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Dunmire
3/20/25

CS FOR SENATE BILL NO. 64()

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY

**Offered:
Referred:**

Sponsor(s): SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

"An Act relating to elections; relating to voters; relating to voting; relating to voter registration; relating to election administration; relating to the Alaska Public Offices Commission; relating to campaign contributions; relating to the crimes of unlawful interference with voting in the first degree, unlawful interference with an election, and election official misconduct; relating to synthetic media in electioneering communications; relating to campaign signs; relating to public official financial disclosures; relating to the Redistricting Board; and providing for an effective date."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:

*** Section 1.** AS 15.05.020 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.05.020. Rules for determining residence of voter. For the purpose of determining residence for voting, the place of residence is governed by the following rules:

(1) A person may not be considered to have gained a residence solely

by reason of presence nor may a person lose it solely by reason of absence while in the civil or military service of this state or of the United States or of absence because of marriage to a person engaged in the civil or military service of this state or the United States, while a student at an institution of learning, while in an institution or asylum at public expense, while confined in public prison, while engaged in the navigation of waters of this state or the United States or of the high seas, while residing on [UPON] an Indian or military reservation, or while residing in the Alaska Pioneers' Home or the Alaska Veterans' Home.

(2) The residence of a person is that place in which the person's physical habitation is fixed, and to which, whenever absent, the person has an articulable and reasonable plan [THE INTENTION] to return. If a person resides in one place, but does business in another, the former is the person's place of residence. Temporary work sites do not constitute a dwelling place.

(3) [A CHANGE OF RESIDENCE IS MADE ONLY BY THE ACT OF REMOVAL JOINED WITH THE INTENT TO REMAIN IN ANOTHER PLACE.] There can only be one residence.

(4) A person does not lose residence if the person leaves home and goes to another country, state, or place in this state for temporary purposes only and with the intent of returning to the person's residence.

(5) A person does not gain residence in any place to which the person comes without the present intention to establish a permanent dwelling at that place.

(6) A person loses residence in this state if the person establishes residence in another state or votes in another state's election, either in person or by absentee ballot, and will not be eligible to vote in this state until again qualifying under AS 15.05.010.

(7) The term of residence is computed by including the day on which the person's residence begins and excluding the day of election.

(8) The address of a voter as it appears on the official voter registration record is presumptive evidence of the person's voting residence. This presumption is negated [ONLY] if the voter notifies the director in writing of a change of voting residence. When a voter's qualification is questioned under AS 15.15.210 or

challenged in accordance with the procedure adopted in regulation under AS 15.20.215, the presumption may be rebutted by providing evidence to the division that the voter has established residence in another state or place in this state or evidence that the voter is not a resident under (2) - (7) of this section.

* **Sec. 2.** AS 15.07.060(a) is amended to read:

(a) Each applicant who requests registration or reregistration shall supply the following information:

- (1) the applicant's name and sex;
- (2) if issued, the applicant's State of Alaska driver's license number or State of Alaska identification card number, or the last four digits of the applicant's social security number;
- (3) the applicant's date of birth;
- (4) the applicant's Alaska residence address;
- (5) a statement of whether the applicant has previously been registered to vote in another jurisdiction, and, if so, the jurisdiction and the address of the previous registration;
- (6) a declaration that the applicant will be 18 years of age or older within 90 days after the date of registration;
- (7) a declaration that the applicant is a citizen of the United States;
- (8) the date of application;
- (9) the applicant's signature, [OR] mark, **or electronic signature**;
- (10) any former name under which the applicant was registered to vote in the state;
- (11) an attestation that the information provided by the applicant in (1) - (10) of this subsection is true; and
- (12) a certification that the applicant understands that a false statement on the application may make the applicant subject to prosecution for a misdemeanor under this title or AS 11.

* **Sec. 3.** AS 15.07.060(c) is amended to read:

(c) Each applicant who requests registration in person before a registration official shall exhibit one form of identification to the official, including a driver's

license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or **identification card issued by a federally recognized tribe** [HUNTING OR FISHING LICENSE]. A registration official who knows the identity of the applicant may waive the identification requirement.

* **Sec. 4.** AS 15.07.060(e) is amended to read:

(e) For an applicant requesting initial registration by mail, by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the director under AS 15.07.050, or by completing a permanent fund dividend application, the director shall verify the information provided in compliance with (a)(2) and (3) of this section through state agency records described in AS 15.07.055(e). If the applicant cannot comply with the requirement of (a)(2) of this section because the applicant has not been issued any of the listed numbers, the applicant may instead submit a copy of one of the following forms of identification: a driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or **identification card issued by a federally recognized tribe** [HUNTING OR FISHING LICENSE].

* **Sec. 5.** AS 15.07.070(b) is amended to read:

(b) To register by mail or by facsimile, scanning, or other electronic transmission approved by the director under AS 15.07.050, the director, the area election supervisor, or a voter registration agency shall furnish, at no cost to the voter, forms prepared by the director on which the registration information required under AS 15.07.060 shall be inserted by the voter, by a person on behalf of the voter if that person is designated to act on behalf of the voter in a power of attorney, or by a person on behalf of the voter if the voter is physically incapacitated. **The director shall accept the electronic signature of the voter or a person acting on behalf of the voter.** The director may require proof of identification of the applicant as required by regulations adopted by the director under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act). Upon receipt and approval of the completed registration forms, the director or the election supervisor shall forward to the voter an acknowledgment, and the voter's name shall immediately be placed on the master register. If the registration is denied, the voter shall immediately be informed in writing that registration was denied and the reason for denial. When identifying information has been provided by the voter as

required by this chapter, the election supervisor shall forward to the voter a registration card.

* **Sec. 6.** AS 15.07.130(a) is amended to read:

(a) Periodically, at times of the director's choosing, but **not** [NO] less frequently than in January of each calendar year, the director shall examine the master register maintained under AS 15.07.120 and shall send, by **forwardable** [NONFORWARDABLE] mail to the voter's registration mailing address, **and to the voter's electronic mail address, if available**, a notice requesting address confirmation or correction. **The notice must explain that the voter's registration will be inactivated unless the voter responds to the notice within 45 days after the date the notice is sent. The director shall send the notice** to each voter

(1) whose mail from the division has been returned to the division in the two years immediately preceding the examination of the register;

(2) who has not contacted the division in the two years immediately preceding the examination of the register **and** [; OR (3)] who has not voted or appeared to vote in the two general elections immediately preceding the examination of the register;

(3) who the division has learned, after registering to vote in this state and during the period encompassing the two general elections immediately preceding the examination of the register, has

(A) registered to vote in another state;

(B) received a driver's license from another state;

(C) registered a vehicle in another state;

(D) received public assistance from another state;

(E) served on a jury in another state;

(F) obtained a resident hunting or fishing license in another state;

(G) paid the state resident tuition rate for a public university in another state;

(H) received a homestead or residential property tax exemption in another state; or

1 (I) received a benefit available only to residents of another
2 state; or
3 (4) who became ineligible to receive a permanent fund dividend
4 under AS 43.23.005 in the two years immediately preceding the examination of
5 the register.

6 * Sec. 7. AS 15.07.130(b) is amended to read:

7 (b) If a registered voter does [HAS] not respond to a notice sent under (a) of
8 this section within 45 days after the date the notice is sent, the director shall
9 inactivate the voter's registration [, WITHIN THE PRECEDING FOUR
10 CALENDAR YEARS, CONTACTED THE DIVISION AND HAS NEITHER
11 VOTED NOR APPEARED TO VOTE IN A LOCAL, REGIONAL SCHOOL
12 BOARD, PRIMARY, SPECIAL, OR GENERAL ELECTION DURING THE LAST
13 FOUR CALENDAR YEARS AND A NOTICE SENT TO THE VOTER UNDER (a)
14 OF THIS SECTION WAS RETURNED AS UNDELIVERABLE, THE VOTER
15 SHALL BE ADVISED BY A NOTICE SENT BY FORWARDABLE MAIL TO THE
16 VOTER'S LAST KNOWN ADDRESS THAT REGISTRATION WILL BE
17 INACTIVATED UNLESS THE VOTER RESPONDS TO THE NOTICE NO
18 LATER THAN 45 DAYS AFTER THE DATE OF THE NOTICE SENT UNDER
19 THIS SECTION]. The director shall maintain on the master register the name of a
20 voter whose registration is inactivated. The director shall cancel a voter's inactive
21 registration in accordance with the procedures set out in 52 U.S.C. 20507 [42 U.S.C.
22 1973gg-6 (SEC. 8, NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION ACT OF 1993)] after the
23 second general election that occurs after the registration becomes inactive if the voter
24 does not contact the division or vote or appear to vote.

25 * Sec. 8. AS 15.07.130(d) is amended to read:

26 (d) The notice sent under (a) [(b)] of this section must include a postage
27 prepaid and pre-addressed return card on which the voter may state the voter's current
28 address. The notice must indicate

29 (1) that the voter should return the card not later than 45 days after the
30 date of the notice if the voter did not change residence;

31 (2) that failure to return the card by the 45-day deadline could result in

removal of the voter's name from the official registration list for a subsequent election;

(3) that the voter's registration will be cancelled if the voter does not contact the division during, or vote or appear to vote in an election held during, the period beginning on the date of the notice and ending on the day after the last day of the fourth calendar year that occurs after the date of notice; and

(4) how the voter can continue to be eligible to vote if the voter has changed residence.

* **Sec. 9.** AS 15.07.130(f) is amended to read:

(f) For the purpose of this section, a voter "contacts" the division if the voter notifies the division of a change of address, responds to a notice sent under this section, signs a petition for a ballot measure, requests a new voter registration card, or otherwise communicates with the division other than to vote or register to vote. **An individual does not "contact" the division by registering to vote under AS 15.07.070(i) - (m).**

* **Sec. 10.** AS 15.07 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 15.07.133. Process to cancel registration. The director shall develop a process to allow a voter to cancel the voter's registration electronically or in person before an election official. The process must include a requirement that the voter verify the voter's identity before the registration may be cancelled. The director shall prominently display instructions for a voter to cancel the voter's registration at each polling place.

* **Sec. 11.** AS 15.10.105 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(c) The director shall employ a rural community liaison. The rural community liaison shall collaborate with tribes, municipalities, corporations incorporated under AS 10.06, regional nonprofit corporations, and other community organizations to facilitate access to early and absentee voting in rural areas of the state and ensure that precincts in rural areas of the state are fully staffed.

* **Sec. 12.** AS 15.10.170(a) is amended to read:

(a) The precinct party committee, where an organized precinct committee exists, or the party district committee where no organized precinct committee exists, or the state party chairperson where neither a precinct nor a party district committee

exists, may appoint one or more [PERSONS AS] watchers in each precinct and counting center for any election. A [EACH] candidate may appoint one or more watchers for each precinct or counting center in the candidate's respective district or the state for any election. An [ANY] organization or organized group that sponsors or opposes a ballot proposition [AN INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM,] or question [RECALL] may have one or more [PERSONS AS] watchers at the polls and counting centers after first obtaining authorization from the director. A candidate, or an organization or organized group with authorization from the director, may appoint at least one watcher for each location where ballots or envelopes are reviewed or counted in a precinct or counting center. A state party chairperson, a precinct party committee, a party district committee, or a candidate may not have more than one watcher on duty at a time in any precinct or counting center. A watcher must be a United States citizen. The watcher may be present at a position inside the place of voting or counting that affords a full view of all action of the election officials taken from the time the polls are opened until the ballots are finally counted and the results certified by the election board or the data processing review board. The election board or the data processing review board may require each watcher to present written proof showing appointment by the precinct party committee, the party district committee, the organization or organized group, or the candidate the watcher represents and that is signed by the respective chairperson or chairperson's designee of the precinct party committee or party district committee, the state party chairperson, the organization or organized group, or the candidate or candidate's designee.

* Sec. 13. AS 15.13.020(j) is amended to read:

(j) The commission shall establish offices [AN OFFICE, WHICH MAY BE CALLED A REGIONAL OFFICE, IN EACH SENATE DISTRICT IN THE STATE TO KEEP ON FILE FOR PUBLIC INSPECTION COPIES OF ALL REPORTS FILED WITH THE COMMISSION BY CANDIDATES FOR STATEWIDE OFFICE AND BY CANDIDATES FOR LEGISLATIVE OFFICE IN THAT DISTRICT; HOWEVER, WHERE ONE MUNICIPALITY CONTAINS MORE THAN ONE HOUSE DISTRICT, ONLY ONE COMMISSION OFFICE SHALL BE ESTABLISHED IN THAT MUNICIPALITY. THE REGIONAL OFFICE SHALL

1 MAKE ALL FORMS AND PERTINENT MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO
2 CANDIDATES. ALL REPORTS SHALL BE FILED BY CANDIDATES, GROUPS,
3 AND INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY WITH THE COMMISSION'S CENTRAL
4 DISTRICT OFFICE. THE COMMISSION SHALL ENSURE THAT COPIES OF
5 ALL REPORTS BY STATEWIDE AND LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES IN EACH
6 SENATE DISTRICT ARE FORWARDED PROMPTLY TO THAT DISTRICT OR
7 REGIONAL OFFICE].

8 * **Sec. 14.** AS 15.13.400(19) is amended to read:

9 (19) "true source" means,

10 (A) for a contribution made for the purpose of influencing a
11 ballot proposition or question, the person or legal entity that makes the
12 contribution or independent expenditure to support or oppose the
13 proposition or question; or

14 (B) for a contribution made for the purpose of influencing
15 the nomination or election of a candidate,

16 (i) the person or legal entity whose contribution is
17 funded from wages, investment income, inheritance, or revenue
18 generated from selling goods or services;

19 (ii) a person or legal entity who **derives** [DERIVED]
20 funds via contributions, donations, dues, or gifts is not the true source
21 [.] but **is** [RATHER] an intermediary for the true source **except that,**
22 **for a contribution from** [; NOTWITHSTANDING THE
23 FOREGOING, TO THE EXTENT] a membership organization **that**
24 receives dues or contributions of less than \$2,000 per person per year,
25 the organization itself **is** [SHALL BE CONSIDERED] the true source.

26 * **Sec. 15.** AS 15.15.060(a) is amended to read:

27 (a) Immediately following the appointment of the election board, the election
28 supervisor in conjunction with the election board chair shall secure polling places for
29 holding the election, suitable ballot boxes that will assure security, and an adequate
30 number of voting booths or screens, national flags, pens, and pencils. At every polling
31 place, at least one voting booth shall be furnished and not less than one voting booth

or screen shall be furnished for each 100 votes or fractional part of 100 votes cast in the previous election. [AT EVERY POLLING PLACE, AT LEAST ONE-HALF OF THE VOTING BOOTHS USED SHALL BE NOT LESS THAN SIX FEET IN HEIGHT, ENCLOSED ON THREE SIDES, AND PROVIDED WITH A CURTAIN EXTENDING FROM THE TOP OF THE VOTING BOOTH TO WITHIN APPROXIMATELY 30 INCHES OF THE FLOOR. THE CURTAIN OF THE VOTING BOOTH MUST CONCEAL THE VOTER WHILE VOTING.] The election supervisor and the election board chair may, in an emergency, secure an alternate location for a polling place.

* **Sec. 16.** AS 15.15.060(b) is amended to read:

(b) To assure administrative economy and to protect the secrecy of the ballot, the director may adopt regulations prescribing

(1) the type of polling place for holding the election;

(2) the requirements regarding ballot boxes, voting screens, national flags, and other supplies; and

(3) [SUBJECT TO THE SPECIFICATIONS OF (a) OF THIS SECTION,] the requirements regarding voting booths.

* **Sec. 17.** AS 15.15.060 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(f) At each polling place, the division shall provide language assistance as required under 52 U.S.C. 10503, as amended. An election supervisor shall post at each polling place information regarding the availability of language assistance in English and all other languages for which language assistance is required to be provided in the jurisdiction under federal law.

* **Sec. 18.** AS 15.15.225(a) is amended to read:

(a) Before being allowed to vote, each voter shall exhibit to an election official one form of identification, including

(1) an official voter registration card, driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or identification card issued by a federally recognized tribe [HUNTING OR FISHING LICENSE]; or

(2) an original or a copy of a [CURRENT] utility bill, bank statement,

paycheck, government check, or other government document; an item exhibited under this paragraph must show the name and current address of the voter **and must be dated within the previous 90 days.**

* **Sec. 19.** AS 15.15.370 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.15.370. Results [COMPLETION] of ballot count [; CERTIFICATE]. When the count of ballots is completed, and in no event later than the day after the election, the election board shall make a certificate in duplicate of the results. The certificate includes the number of votes cast for each candidate, including, for a candidate in a general election, the number of votes at each **ranking** [ROUND OF THE RANKED-CHOICE TABULATION PROCESS] under AS 15.15.350, the number of votes for and against each proposition, yes or no on each question, and any additional information prescribed by the director. **However, a precinct that counts results exclusively by hand may report the number of votes cast for each highest-ranked candidate and need not report the number of second-place or lower ranked votes cast for a candidate.** The election board shall, immediately upon completion of the certificate or as soon thereafter as the local mail service permits, send in one sealed package to the director one copy of the certificate and the register. In addition, all ballots properly cast shall be mailed to the director in a separate, sealed package. Both packages, in addition to an address on the outside, shall clearly indicate the precinct from which they come. Each board shall, immediately upon completion of the certification and as soon thereafter as the local mail service permits, send the duplicate certificate to the respective election supervisor. The director may authorize election boards in precincts in those areas of the state where distance and weather make mail communication unreliable to forward their election results by telephone or radio. The director may authorize the unofficial totaling of votes on a regional basis by election supervisors, tallying the votes as indicated on duplicate certificates. To ensure adequate protection, the director shall prescribe the manner in which the ballots, registers, and all other election records and materials are thereafter preserved, transferred, and destroyed.

* **Sec. 20.** AS 15.15.370 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

(b) Each day that the director releases unofficial totals of election results for a

general election, the director shall also

(1) release an updated ranked-choice tabulation;

(2) identify the precincts that have been counted;

(3) identify the days on which absentee ballots have been logged and counted, including a summary of the count codes used on ballots in each district each day;

(4) identify the districts in which early votes were cast and the days on which votes were cast in each district; and

(5) identify the precincts and count codes of questioned ballots that have been counted.

(c) Each day that an absentee ballot is reviewed under AS 15.20.201 or a questioned ballot is reviewed under AS 15.20.207, the director shall display on the division's Internet website an updated unofficial total detailing the number of absentee ballots and questioned ballots counted for each count code.

(d) In this section, "count code" means a code assigned to a ballot by the division that designates the races in which the ballot is to be counted during a district absentee ballot counting review conducted under AS 15.20.203 or a district questioned ballot review conducted under AS 15.20.207.

* **Sec. 21.** AS 15.15.380 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.15.380. Payment of election board members. The director shall pay each election board member for time spent at election duties, including the receiving of instructions. Election board chairpersons and the chairperson and members of the absentee ballot, questioned ballot, and state ballot counting review boards shall be paid for time spent at their election duties. The director shall set the compensation to be paid under this section [BY REGULATION].

* **Sec. 22.** AS 15.15.420 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.15.420. Duty to review the ballot counting. The director shall review the counting of the ballots [WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF AND] in the presence of the appointed representatives from the political parties. **A candidate for an office that is on the ballots being counted and appointed representatives from the group supporting and from the group opposing a ballot proposition or question may be**

present and observe the counting of the ballots.

* **Sec. 23.** AS 15.15.430(a) is amended to read:

(a) The review of ballot counting by the director **must** [SHALL] include [ONLY (1)] a review of the precinct registers, tallies, and ballots cast. **The review must include** [; (2)] a review of absentee and questioned ballots as prescribed by law. **The review must include, for each house district except a house district where all races on the ballot are uncontested** [; AND (3) UNLESS THE BALLOT FOR THE HOUSE DISTRICT CONTAINS NOTHING BUT UNCONTESTED OFFICES], a hand count of ballots from one randomly selected precinct in **the** [EACH] house district that accounts for at least five percent of the ballots cast in that district. **The director may adopt regulations prescribing additional review procedures employing statistical methods to limit the risk of certifying an election result that would be inconsistent with the result that would be obtained by conducting a recount.**

* **Sec. 24.** AS 15.20.030 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.20.030. Preparation of ballots, envelopes, and other material. The director shall provide ballots for use as absentee ballots in all districts. The director shall provide a secrecy sleeve in which the voter shall initially place the marked ballot [,] and shall provide **a postage-paid return** [AN] envelope with the prescribed voter's certificate on it, in which the secrecy sleeve with ballot enclosed shall be placed. The director shall prescribe the form of and prepare the voter's certificate, envelopes, and other material used in absentee voting. The voter's certificate shall include a declaration, for use when required, that the voter is a qualified voter in all respects, a blank for the voter's signature, **and a space for recording the date that the voter executed the certificate. An envelope may not identify a voter's party affiliation** [, A CERTIFICATION THAT THE AFFIANT PROPERLY EXECUTED THE MARKING OF THE BALLOT AND GAVE THE VOTER'S IDENTITY, BLANKS FOR THE ATTESTING OFFICIAL OR WITNESS, AND A PLACE FOR RECORDING THE DATE THE ENVELOPE WAS SEALED AND WITNESSED]. The envelope with the voter's certificate must include a notice that false statements made by the voter [OR BY THE ATTESTING OFFICIAL OR WITNESS] on the

certificate are punishable by law.

* **Sec. 25.** AS 15.20.072 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

(h) If a voter satisfies the requirements of (d) of this section, the division may not reject a voter's special needs ballot based on an error by an election official or representative on the register under (c) of this section or an error by a representative under (d) of this section.

* **Sec. 26.** AS 15.20.081(d) is amended to read:

(d) Upon receipt of an absentee ballot by mail, the voter [, IN THE PRESENCE OF A NOTARY PUBLIC, COMMISSIONED OFFICER OF THE ARMED FORCES INCLUDING THE NATIONAL GUARD, DISTRICT JUDGE OR MAGISTRATE, UNITED STATES POSTAL OFFICIAL, REGISTRATION OFFICIAL, OR OTHER PERSON QUALIFIED TO ADMINISTER OATHS,] may proceed to mark the ballot in secret, to place the ballot in the secrecy sleeve, to place the secrecy sleeve in the envelope provided, and to sign the voter's certificate on the envelope. The [IN THE PRESENCE OF AN OFFICIAL LISTED IN THIS SUBSECTION WHO SHALL SIGN AS ATTESTING OFFICIAL AND SHALL DATE THE SIGNATURE. IF NONE OF THE OFFICIALS LISTED IN THIS SUBSECTION IS REASONABLY ACCESSIBLE, AN ABSENTEE VOTER SHALL SIGN THE VOTER'S CERTIFICATE IN THE PRESENCE OF AN INDIVIDUAL WHO IS 18 YEARS OF AGE OR OLDER, WHO SHALL SIGN AS A WITNESS AND ATTEST TO THE DATE ON WHICH THE VOTER SIGNED THE CERTIFICATE IN THE INDIVIDUAL'S PRESENCE, AND, IN ADDITION, THE] voter shall certify, as prescribed in AS 09.63.020, under penalty of perjury, that the statements in the voter's certification are true.

* **Sec. 27.** AS 15.20.081(e) is amended to read:

(e) An absentee ballot must be marked on or before the date of the election. Except as provided in (h) of this section, a voter who returns the absentee ballot by mail, whether provided to the voter by mail or by electronic transmission, shall use a mail service at least equal to first class and mail the ballot not later than the day of the election to the election supervisor for the house district in which the voter seeks to vote. Except as provided in AS 15.20.480, the ballot may not be counted unless it is

received by the close of business on the 10th day after the election. [IF THE BALLOT IS POSTMARKED, IT MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE ELECTION DAY.] After the day of the election, ballots may not be accepted unless received by mail. A ballot received after the day of the election that is not postmarked or is postmarked after the day of the election may not be counted unless the ballot envelope is marked with a United States Postal Service tracking barcode sufficient to verify that the ballot was mailed on or before the day of the election or with a division of elections ballot tracking barcode sufficient to verify that the ballot was mailed on or before the day of the election.

* Sec. 28. AS 15.20.081(f) is amended to read:

(f) The director shall require a voter casting an absentee ballot by mail to provide proof of identification or other information to aid in the establishment of the voter's identity as prescribed by regulations adopted under AS 44.62 (Administrative Procedure Act). If the voter is a first-time voter who initially registered by mail or by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the director under AS 15.07.050 and has not met the identification requirements set out in AS 15.07.060, the voter must provide one of the following forms of proof of identification:

(1) a copy of a driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or identification card issued by a federally recognized tribe [HUNTING OR FISHING LICENSE]; or

(2) an original or a copy of a [CURRENT] utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document; an item provided under this paragraph must show the name and current address of the voter and must be dated within the previous 90 days.

* Sec. 29. AS 15.20.081(h) is amended to read:

(h) Except as provided in AS 15.20.480, an absentee ballot returned by mail from outside the United States or from an overseas voter qualifying under AS 15.05.011 that has been marked and mailed not later than election day may not be counted unless the ballot is received by the election supervisor not later than the close of business on the

[(1)] 10th day following the [A PRIMARY] election [OR SPECIAL

1 PRIMARY ELECTION UNDER AS 15.40.140; OR

2 (2) 15TH DAY FOLLOWING A GENERAL ELECTION OR
3 SPECIAL ELECTION, OTHER THAN A SPECIAL PRIMARY ELECTION
4 DESCRIBED IN (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION].

5 * **Sec. 30.** AS 15.20.081 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

6 (m) An absentee ballot application must include an option for a qualified voter
7 to choose to receive absentee ballots by mail for future regularly scheduled state
8 elections. The division may not require a voter who chooses this option to reapply for
9 an absentee ballot by mail unless

10 (1) the voter has not voted an absentee ballot for a period of four years;

11 or

12 (2) the voter's previous absentee ballot sent under this section was
13 returned to the division as undeliverable.

14 * **Sec. 31.** AS 15.20.170 is amended to read:

15 **Sec. 15.20.170. Disposition of ballots.** Each absentee voting official shall
16 transmit the dated envelopes containing the marked ballots by the most expeditious
17 mail service to the election supervisor for the district. Upon receipt of the absentee
18 ballots, the election supervisor shall stamp on the envelope the date on which the
19 ballot is received. **In this section, "mail service" includes delivery by optical**
20 **scanning and electronic transmission.**

21 * **Sec. 32.** AS 15.20.201(a) is amended to read:

22 (a) **Not** [NO] less than **12** [SEVEN] days preceding the day of election, the
23 election supervisor, in the presence and with the assistance of the district absentee
24 ballot counting board, shall review all voter certificates of absentee ballots received by
25 that date. The review of absentee ballots shall continue at times designated by the
26 election supervisor until completed.

27 * **Sec. 33.** AS 15.20.203(b) is amended to read:

28 (b) An absentee ballot **must be rejected** [MAY NOT BE COUNTED] if

29 (1) the voter has failed to properly execute the certificate;

30 (2) [AN OFFICIAL OR THE WITNESSES AUTHORIZED BY LAW

31 TO ATTEST THE VOTER'S CERTIFICATE FAIL TO EXECUTE THE

CERTIFICATE, EXCEPT THAT AN ABSENTEE BALLOT CAST IN PERSON AND ACCEPTED BY AN ABSENTEE VOTING OFFICIAL OR ELECTION SUPERVISOR MAY BE COUNTED DESPITE FAILURE OF THE ABSENTEE VOTING OFFICIAL OR ELECTION SUPERVISOR TO PROPERLY SIGN AND DATE THE VOTER'S CERTIFICATE AS ATTESTING OFFICIAL AS REQUIRED UNDER AS 15.20.061(c);

(3) THE BALLOT IS NOT ATTESTED ON OR BEFORE THE DATE OF THE ELECTION;

(4)] the ballot envelope and certificate, if delivered by mail after the day of the election [POSTMARKED],

(A) is not postmarked or is postmarked after [ON OR BEFORE] the date of the election and is not marked with a United States Postal Service tracking barcode sufficient to verify that the ballot was mailed on or before the day of the election or with a division of elections ballot tracking barcode sufficient to verify that the ballot was mailed on or before the day of the election;

(B) has a United States Postal Service tracking barcode verifying that the ballot was mailed after the date of the election or a division of elections ballot tracking barcode verifying that the ballot was mailed after the date of the election; or

(C) is executed after the date of the election;

(3) [(5)] after the day of election, the ballot was delivered by a means other than mail; or

(4) [OR (6)] the voter voted

(A) in person and is a

(i) first-time voter who initially registered by mail or by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the director under AS 15.07.050, has not provided the identification required by AS 15.15.225(a), was not eligible for waiver of the identification requirement under AS 15.15.225(b), and has not provided the identifiers required in AS 15.07.060(a)(2) and (3) that can be verified

through state agency records described in AS 15.07.055(e); or

(ii) voter other than one described in (i) of this subparagraph, did not provide identification described in AS 15.15.225(a), was not personally known by the election official, and has not provided the identifiers required in AS 15.07.060(a)(2) and (3); or

(B) by mail or electronic transmission, is a first-time voter who initially registered by mail or by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the director under AS 15.07.050 to vote, has not met the identification requirements set out in AS 15.07.060, and does not submit with the ballot a copy of a

(i) driver's license, state identification card, current and valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or **identification card issued by a federally recognized tribe** [HUNTING OR FISHING LICENSE]; or

(ii) **an original or a copy of a** [CURRENT] utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document; an item described in this sub-subparagraph must show the name and current address of the voter **and must be dated within the previous 90 days.**

* **Sec. 34.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 15.20.215. Rules for challenging ballot. The director shall adopt by regulation a procedure and time frame for a person present at the ballot counting review to challenge the decision of whether to count an absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot. The procedure must provide a reasonable amount of time to submit a challenge.

* **Sec. 35.** AS 15.20.220(b) is amended to read:

(b) The state review board shall review and count absentee ballots under AS 15.20.081(e) and (h), **absentee ballots properly cured under AS 15.20.222,** and questioned ballots that have been forwarded to the director and that have not been reviewed or counted by a district counting board.

* **Sec. 36.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding new sections to read:

Sec. 15.20.221. Ballot-tracking system. (a) The director shall establish an online ballot-tracking system. The director may procure the system from a third party. The system must be designed to allow a voter to easily use the system through a mobile electronic device. The system must allow a voter to

- (1) confirm that the voter's ballot has been sent by the division;
- (2) track the date of the ballot's delivery to the voter;
- (3) confirm the division's receipt of the voter's ballot;
- (4) determine whether the voter's certificate has been reviewed;
- (5) determine whether the voter's ballot has been counted; and
- (6) provide the information necessary to cure a rejected ballot.

(b) The online ballot-tracking system must

- (1) verify a voter's identity; and
- (2) indicate to a voter

(A) the process by which the voter may cure the lack of signature or verify the voter's identity, if the signature on the voter's ballot was missing; and

(B) the reason the voter's ballot was not counted, if the ballot was not counted.

(c) The division may not charge a voter a fee to use the online ballot-tracking system.

Sec. 15.20.222. Procedure for curing uncounted ballot. (a) If a voter's ballot is rejected because the certificate is missing a signature or the voter provided insufficient voter identification, the director shall immediately make a reasonable effort to contact the voter, explain the ballot deficiency, explain how the deficiency may be cured, and inform the voter of the deadline to cure the ballot. The director shall, within 24 hours, send a notice of deficiency by electronic mail to the voter's electronic mail address if the voter has provided an electronic mail address. If the voter has provided a telephone number, the director shall, within 24 hours, attempt to notify the voter of the deficiency by telephone call and text message. The director shall, within 48 hours, but not later than five days after election day, send a notice of

deficiency by first class, nonforwardable mail to the address in the voter's registration record.

(b) A notice of deficiency must include a form for the voter to confirm that the voter returned a ballot to the division, provide a copy of a form of identification accepted by the division under AS 15.15.225(a), and provide a signature. The director shall provide a printed copy of the form with the notice of deficiency mailed to the voter. The director shall also make the form available in a format that can be completed and returned electronically.

(c) The rejected ballot of a voter who received a notice of deficiency may be counted only if

(1) the voter returns the completed form sent with the notice of deficiency, the division receives the form within 14 days after election day, and the form confirms that the voter returned a ballot to the division;

(2) the voter provides a signature and includes a copy of a form of identification accepted by the division under AS 15.15.225(a); and

(3) the ballot is otherwise valid.

(d) A voter's rejected ballot may not be counted and the director shall, if applicable, send copies of the signature on the voter's return envelope to the attorney general for investigation if the voter returns the form and the form indicates that the voter did not return a ballot to the division.

* **Sec. 37.** AS 15.20.480 is amended to read:

Sec. 15.20.480. Procedure for recount. In conducting the recount, the director shall review all ballots, whether the ballots were counted at the precinct or by computer or by the district absentee counting board or the questioned ballot counting board, to determine which ballots, or part of ballots, were properly marked and which ballots are to be counted in the recount, and shall check the accuracy of the original count, the precinct certificate, and the review. [THE DIRECTOR SHALL COUNT ABSENTEE BALLOTS RECEIVED BEFORE THE COMPLETION OF THE RECOUNT.] For administrative purposes, the director may join and include two or more applications in a single review and count of votes. The rules in AS 15.15.360 governing the counting of ballots shall be followed in the recount when a ballot is

1 challenged on the basis of a question regarding the voter's intent to vote for the
2 candidate, proposition, or question. The ballots and other election material must
3 remain in the custody of the director during the recount, and the highest degree of care
4 shall be exercised to protect the ballots against alteration or mutilation. The recount
5 shall be completed within 10 days. The director may employ additional personnel
6 necessary to assist in the recount.

7 * **Sec. 38.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

8 **Article 4A. Ballot Drop Boxes.**

9 **Sec. 15.20.850. Ballot drop boxes.** The director shall provide secure ballot
10 drop boxes. The director shall adopt regulations governing the use and location of
11 ballot drop boxes. The director shall provide a drop box at each division regional
12 office. When selecting drop box locations, the director may consult with
13 municipalities, school districts, tribal organizations, and nonpartisan civic
14 organizations. The director shall include in the regulations the criteria for selecting the
15 locations of drop boxes, the security requirements for the drop boxes, and a
16 requirement that drop boxes be open 24 hours a day in the 10 days before an election
17 day. The regulations must require that each drop box be open on the election day until
18 8:00 p.m. A municipality may provide a drop box under regulations adopted by the
19 director.

20 * **Sec. 39.** AS 15.56.030(d) is amended to read:

21 (d) For purposes of (a)(2) and (3) of this section, "other valuable thing"

22 (1) includes

23 (A) an entry in a game of chance in which a prize of money or
24 other present or future pecuniary gain or advantage may be awarded to a
25 participant wherein the total of the prizes offered is greater than \$2 per
26 participant with a maximum of \$100; and

27 (B) government employment or benefits;

28 (2) does not include

29 (A) materials having a nominal value bearing the name,
30 likeness, or other identification of a candidate, political party, political group,
31 party district committee, or organization, or stating a position on a ballot

proposition or question;

(B) food and refreshments provided incidental to an activity that is nonpartisan in nature and directed at encouraging persons to vote, or incidental to a gathering in support of or in opposition to a candidate, political party, political group, party district committee, organization, or ballot question or proposition;

(C) care of the voter's dependents provided in connection with the absence of a voter from home for the purpose of voting;

(D) services provided by a person acting as a representative under AS 15.20.072;

(E) services provided by an election official as defined in AS 15.80.010; [AND]

(F) transportation of a voter to or from the polls without charge; and

(G) postage-paid return envelopes required in AS 15.20.030.

* **Sec. 40.** AS 15.56.060(a) is amended to read:

(a) A person commits the crime of unlawful interference with an election if the person

(1) induces or attempts to induce an election official to fail in the official's duty by force, threat, intimidation, or offers of reward;

(2) intentionally changes, attempts to change, or causes to be changed an official election document including ballots, tallies, and returns;

(3) intentionally delays, attempts to delay, or causes to be delayed the sending of the certificate, register, ballots, or other materials whether original or duplicate, required to be sent by AS 15.15.370; [OR]

(4) is contracted or employed by the state to print or reproduce in any manner an official ballot, and the person knowingly

(A) personally appropriates, or gives or delivers to, or permits to be taken by anyone other than a person authorized by the director, official ballots; or

(B) prints or reproduces or has printed or reproduced official ballots in a form or with a content other than that prescribed by law or as directed by the director;

(5) intentionally opens or tampers with a signed absentee ballot certificate, sealed absentee ballot envelope, or package of ballots without express authorization from the director; or

(6) intentionally breaches, hacks, alters, or tampers with election machinery, including a tabulator, a program, a system, a server, or software used to verify identity, count or tabulate, or manage or control an election function.

* **Sec. 41.** AS 15.56.070(a) is amended to read:

(a) A person commits the crime of election official misconduct in the first degree if, while an election official, the person

(1) intentionally fails to perform an election duty or knowingly does an unauthorized act with the intent to affect an election or its results;

(2) knowingly permits or makes or attempts to make a false count of election returns; [OR]

(3) intentionally conceals, withholds, destroys, or attempts to conceal, withhold, or destroy election returns; or

(4) knowingly discloses, shares, or reports to a person who is not an election official election results, returns, or any confidential election data before the polls close on election day.

* **Sec. 42.** AS 15.80 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 15.80.006. Cybersecurity. The lieutenant governor shall, by regulation, develop a cybersecurity program to defend the voter registration records kept by the division against cyber attacks and data breaches and enable the division to detect and recover from cyber attacks. The program must include cybersecurity training for election officials.

* **Sec. 43.** AS 15.80 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 15.80.009. Synthetic media in electioneering communications. (a) A person may not knowingly use synthetic media in an electioneering communication with the intent to influence an election.

(b) An individual who is harmed by an electioneering communication that violates this section may bring an action in the superior court to recover damages, full reasonable attorney fees, and costs from

(1) the person who created the electioneering communication or retained the services of another to create the electioneering communication;

(2) a person who disseminates an electioneering communication knowing that the electioneering communication includes synthetic media; or

(3) a person who removes a disclosure statement described in (d) of this section from an electioneering communication with the intent to influence an election and knowing that the electioneering communication includes synthetic media.

(c) An individual who is harmed by an electioneering communication that violates this section may seek injunctive relief in the superior court to prohibit publication of the synthetic media.

(d) It is a defense to an action under this section that

(1) the electioneering communication included the following disclosure statement: "This (image/video/audio) has been manipulated" and

(A) for visual media that included other text, the text of the disclosure statement remained visible throughout the entirety of the communication, was easily readable by the average viewer, and was in a font not smaller than the largest font size of any other text that appeared in the visual component;

(B) for visual media that did not include any other text, the disclosure statement was in a font size that was easily readable by the average viewer;

(C) for a communication that consisted of only audio, the disclosure statement was read

(i) at the beginning of the audio, at the end of the audio, and, if the audio was longer than two minutes in duration, at intervals interspersed within the audio that occurred at least once every two minutes; and

(ii) in a clear manner and in a pitch and at a speed that

1 was easily heard by the average listener; or

2 (2) the synthetic media constitutes satire or parody.

3 (e) An interactive computer service, Internet service provider, cloud service
4 provider, telecommunications network, or radio or television broadcaster, including a
5 cable or satellite television operator, programmer, or producer, is not liable under this
6 section for hosting, publishing, or distributing an electioneering communication
7 provided by another person. For purposes of this section, a developer of the
8 technology used to create synthetic media that is in an electioneering communication
9 is not the creator of the electioneering communication. This subsection does not
10 prevent an individual from bringing an action under (b)(3) of this section for removing
11 a disclosure statement.

12 (f) In this section,

13 (1) "access software provider" means a provider of client, server, or
14 other software or enabling tools that

15 (A) filter, screen, allow, or disallow content;

16 (B) pick, choose, analyze, or digest content; or

17 (C) transmit, receive, display, forward, cache, search, subset,
18 organize, reorganize, or translate content;

19 (2) "artificial intelligence" means a machine-based system that, for
20 explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input the system receives, how to
21 generate outputs, including predictions, content, recommendations, and decisions that
22 can influence physical or virtual environments, with different artificial intelligence
23 systems varying in levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment;

24 (3) "electioneering communication" means a communication that

25 (A) directly or indirectly identifies a candidate or political
26 party;

27 (B) is disseminated through a mailing, a newspaper, the
28 Internet, or broadcast media, including radio, television, cable, or satellite, to
29 an audience that includes voters who will have the opportunity to vote on a
30 candidate identified in the communication or on a candidate of a party
31 identified in the communication; and

(C) when read as a whole and with limited reference to outside events, is susceptible of no other reasonable interpretation but as an exhortation to vote for or against a specific candidate;

(4) "interactive computer service" means an information service, system, or access software provider that provides or enables computer access by multiple users to a computer server, including specifically a service or system that provides access to the Internet and systems operated or services offered by libraries or educational institutions;

(5) "synthetic media"

(A) means an image, audio recording, or video recording of an individual's appearance, speech, or conduct that is manipulated by artificial intelligence in a manner that creates a realistic but false image, audio recording, or video recording and produces

(i) a depiction that a reasonable person would believe is of a real individual in appearance, speech, or conduct but did not actually occur in reality; and

(ii) a materially different understanding or impression than a reasonable person would have from the unaltered, original version of the image, audio recording, or video recording;

(B) does not include an image, audio recording, or video recording that is minimally edited, adjusted, or enhanced by artificial intelligence without materially altering how the meaning or significance of the depiction would be perceived by a reasonable person.

* **Sec. 44.** AS 19.25.105(a) is amended to read:

(a) Outdoor advertising may not be erected or maintained within 660 feet of the nearest edge of the right-of-way and visible from the main-traveled way of the interstate, primary, or secondary highways in this state except the following:

(1) directional and other official signs and notices that [WHICH] include [, BUT ARE NOT LIMITED TO,] signs and notices pertaining to natural wonders, scenic and historic attractions, which are required or authorized by law, and which shall conform to federal standards for interstate and primary systems;

(2) signs, displays, and devices advertising the sale or lease of property on [UPON] which they are located or advertising activities conducted on the property;

(3) signs determined by the state, subject to concurrence of the United States Department of Transportation, to be landmark signs, including signs on farm structures or natural surfaces of historic or artistic significance, the preservation of which would be consistent with the provisions of this chapter;

(4) directional signs and notices pertaining to schools;

(5) advertising on bus benches or bus shelters, and adjacent trash receptacles, if the state determines that the advertising conforms to local, state, and federal standards for interstate and primary highways;

(6) temporary political campaign signs not larger than 32 square feet in size displayed on private property if the owner or resident of the property is not being compensated for the display, the sign is not a risk to the public, and the sign is outside of an interstate, primary, or secondary highway right-of-way.

* **Sec. 45.** AS 24.45.091 is amended to read:

Sec. 24.45.091. Publication of reports. Copies of the statements and reports filed under this chapter shall be made available to the public at the commission's **offices and on the commission's Internet website** [CENTRAL OFFICE, THE OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE LIBRARY OF THE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY, AND AT THE COMMISSION'S DISTRICT OFFICES PRESCRIBED IN AS 15.13.020(j)] as soon as practicable after each reporting period.

* **Sec. 46.** AS 24.45.111(b) is amended to read:

(b) The commission shall preserve the statements and reports required to be filed under this chapter for a period of six years from the date of filing. **Copies** [IF THE COMMISSION'S CENTRAL OFFICE IS NOT IN THE STATE CAPITAL, COPIES] of all statements and reports filed under this chapter shall be maintained in **the commission's offices and be made available on the commission's Internet website** [AN OFFICE ESTABLISHED BY THE COMMISSION IN THE STATE CAPITAL OR IN THE OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR].

* **Sec. 47.** AS 39.50.020(b) is amended to read:

(b) A public official, [OR] former public official, or candidate for municipal office [OTHER THAN AN ELECTED OR APPOINTED MUNICIPAL OFFICER] shall file the statement with the Alaska Public Offices Commission. Candidates for the office of governor and lieutenant governor and, if the candidate is not subject to AS 24.60, the legislature shall file the statement under AS 15.25.030. The Alaska Public Offices Commission shall provide copies of the statements filed by municipal [MUNICIPAL] officers, former municipal officers, and candidates for elective municipal office to [SHALL FILE WITH] the applicable municipal clerk or other municipal official designated to receive the statements [THEIR FILING FOR OFFICE]. All statements required to be filed under this chapter are public records.

* **Sec. 48.** AS 39.50.200(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

(65) Redistricting Board.

* **Sec. 49.** AS 44.62.310(h)(3) is amended to read:

(3) "public entity" means an entity of the state or of a political subdivision of the state including an agency, a board or commission, the Redistricting Board, the University of Alaska, a public authority or corporation, a municipality, a school district, and other governmental units of the state or a political subdivision of the state; it does not include the court system or the legislative branch of state government.

* **Sec. 50.** AS 15.10.170(b) is repealed.

* **Sec. 51.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to read:

REPORT TO THE LEGISLATURE. The division of elections shall provide a report to the legislature by November 1, 2026, recommending options for expanding early voting in rural communities and low-income neighborhoods. The division shall deliver the report to the senate secretary and the chief clerk of the house of representatives and notify the legislature that the report is available. In this section,

(1) "low-income neighborhood" means a neighborhood where the median family income is below 80 percent of the statewide median family income;

(2) "rural community" means a community with a population of 7,500 or less that is not connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks or a community with a

1 population of 3,500 or less that is connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks.

2 * **Sec. 52.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
3 read:

4 APPLICABILITY. AS 15.56.030(d), as amended by sec. 39 of this Act,
5 AS 15.56.060(a), as amended by sec. 40 of this Act, and AS 15.56.070(a), as amended by sec.
6 41 of this Act, apply to offenses committed on or after the effective date of this Act.

7 * **Sec. 53.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2026.