Valid Types of Written Requests. – A written request for an absentee ballot as
required by G.S. 163-230.1 is valid only if it is written entirely by the requester personally, or
is on a form generated by the county board of elections. State Board and signed by the
requester, voter requesting an absentee ballot or that voter's near relative or verifiable legal
guardian. The county board of elections shall issue a request form only to the voter seeking to
vote by absentee ballot or to a person authorized by G.S. 163-230.1 to make a request for the
voter. If a requester, due to disability or illiteracy, is unable to complete a written request, that
requester may receive assistance in writing that request from an individual of that requester's
choice. The State Board shall make the form available at its offices, online, and in each county
board of elections office. A voter may make a request in person or by writing to the county
board for the form to request an absentee ballot. The request form for an absentee ballot shall
require at least the following information:

(1) The name of the voter.
§ 163-231. Voting absentee ballots and transmitting them to the county board of elections.

(a) Procedure for Voting Absentee Ballots. – In the presence of at least two persons who are at least 18 years of age, and who are not disqualified by G.S. 163-226.3(a)(4) or G.S. 163-237(b1), the voter shall do all of the following:

1. Mark the voter's ballots, or cause them to be marked by that person in the voter's presence according to the voter's instruction.
2. Fold each ballot separately, or cause each of them to be folded in the voter's presence.
3. Place the folded ballots in the container-return envelope and securely seal it, or have this done in the voter's presence.
4. Make the application printed on the container-return envelope according to the provisions of G.S. 163-229(b) and make the certificate printed on the container-return envelope according to the provisions of G.S. 163-229(b).
5. Require those persons to sign the application and certificate as witnesses and to indicate those persons' addresses.

The persons whose presence the ballot is marked shall at all times respect the secrecy of the ballot and the privacy of the absentee voter, unless the voter requests the person's assistance and the person is otherwise authorized by law to give assistance. The person whose presence the ballot was marked shall sign the application and certificate as a witness and shall indicate that person's address. When thus executed, the sealed container-return envelope, with the ballots enclosed, shall be transmitted in accordance with the provisions of subsection (b) of this section to the county board of elections which issued the ballots.

(a1) Repealed by Session Laws 1987, c. 583, s. 1.

(b) Transmitting Executed Absentee Ballots to County Board of Elections. – The sealed container-return envelope in which executed absentee ballots have been placed shall be transmitted to the county board of elections who issued them as follows: All ballots issued
under the provisions of Articles 20 and 21A of this Chapter may also be electronically transmitted. If ballots are received later than that hour, they are absentee ballots shall not be accepted unless (i) federal law so requires, (ii) if ballots issued under Article 20 of this Chapter Article, the absentee ballots are postmarked by the day of the statewide primary or general election or county bond election and are received by the county board of elections not later than three days after the election by 5:00 p.m., or (iii) if ballots issued under Article 21A of this Chapter Article, the absentee ballots are received by the county board of elections not later than the end of business on the business day before the canvass conducted by the county board of elections held pursuant to G.S. 163-182.5. Ballots issued under Article 20 of this Chapter Article not postmarked by the day of the election shall not be accepted by the county board of elections."

SECTION 14. Education and Publicity Requirements. – The public shall be educated about the photo identification to vote requirements of this act as follows:

(1) As counties use their regular processes to notify voters of assignments and reassignments to districts for election to the United States House of Representatives, State Senate, State House of Representatives, or local office, by including information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

(2) As counties send new voter registration cards to voters as a result of new registration, changes of address, or other reasons, by including information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

(3) Counties that maintain a board of elections Web site shall include information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

(4) Notices of elections published by county boards of elections under G.S. 163-22(8) for the 2014 primary and 2014 general election shall include a brief statement that photo identification will be required to vote in person beginning in 2016.

(5) The State Board of Elections shall include on its Web site information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

(6) Counties shall post at the polls and at early voting sites beginning with the 2014 primary elections information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

(7) The State Board of Elections shall include in the Judicial Voter Guide described in G.S. 163-278.69 information about the provisions of Part II of this act and shall also include the information in the Voter Guide under G.S. 163-278.99E if it is published separately.

(8) The Voter Information and Verification Advisory board, as required by Part I of this act, shall provide education and assistance to voters and newly registered voters information about the provisions of Part II of this act.

SECTION 15.(a) G.S. 163-278.69 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(d) The Judicial Voter Guide published under this section shall also include information on the photo identification requirement for voting in person pursuant to G.S. 163-166.13."

SECTION 15.(b) Funds from the surcharge on attorney membership fees under G.S. 84-34 collected on or after July 1, 2013, may be used for the purpose of the Judicial Voter Guide as provided in G.S. 163-278.69, as amended by this act.

SECTION 16. The State Board of Elections shall study and report to the Joint Legislative Elections Oversight Committee, on or before April 1, 2014, on a secure and feasible method of creating and utilizing electronic pollbooks with digital photographs of registered voters. The study shall address all of the following:
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(1) Obtaining digital photographs of registered voters and verifying identity of those voters.

(2) Maintaining information stored electronically in a secure fashion.

(3) Utilizing electronically stored information, including digital photographs and electronic signatures, to create electronic pollbooks.

(4) Using electronic pollbooks to assist in identifying individuals attempting to vote more than once in an election.

(5) Any other related matter identified by the State Board impacting the use of digital and electronic information in the voting place.

SECTION 17. If any provision of this act or its application is held invalid, the invalidity does not affect other provisions or applications of this act that can be given effect without the invalid provisions or application, and to this end the provisions of this act are severable.

SECTION 18. Part I of this act is effective when it becomes law and expires December 31, 2016. Part II of this act becomes effective January 1, 2016, and applies to primaries and elections conducted on or after that date. The remainder of this act is effective when it becomes law. At any election between August 1, 2013, and January 1, 2016, any registered voter may present that voter's photo identification to the elections officials at the voting place, but may not be required to do so. At each election between August 1, 2013, and January 1, 2016, each voter presenting in person shall be notified that photo identification will be needed to vote beginning in 2016 and be asked if that voter has one of the forms of photo identification appropriate for voting. If that voter indicates he or she does not have one or more of the types of photo identification appropriate for voting, that voter shall be asked to sign an acknowledgment of the photo identification requirement, be given a list of types of photo identification appropriate for voting and information on how to obtain those types of photo identification. The list of names of those voters who signed an acknowledgment is a public record.