

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2015

SESSION LAW 2015-103
HOUSE BILL 836

AN ACT TO PROVIDE REGULATORY RELIEF FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENTS BY AUTHORIZING CITIES TO RESERVE CERTAIN EASEMENTS WHEN PERMANENTLY CLOSING STREETS AND ALLEYS; TO REPEAL THE REQUIREMENT FOR LICENSING OF GOING OUT OF BUSINESS SALES BY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS; TO AUTHORIZE ELECTRONIC SUBMISSION OF ABSENTEE BALLOT LISTS BY COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS; TO AUTHORIZE THE USE OF NEW TECHNOLOGY FOR PAPER BALLOTS; TO EXTEND THE TIME FRAME TO IMPLEMENT THE REQUIREMENT FOR PAPER BALLOTS FROM JANUARY 1, 2018 TO SEPTEMBER 1, 2019, FOR COUNTIES THAT USE DIRECT RECORD ELECTRONIC VOTING MACHINES FOR CURRENT VOTING REQUIREMENTS; TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES TO CONDUCT MALT BEVERAGE AND UNFORTIFIED WINE ELECTIONS; TO REQUIRE COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS TO NOTIFY A REGISTERED VOTER OF THE OPTION TO COMPLETE A WRITTEN REQUEST FOR AN ABSENTEE BALLOT AT A ONE-STOP VOTING LOCATION WHEN THE VOTER PRESENTS WITHOUT AN ELIGIBLE FORM OF PHOTO IDENTIFICATION; TO AUTHORIZE VOTERS WHO SUFFER FROM A REASONABLE IMPEDIMENT PREVENTING THE VOTER FROM OBTAINING PHOTO IDENTIFICATION TO COMPLETE REASONABLE IMPEDIMENT DECLARATIONS WHEN VOTING; TO REMOVE TERM LIMITS FOR SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ALEXANDER COUNTY; AND TO REQUIRE ELECTRONIC POLL BOOKS TO BE CERTIFIED BY THE STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

CLARIFY EASEMENT RESERVATION AUTHORITY FOR CITIES CLOSING STREETS AND ALLEYS

SECTION 1. G.S. 160A-299 reads as rewritten:

"§ 160A-299. Procedure for permanently closing streets and alleys.

...
(f) A city may reserve ~~its~~ a right, title, and interest in any ~~utility improvement~~ improvements or ~~easement~~ easements within a street closed pursuant to this section. ~~Such~~ An easement under this subsection shall include utility, drainage, pedestrian, landscaping, conservation, or other easements considered by the city to be in the public interest. ~~The reservation of an easement under this subsection shall be stated in the order of closing. Such~~ The reservation also extends to utility improvements or easements owned by private utilities which at the time of the street closing have a utility agreement or franchise with the city.
...."

REPEAL LICENSING FOR GOING OUT OF BUSINESS/DISTRESS SALES

SECTION 2.(a) G.S. 66-77 is repealed.

SECTION 2.(b) G.S. 66-80 reads as rewritten:

"§ 66-80. Continuation of sale or business beyond termination date.

No person shall conduct a closing-out sale or a sale of goods, wares or merchandise damaged by fire, smoke, water or otherwise or a distress sale beyond the termination date specified for such sale, ~~except as otherwise provided for in subsection (b) of G.S. 66-77;~~ sale; nor shall any person, upon conclusion of such sale, continue that business which had been



represented as closing out or going out of business under the same name, or under a different name, at the same location, or elsewhere in the same city or town where the inventory for such sale was filed for a period of 12 months; nor shall any person, upon conclusion of such sale, continue business contrary to the designation of such sale. As used in this section, the term "person" includes individuals, partnerships, corporations, and other business entities. If a business entity that is prohibited from continuing a business under this section reformulates itself as a new entity or as an individual, whether by sale, merger, acquisition, bankruptcy, dissolution, or any other transaction, for the purpose of continuing the business, the successor entity or individual shall be considered the same person as the original entity for the purpose of this section. If an individual who is prohibited from continuing a business under this section forms a new business entity to continue the business, that entity shall be considered the same person as the individual for the purpose of this section."

SECTION 2.(c) This section becomes effective July 1, 2015.

ELECTRONIC REPORTING FOR COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS

SECTION 3.(a) G.S. 163-232 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-232. Certified list of executed absentee ballots; distribution of list.

The county board of elections shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a list in at least quadruplicate, of all absentee ballots returned to the county board of elections to be counted, which have been approved by the county board of elections, and which have been received as of 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. At the end of the list, the ~~chairman~~ chair shall execute the following certificate under oath:

"State of North Carolina

County of _____

I, _____, ~~chairman~~ chair of the _____ County board of elections, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a list of all executed absentee ballots to be voted in the election to be conducted on the _____ day of _____, _____, which have been approved by the county board of elections and which have been returned no later than 5:00 p.m. on the day before the election. I certify that the ~~chairman~~ chair, member, officer, or employee of the board of elections has not delivered ballots for absentee voting to any person other than the voter, by mail or by commercial courier service or in person, except as provided by law, and have not mailed or delivered ballots when the request for the ballot was received after the deadline provided by law.

This the _____ day of _____, _____

(Signature of ~~chairman~~ chair of
county board of elections)

Sworn to and subscribed before me this _____ day of _____, _____.
Witness my hand and official seal.

(Signature of officer
administering oath)

(Title of officer)"

No later than 10:00 a.m. on election day, the county board of elections shall cause one copy of the list of executed absentee ballots, which may be a continuing countywide list or a separate list for each precinct, to be immediately (i) submitted electronically in a manner approved by the State Board of Elections or (ii) deposited as "first-class" mail to the State Board of Elections. The board shall retain one copy in the board office for public inspection and the board shall cause two copies of the appropriate precinct list to be delivered to the chief judge of each precinct in the county. The county board of elections shall be authorized to call upon the sheriff of the county to distribute the list to the precincts. In addition the county board of elections shall, upon request, provide a copy of the complete list to the ~~chairman~~ chair of each political party, recognized under the provisions of G.S. 163-96, represented in the county.

The chief judge shall post one copy of the list immediately in a conspicuous location in the voting place and retain one copy until all challenges of absentee ballots have been heard by the county board of elections. Challenges shall be made to absentee ballots as provided in G.S. 163-89.

After receipt of the list of absentee voters required by this section the chief judge shall call the name of each person recorded on the list and enter an "A" in the appropriate voting square on the voter's permanent registration record, or a similar entry on the computer list used at the polls. If such person is already recorded as having voted in that election, the chief judge shall enter a challenge which shall be presented to the county board of elections for resolution by the board of elections prior to certification of results by the board.

All lists required by this section shall be retained by the county board of elections for a period of 22 months after which they may then be destroyed."

SECTION 3.(b) G.S. 163-232.1(c) reads as rewritten:

"(c) The board shall post one copy of the most current version of each list in the board office in a conspicuous location for public inspection and shall retain one copy until all challenges of absentee ballots have been heard by the county board of elections. The county board of elections shall cause one copy of each of the final lists of executed absentee ballots required under subsection (a) and subsection (b) of this section to be (i) submitted electronically in a manner approved by the State Board of Elections or (ii) deposited as "first-class" mail to the State Board of Elections. ~~The final lists shall be electronically submitted or mailed~~ no later than 10:00 a.m. of the next business day following the deadline for receipt of such absentee ballots. Challenges shall be made to absentee ballots as provided in G.S. 163-89. In addition the county board of elections shall, upon request, provide a copy of each of the lists to the ~~chairman~~ chair of each political party, recognized under the provisions of G.S. 163-96, represented in the county."

PAPER BALLOTS AND VOTING SYSTEMS

SECTION 4.(a) G.S. 163-165(1) reads as rewritten:

"(1) "Ballot" means an instrument on which a voter indicates a that voter's choice for a ballot item so that it may be recorded as a vote for or against a certain candidate or referendum proposal. The term "ballot" may include a paper ballot to be counted by hand, a paper ballot to be counted on an electronic scanner, the face of a lever voting machine, the image on a direct record electronic unit, or a ballot used on any other voting system."

SECTION 4.(b) G.S. 163-165.5 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-165.5. Contents of official ballots.

(a) ~~Each~~ Except as provided in this section, each official ballot shall contain all the following elements:

- (1) The heading prescribed by the State Board of Elections. The heading shall include the term "Official Ballot".
- (2) The title of each office to be voted on and the number of ~~seats to be filled~~ votes allowed in each ballot item.
- (3) The names of the candidates as they appear on their notice of candidacy filed pursuant to G.S. 163-106 or G.S. 163-323, or on petition forms filed in accordance with G.S. 163-122. No title, appendage, or appellation indicating rank, status, or position shall be printed on the official ballot in connection with the candidate's name. Candidates, however, may use the title Mr., Mrs., Miss, or Ms. Nicknames shall be permitted on an official ballot if used in the notice of candidacy or qualifying petition, but the nickname shall appear according to standards adopted by the State Board of Elections. Those standards shall allow the presentation of legitimate nicknames in ways that do not mislead the voter or unduly advertise the candidacy. In the case of candidates for presidential elector, the official ballot shall not contain the names of the candidates for elector but instead shall contain the nominees for President and Vice President which the candidates for elector represent. The State Board of Elections shall establish a review procedure that local boards of elections shall follow to ensure that candidates' names appear on the official ballot in accordance with this subdivision.
- (4) Party designations in partisan ballot items.
- (5) A means by which the voter may cast write-in votes, as provided in G.S. 163-123. No space for write-ins is required unless a write-in candidate has qualified under G.S. 163-123 or unless the ballot item is exempt from G.S. 163-123.

- (6) Instructions to voters, unless the State Board of Elections allows instructions to be placed elsewhere than on the official ballot.
- (7) The printed title and facsimile signature of the chair of the county board of elections.

(b) Notwithstanding subsection (a) of this section, an official ballot created and printed by use of a voting system in the voting enclosure shall be counted if all of the following apply:

- (1) Each of the following are printed on that official ballot:
 - a. The date of the election.
 - b. The precinct name or a unique identification code associated with that ballot style.
 - c. The choices made by the voter for all ballot items in which the voter cast a vote.
- (2) The electronic display of the voting system seen by the voter contains all of the information required by subsection (a) of this section.
- (3) The voter is capable of reviewing the printed official ballot, and voiding that ballot, prior to casting that voter's ballot.
- (4) The voter's choices in and on the electronic display are removed prior to the next voter using that voting equipment."

SECTION 5.(a) G.S. 163-165, as amended by Section 4(a) of this act, reads as

rewritten:

"§ 163-165. Definitions.

In addition to the definitions stated below, the definitions set forth in Article 15A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes also apply to this Article. As used in this Article:

- (1) "Ballot" means an instrument on which a voter indicates that voter's choice for a ballot item so that it may be recorded as a vote for or against a certain candidate or referendum ~~proposal-proposal, and is evidenced by an individual paper document that bears marks made by the voter by hand or through electronic means, whether preprinted or printed in the voting enclosure. The term "ballot" may include a paper ballot to be counted by hand, a paper ballot to be counted on an electronic scanner, or a paper ballot used on any other voting system.~~
- (2) "Ballot item" means a single item on a ballot in which the voters are to choose between or among the candidates or proposals listed.
- (3) "Ballot style" means the version of a ballot within a jurisdiction that an individual voter is eligible to vote. For example, in a county that uses essentially the same official ballot, a group office such as county commissioner may be divided into districts so that different voters in the same county vote for commissioner in different districts. The different versions of the county's official ballot containing only those district ballot items one individual voter may vote are the county's different ballot styles.
- (4) "Election" means the event in which voters cast votes in ballot items concerning proposals or candidates for office in this State or the United States. The term includes primaries, general elections, referenda, and special elections.
- (5) "Official ballot" means a ballot that has been certified by the State Board of Elections and produced by or with the approval of the county board of elections. The term does not include a sample ballot or a specimen ballot.
- (5a) ~~"Paper ballot" means an individual paper document that bears marks made by the voter by hand or through electronic means.~~
- (6) "Provisional official ballot" means an official ballot that is voted and then placed in an envelope that contains an affidavit signed by the voter certifying identity and eligibility to vote. Except for its envelope, a provisional official ballot shall not be marked to make it identifiable to the voter.
- (7) "Referendum" means the event in which voters cast votes for or against ballot questions other than the election of candidates to office.
- (8) "Voting booth" means the private space in which a voter is to mark an official ballot.
- (9) "Voting enclosure" means the room within the voting place that is used for voting.

- (10) "Voting place" means the building or area of the building that contains the voting enclosure.
- (11) "Voting system" means a system of casting and tabulating ballots. The term includes systems of paper ballots counted by hand as well as systems utilizing mechanical and electronic voting equipment."

SECTION 5.(b) Article 14A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-165.4B. Prohibited voting systems.

A voting system that does not use or produce a ballot shall not be used in any referendum, primary, or other election as a means of voting or counting an official ballot."

SECTION 5.(c) This section becomes effective January 1, 2018. Counties authorized to use direct record electronic voting systems pursuant to S.L. 2013-381, as amended by Section 6 of this act, may continue to use direct record electronic voting systems in accordance with that act.

SECTION 6.(a) Section 30.8 of S.L. 2013-381 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 30.8. Any direct record electronic (DRE) voting systems currently certified by the State Board of Elections which do not use paper ballots shall be decertified and shall not be used in any election held on or after January 1, 2018. September 1, 2019, for counties that use direct record electronic voting machines on election day as of January 1, 2015, and January 1, 2018, for all other counties. Decertification of a DRE voting system that does not use paper ballots may not be appealed to the Superior Court of Wake County pursuant to G.S. 163-165.7(b)."

SECTION 6.(b) Section 30.9 of S.L. 2013-381 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 30.9. This Part becomes effective January 1, 2018. September 1, 2019, for counties that use direct record electronic voting machines on election day as of January 1, 2015. This Part becomes effective for all other counties January 1, 2018."

CERTAIN MUNICIPALITIES AUTHORIZED TO CONDUCT MALT BEVERAGE AND UNFORTIFIED WINE ELECTIONS

SECTION 7. G.S. 18B-600 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(c1) Certain City Malt Beverage and Unfortified Wine Elections. – A city may hold a malt beverage or unfortified wine election only if all of the following criteria are met:

- (1) The county in which more than fifty percent (50%) of the area of the primary corporate limits of the city is located has already held such an election, and the vote in the last county election was against the sale of that kind of alcoholic beverage.
- (2) The city has a population of 200 or more.
- (3) The county in which more than fifty percent (50%) of the area of the primary corporate limits of the city is located also contains three or more other cities that have previously voted to allow malt beverage and unfortified wine sales."

VOTER ID MODIFICATIONS

SECTION 8.(a) G.S. 163-166.13 reads as rewritten:

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

(a) Every qualified voter voting in person in accordance with this Article, G.S. 163-227.2, or G.S. 163-182.1A shall present photo identification bearing any reasonable resemblance to that voter to a local election official at the voting place before voting, except as follows:

- (1) For a registered voter voting curbside, that voter shall present identification under G.S. 163-166.9.
- (2) For a registered voter who has a sincerely held religious objection to being photographed and has filed a declaration in accordance with G.S. 163-82.7A at least 25 days before the election in which that voter is voting in person, that voter shall not be required to provide photo identification.
- (3) For a registered voter who is a victim of a natural disaster occurring within 60 days before election day that resulted in a disaster declaration by the President of the United States or the Governor of this State who declares the lack of photo identification due to the natural disaster on a form provided by

the State Board, that voter shall not be required to provide photo identification in any county subject to such declaration. The form shall be available from the State Board of Elections, from each county board of elections in a county subject to the disaster declaration, and at each polling place and one-stop early voting site in that county. The voter shall submit the completed form at the time of voting.

(b) Any voter who complies with subsection (a) of this section shall be permitted to vote.

(c) Any voter who does not comply with subsection (a) of this section shall be notified of the following options:

(1) The voter is permitted to vote a provisional official ballot which shall be counted in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1A.

(2) The voter is permitted to complete a reasonable impediment declaration, as provided in G.S. 163-166.15, and vote a provisional official ballot which shall be counted in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1B.

(3) The voter is permitted to complete a written request for an absentee ballot in accordance with G.S. 163-227.2(b1) until the deadline for submission of requests for absentee ballots provided in G.S. 163-230.1.

(d) The local election official to whom the photo identification is presented shall determine if the photo identification bears any reasonable resemblance to the voter presenting the photo identification. If it is determined that the photo identification does not bear any reasonable resemblance to the voter, the local election official shall comply with G.S. 163-166.14.

(e) Except as provided in subsection (e1) of this section, As-as used in this section, "photo identification" means any one of the following that contains a photograph of the registered voter. In addition, the photo identification shall have voter, has a printed expiration date, and is date and shall be unexpired, provided that any voter having attained the age of 70 years at the time of presentation at the voting place shall be permitted to present an expired form of any of the following that was unexpired on the voter's 70th birthday; unless otherwise noted:

(1) 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~~ license, provided that it shall be acceptable if it has a printed expiration date that is not more than four years before it is presented for voting.

(2) A special identification card for nonoperators issued under ~~G.S. 20-37.7~~ G.S. 20-37.7, provided that it shall be acceptable if it has a printed expiration date that is not more than four years before it is presented for voting.

(3) A United States passport.

(4) A United States military identification card, except there is no requirement that it have a printed expiration or issuance date.

(5) A Veterans Identification Card issued by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs for use at Veterans Administration medical facilities facilities, except there is no requirement that it have a printed expiration or issuance date.

(6) A tribal enrollment card issued by a federally recognized tribe, provided that if the tribal enrollment card does not contain a printed expiration date, it shall be acceptable if it has a printed issuance date that is not more than eight years before it is presented for voting.

(7) A tribal enrollment card issued by a tribe recognized by this State under Chapter 71A of the General Statutes, provided that card meets all of the following criteria:

a. Is issued in accordance with a process approved by the State Board of Elections that requires an application and proof of identity equivalent to the requirements for issuance of a special identification card by the Division of Motor Vehicles under G.S. 20-7 and G.S. 20-37.7.

b. Is signed by an elected official of the tribe.

- (8) A drivers license or nonoperators identification card issued by another state, the District of Columbia, or a territory or commonwealth of the United States, but only if the voter's voter registration was within 90 days of the election.

(e1) Any voter 70 years of age or older shall be permitted to present an expired form of photo identification listed in subsection (e) of this section, if that identification expired at any point after that voter's 70th birthday."

SECTION 8.(b) G.S. 163-227.2 is amended by adding the following new subsection to read:

"(b1) Until the deadline for submission of requests for absentee ballots provided in G.S. 163-230.1, any voter who fails to present an eligible form of photo identification in accordance with G.S. 163-166.13 shall be notified of the option to complete a written request form for an absentee ballot at that one-stop absentee voting location. The county board of elections shall notify the voter of each of the following:

- (1) The option to request an absentee ballot to vote in that election, whether requested at that one-stop absentee voting location or as provided in G.S. 163-230.2.
- (2) The instructions for completing the absentee ballot request in accordance with G.S. 163-230.1, along with the deadlines for returning the absentee ballot.
- (3) The means by which the voter may transmit the executed ballot to the county board of elections as provided in G.S. 163-231, including through delivery in person to an election official at a one-stop voting location.

Upon receiving notice pursuant to this subsection, a voter shall sign a form acknowledging that the voter was notified of the option to request and vote an absentee ballot. The list of names of those voters who signed an acknowledgment is a public record."

SECTION 8.(c) G.S. 163-227.2 is amended by adding the following new subsection to read:

"(j) The State Board of Elections shall adopt rules requiring signage to be displayed until the deadline for submission of requests for absentee ballots provided in G.S. 163-230.1 at all one-stop absentee voting locations notifying voters who do not have eligible photo identification of the option to request an absentee ballot as provided in subsection (b1) of this section."

SECTION 8.(d) Article 14A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-166.15. Reasonable impediment declarations.

(a) Any voter who does not comply with the photo identification requirement of G.S. 163-166.13(a) due to a reasonable impediment that prevents the voter from obtaining photo identification may vote a provisional official ballot in accordance with this section.

(b) The voter shall complete a reasonable impediment declaration on a form provided by the State Board declaring that the voter meets all of the following criteria:

- (1) Is the same individual who personally appeared at the polling place.
- (2) Cast the provisional ballot while voting in person in accordance with this Article or G.S. 163-227.2.
- (3) Suffers from a reasonable impediment that prevents the voter from obtaining photo identification. The voter also shall list the impediment, as set forth in subsection (e) of this section, unless otherwise prohibited by State or federal law.

(c) The voter shall also present identification in the form of (i) a copy of a document listed in G.S. 163-166.12(a)(2) or the voter registration card issued to the voter by the county board of elections or (ii) the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number and the voter's date of birth. Upon compliance with this section, the voter may cast a provisional ballot. The declaration and a notation on the declaration form that the voter has provided the required identification shall be submitted with the provisional ballot envelope to the county board of elections and shall be counted in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1B.

(d) If a voter fails to present identification, as required in subsection (c) of this section, but completes a reasonable impediment declaration, the voter shall be permitted to vote a provisional official ballot. The declaration and a notation on the declaration form that the voter has not provided the required identification shall be submitted with the provisional ballot

envelope to the county board of elections. The ballot shall be counted in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1B if the voter presents the required identification to the county board of elections in accordance with G.S. 163-182.1B.

(e) The reasonable impediment declaration form provided by the State Board shall, at a minimum, include the following:

- (1) Separate boxes that a voter may check to identify the reasonable impediment, including at least the following:
 - a. Lack of transportation.
 - b. Disability or illness.
 - c. Lack of birth certificate or other documents needed to obtain photo identification.
 - d. Work schedule.
 - e. Family responsibilities.
 - f. Lost or stolen photo identification.
 - g. Photo identification applied for but not received by the voter voting in person.
 - h. Other reasonable impediment. If the voter checks the "other reasonable impediment" box, a further brief written identification of the reasonable impediment shall be required, including the option to indicate that State or federal law prohibits listing the impediment.
- (2) A space for the voter to provide the last four digits of the Social Security number and the voter's date of birth, if the voter opts to provide this information as identification in accordance with subsection (c) of this section.
- (3) A space to note whether the voter has provided a copy of the document listed in G.S. 163-166.12(a)(2) or the voter registration card issued to the voter by the county board of elections."

SECTION 8.(e) Article 15A of Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new section to read:

"§ 163-182.1B. Counting of provisional official ballots cast following completion of a reasonable impediment declaration when voting in person.

(a) The county board of elections shall find that a voter's provisional official ballot cast following completion of a declaration of reasonable impediment in accordance with G.S. 163-166.15 is valid and direct that the provisional ballot be opened and counted in accordance with this Chapter, unless any of the following apply:

- (1) The county board of elections has grounds, including an impediment evidentiary challenge by a voter, as provided in subsection (b) of this section, to believe the declaration is factually false, merely denigrated the photo identification requirement, or made obviously nonsensical statements.
- (2) The voter failed to present identification in the form of one of the following:
 - a. Either a copy of a document listed in G.S. 163-166.12(a)(2) or the voter registration card issued to the voter by the county board of elections when voting or at the county board of elections.
 - b. The voter's last four digits of the Social Security number and date of birth.
- (3) The voter provided the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number and date of birth as the form of identification required under G.S. 163-166.15(c) and the county board of elections could not confirm the voter's registration using that information.
- (4) The voter is disqualified for some other reason provided by law.

(b) An impediment evidentiary challenge may be made only on a form developed by the State Board of Elections as follows:

- (1) Any registered voter of the county may make the challenge by submitting clear and convincing evidence in writing on a signed form to the county board of elections challenging the factual veracity of the impediment.
- (2) Challenges shall be submitted no later than 5:00 P.M. on the third business day following the election.
- (3) The county board shall hear evidentiary challenges on the day set for the canvass of the returns.

- (4) A voter whose declaration has been challenged may personally, or through an authorized representative, appear before the county board and present evidence supporting the factual veracity of the impediment.
- (5) In considering the challenge, the county board shall construe all evidence presented in the light most favorable to the voter submitting the reasonable impediment declaration.
- (6) The county board shall not find a challenge valid if it provides only evidence regarding the reasonableness of the impediment.
- (7) The county board may find the challenge valid if the evidence demonstrates the declaration merely denigrated the photo identification requirement, made obviously nonsensical statements, or made statements or selected a reasonable impediment check box that was factually false.

(c) A voter who failed to present identification required in G.S. 163-166.15(c) when completing the reasonable impediment affidavit may comply with the identification requirement by appearing in person at the county board of elections to present the identification no later than 12:00 noon the day prior to the time set for the convening of the election canvass pursuant to G.S. 163-182.5.

(d) If the county board of elections determines that a voter has also cast a provisional official ballot for a cause other than the voter's failure to provide photo identification in accordance with G.S. 163-166.13(a), the county board shall do all of the following:

- (1) Note on the envelope containing the provisional official ballot that the voter has complied with the reasonable impediment declaration requirement.
- (2) Proceed to determine any other reasons for which the provisional official ballot was cast provisionally before ruling on the validity of the voter's provisional official ballot.

(e) Within 60 days after each election, the county board of elections shall provide to the State Board of Elections a report of those reasonable impediments identified in that election by voters. The State Board shall use the information in the reports to identify and address obstacles to obtaining photo identification."

SECTION 8.(f) G.S. 163-82.8(e) reads as rewritten:

"(e) Display of Card May Not Be Required to Vote. – No county board of elections may require that a voter registration card be displayed in order to vote. A county board of elections may notify a voter that the voter's registration card may be used for the required identification in conjunction with a reasonable impediment declaration in accordance with G.S. 163-166.15."

SECTION 8.(g) Section 5.3 of S.L. 2013-381 reads as rewritten:

"SECTION 5.3. 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 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 this act.
- (3) Counties that maintain a board of elections Web site shall include information about the provisions 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 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 this act.
- (7) The State Board of Elections shall distribute information about the photo identification requirements to groups and organizations serving persons with disabilities or the elderly.
- (8) The State Board of Elections, the Division of Motor Vehicles, and county boards of elections in counties where there is no Division of Motor Vehicles

drivers license office open five days a week shall include information about mobile unit schedules on existing Web sites, shall distribute information about these schedules to registered voters identified without photo identification, and shall publicize information about the mobile unit schedules through other available means.

- (9) The State Board of Elections and county boards of elections shall direct volunteers to assist registered voters in counties where there is no Division of Motor Vehicles drivers license office open five days a week.
- (10) The State Board of Elections shall educate the public regarding the reasonable impediment declaration and shall use the information on reasonable impediments reported by county boards of election as provided in G.S. 163-182.1B(e) to identify and address obstacles to obtaining voter photo identification.

SECTION 8.(h) Section 8(g) of this section becomes effective when this act becomes law. The remainder of this section becomes effective January 1, 2016, and applies to primaries and elections conducted on or after that date.

REMOVE TERM LIMITS FOR SERVICE ON THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OF ALEXANDER COUNTY

SECTION 9.(a) Sec. 8 of Chapter 774 of the Session Laws of 1969 reads as rewritten:

"**Sec. 8.** Member(s) whose terms of office expire and who desire to become candidates for re-election shall register and be voted upon in the same manner as herein provided and at the general election to be held in the year in which said terms of office ~~expire, provided no member shall serve more than two terms in succession.~~ expire."

SECTION 9.(b) This section becomes effective January 1, 2016, and applies to elections conducted on or after that date.

VOTING SYSTEM CERTIFICATIONS

SECTION 10. G.S. 163-165.7(a) reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-165.7. Voting systems: powers and duties of State Board of Elections.

(a) Only voting systems that have been certified by the State Board of Elections in accordance with the procedures set forth by the State Board of Elections and subject to the standards set forth in this section and that have not been subsequently decertified shall be permitted for use in elections in this State. Those certified voting systems shall be valid in any election held in the State or in any county, municipality, or other electoral district in the State. Subject to all other applicable rules adopted by the State Board of Elections and, with respect to federal elections, subject to all applicable federal regulations governing voting systems, paper ballots marked by the voter and counted by hand shall be deemed a certified voting system. The State Board of Elections shall certify optical scan voting systems, optical scan with ballot markers voting systems, and direct record electronic voting systems if any of those systems meet all applicable requirements of federal and State law. The State Board may certify ~~additional~~ voting systems only if they meet the requirements ~~of the request for proposal process~~ set forth in this section and only if they generate either a paper ballot or a paper record by which voters may verify their votes before casting them and which provides a backup means of counting the vote that the voter casts. Those voting systems may include optical scan and direct record electronic (DRE) voting systems. ~~In consultation with the Office of Information Technology Services, the State Board shall develop the requests for proposal subject to the provisions of this Chapter and other applicable State laws. Among other requirements,~~ requirements as set by the State Board of Elections, the ~~request for proposal certification requirements~~ shall require at least all of the following elements:

- (1) That the vendor post a bond or letter of credit to cover damages resulting from defects in the voting system. Damages ~~shall~~ may include, among other items, any costs of conducting a new election attributable to those defects.
- (2) That the voting system comply with all federal requirements for voting systems.
- (3) That the voting system must have the capacity to include in voting tabulation district returns the votes cast by voters outside of the voter's voting tabulation district as required by G.S. 163-132.5G.

- (4) With respect to electronic voting systems, that the voting system generate a paper record of each individual vote cast, which paper record shall be maintained in a secure fashion and shall serve as a backup record for purposes of any hand-to-eye count, hand-to-eye recount, or other audit. Electronic systems that employ optical scan technology to count paper ballots shall be deemed to satisfy this requirement.
- (5) With respect to DRE voting systems, that the paper record generated by the system be viewable by the voter before the vote is cast electronically, and that the system permit the voter to correct any discrepancy between the electronic vote and the paper record before the vote is cast.
- (6) With respect to all voting systems using electronic means, that the vendor provide access to all of any information required to be placed in escrow by a vendor pursuant to G.S. 163-165.9A for review and examination by the State Board of Elections; the Office of Information Technology Services; the State chairs of each political party recognized under G.S. 163-96; the purchasing county; and designees as provided in subdivision (9) of subsection (d) of this section.
- (7) That the vendor must quote a statewide uniform price for each unit of the equipment.
- (8) That the vendor must separately agree with the purchasing county that if it is granted a contract to provide software for an electronic voting system but fails to debug, modify, repair, or update the software as agreed or in the event of the vendor having bankruptcy filed for or against it, the source code described in G.S. 163-165.9A(a) shall be turned over to the purchasing county by the escrow agent chosen under G.S. 163-165.9A(a)(1) for the purposes of continuing use of the software for the period of the contract and for permitting access to the persons described in subdivision (6) of this subsection for the purpose of reviewing the source code.

~~In its request for proposal, As part of the certification requirements, the State Board of Elections shall address the mandatory terms of the contract for the purchase of the voting system and the maintenance and training related to that voting system.~~

~~If a voting system was acquired or upgraded by a county before August 1, 2005, the county shall not be required to go through the purchasing process described in this subsection if the county can demonstrate to the State Board of Elections compliance with the requirements in subdivisions (1) through (6) and subdivision (8) of this subsection, where those requirements are applicable to the type of voting system involved. If the county cannot demonstrate to the State Board of Elections that the voting system is in compliance with those subdivisions, the county board shall not use the system in an election during or after 2006, and the county shall be subject to the purchasing requirements of this subsection."~~

SECTION 11.(a) G.S. 163-165.7 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(a2) Only electronic poll books that have been certified by the State Board in accordance with procedures and subject to standards adopted by the State Board shall be permitted for use in elections in this State."

SECTION 11.(b) This section becomes effective August 1, 2015.

EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 12. Except as otherwise provided, this act is effective when it becomes law.
In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 22nd day of June, 2015.

s/ Chad Barefoot
Presiding Officer of the Senate

s/ Tim Moore
Speaker of the House of Representatives

s/ Pat McCrory
Governor

Approved 8:15 p.m. this 22nd day of June, 2015