

SENATE BILL NO. 64

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE - FIRST SESSION

BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE

Introduced: 1/24/25

Referred: State Affairs, Finance

A BILL

FOR AN ACT ENTITLED

1 **"An Act relating to elections; relating to voters; relating to voting; relating to voter**
2 **preregistration for minors at least 16 years of age; relating to voter registration; relating**
3 **to the Alaska Public Offices Commission; relating to synthetic media in electioneering**
4 **communications; relating to campaign signs; relating to public official financial**
5 **disclosures; relating to the crime of unlawful interference with voting in the first degree;**
6 **and providing for an effective date."**

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

8 * **Section 1.** AS 15.05.010 is amended to read:

9 **Sec. 15.05.010. Voter qualification.** A person may vote at any election who

10 (1) is a citizen of the United States;

11 (2) is 18 years of age or older;

12 (3) has been a resident of the state and of the house district in which
13 the person seeks to vote for at least 30 days just before the election; and

(4) has registered [BEFORE THE ELECTION] as required under AS 15.07 and is not registered to vote in another jurisdiction.

* **Sec. 2.** 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

1 under AS 15.05.010.

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

4 (8) The address of a voter as it appears on the official voter registration
5 record is presumptive evidence of the person's voting residence. This presumption is
6 negated [ONLY] if the voter notifies the director in writing of a change of voting
7 residence. **When a voter's qualification is questioned under AS 15.15.210 or**
8 **challenged in accordance with the procedure adopted in regulation under**
9 **AS 15.20.215, the presumption may be rebutted by providing evidence to the**
10 **division that the voter has established residence in another state or place in this**
11 **state or evidence that the voter is not a resident under (2) - (7) of this section.**

12 * **Sec. 3.** AS 15.07.040 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

13 (b) A person who is at least 16 years of age and under 18 years of age may
14 preregister to vote. To preregister, a person shall supply the information required
15 under AS 15.07.060(a) to a registration official or a voter registration agency, except
16 that, instead of a declaration that the applicant will be 18 years of age or older within
17 90 days after the date of registration under AS 15.07.060(a)(6), the person shall supply
18 a declaration that the person will be 18 years of age or older within two years after the
19 date of preregistration.

20 (c) The division shall register a person preregistered to vote under (b) of this
21 section 90 days before the person reaches 18 years of age and forward to the person a
22 registration card.

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

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

- 26 (1) the applicant's name and sex;
- 27 (2) if issued, the applicant's State of Alaska driver's license number or
- 28 State of Alaska identification card number, or the last four digits of the applicant's
- 29 social security number;
- 30 (3) the applicant's date of birth;
- 31 (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. 5.** AS 15.07.060 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

(g) The division shall provide an applicant the opportunity to designate, from among the written languages in which the division is required to print election materials under 52 U.S.C. 10503, as amended, the language in which the applicant prefers to receive ballots and other election materials printed for an election. The division shall provide the applicant with ballots and election materials in the applicant's designated language unless the applicant designates a language in which the division is not required to print ballots and election materials. The division shall notify an applicant when ballots and election materials printed in the designated language are not available and allow the applicant another opportunity to designate a language under this subsection. The division shall provide an applicant with ballots and election materials in the designated language until the earlier of the date that

(1) the applicant's voter registration is inactivated or cancelled; or

(2) the division is no longer required under 52 U.S.C. 10503, as amended, to print ballots and election materials in the designated language.

(h) An applicant who requests registration within 30 days before an election

1 shall supply a declaration stating whether the applicant established residency at least
2 30 days before the date of the election in

3 (1) the state;

4 (2) the house district in which the applicant seeks to vote at the
5 election.

6 * **Sec. 6.** AS 15.07.070(b) is amended to read:

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

24 * **Sec. 7.** AS 15.07.070(c) is amended to read:

25 (c) The names of persons submitting completed registration forms by mail that
26 are postmarked at least 30 days before the next election, or submitting completed
27 registration forms by facsimile or other electronic transmission approved by the
28 director under AS 15.07.050 that are received at least 30 days before the next election,
29 shall be placed on the official registration list for that election. If a registration form
30 received by mail less than 30 days before an election does not have a legible and dated
31 postmark, the name of the person submitting the form shall be placed on the official

1 registration list for that election if the form was signed and dated by the person at least
 2 30 days before the election and if the form is received by the director or election
 3 supervisor at least 25 days before the election. The name of a person submitting a
 4 completed registration form by mail or by facsimile or other electronic transmission
 5 that does not meet the applicable requirements of this subsection may not be placed on
 6 the official registration list for that election but shall be placed on the master register
 7 after that election. **A person submitting a completed registration form that does**
 8 **not meet the requirements of this subsection for placement on the master register**
 9 **for the next election but who complies with AS 15.07.060(g) may vote an**
 10 **absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot at that election.**

11 * **Sec. 8.** AS 15.07.070(d) is amended to read:

12 (d) Qualified voters may register in person before a registration official or
 13 through a voter registration agency at any time throughout the year. **A qualified voter**
 14 **who registers** [, EXCEPT THAT A PERSON REGISTERING] within 30 days **before**
 15 **or on the day of an election may vote only an absentee, special needs, or**
 16 **questioned ballot** [PRECEDING AN ELECTION IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO VOTE] at
 17 that election. **The division may not reject the absentee, special needs, or**
 18 **questioned ballot of a qualified voter who registers within 30 days before or on**
 19 **the day of an election on the grounds that the voter is not on the official**
 20 **registration list for the election.** Upon receipt and approval of the registration forms,
 21 the director or the election supervisor shall forward to the voter an acknowledgment in
 22 the form of a registration card, and the voter's name shall immediately be placed on
 23 the master register. Names of persons registering 30 or more days before an election
 24 shall be placed on the official registration list for that election.

25 * **Sec. 9.** AS 15.07.090(b) is amended to read:

26 (b) A voter shall reregister if the voter's registration is cancelled as provided in
 27 AS 15.07.130. **A person reregistering under this subsection may vote only an**
 28 **absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot until** [THE REREGISTRATION IS
 29 EFFECTIVE FOR] the next election that occurs at least 30 days after the date of
 30 reregistration. **The division may not reject the absentee, special needs, or**
 31 **questioned ballot of a qualified voter who reregisters within 30 days before or on**

1 the day of an election on the grounds that the voter is not on the official
 2 registration list for the election.

3 * Sec. 10. AS 15.07.090(c) is amended to read:

4 (c) The director shall transfer the registration of a voter from one precinct to
 5 another within a house district when requested by the voter. If a [THE] request is
 6 [SHALL BE] made within 30 [OR MORE] days before [THE] election day or on
 7 election day, a person transferring registration to a new precinct may vote only
 8 an absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot. The division may not reject the
 9 absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot of a qualified voter who transfers
 10 registration within 30 days before or on the day of an election on the grounds
 11 that the voter is not on the official registration list for the election. The director
 12 shall transfer the registration of a voter from one house district to another when
 13 requested by the voter. The voter must reside in the new house district for at least 30
 14 days in order to vote a ballot for that district.

15 * Sec. 11. AS 15.07.090(d) is amended to read:

16 (d) A person who claims to be a registered voter, but for whom no evidence of
 17 registration in the precinct can be found, may vote only an absentee, special needs,
 18 or questioned ballot. The division may not reject the absentee, special needs, or
 19 questioned ballot of a qualified voter who registers within 30 days before or on
 20 the day of an election on the grounds that the voter is not on the official
 21 registration list for the election [SHALL BE GRANTED THE RIGHT TO VOTE
 22 IN THE SAME MANNER AS THAT OF A QUESTIONED VOTER AND THE
 23 BALLOT SHALL BE TREATED IN THE SAME MANNER. THE BALLOT
 24 SHALL BE CONSIDERED TO BE A "QUESTIONED BALLOT" AND SHALL BE
 25 SO DESIGNATED. THE DIRECTOR OR THE DIRECTOR'S REPRESENTATIVE
 26 SHALL DETERMINE WHETHER THE VOTER IS REGISTERED IN THE HOUSE
 27 DISTRICT BEFORE COUNTING THE BALLOT. A VOTER WHO HAS FAILED
 28 TO OBTAIN A TRANSFER AS PROVIDED IN (c) OF THIS SECTION SHALL
 29 VOTE A "QUESTIONED BALLOT" IN THE PRECINCT IN WHICH THE VOTER
 30 RESIDES].

31 * Sec. 12. 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; **or**

(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

(I) received a benefit available only to residents of another state.

* Sec. 13. AS 15.07.130(b) is amended to read:

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

* **Sec. 14.** AS 15.07.130(d) is amended to read:

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

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

(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

1 changed residence.

2 * **Sec. 15.** AS 15.07 is amended by adding a new section to read:

3 **Sec. 15.07.133. Process to cancel registration.** The director shall develop a
4 process to allow a voter to cancel the voter's registration electronically or in person
5 before an election official. The director shall prominently display instructions for a
6 voter to cancel the voter's registration at each polling place.

7 * **Sec. 16.** AS 15.10.105 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

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

13 * **Sec. 17.** AS 15.10.170(a) is amended to read:

14 (a) The precinct party committee, where an organized precinct committee
15 exists, or the party district committee where no organized precinct committee exists,
16 or the state party chairperson where neither a precinct nor a party district committee
17 exists, may appoint one or more [PERSONS AS] watchers in each precinct and
18 counting center for any election. A [EACH] candidate may appoint one or more
19 watchers for each precinct or counting center in the candidate's respective district or
20 the state for any election. An [ANY] organization or organized group that sponsors or
21 opposes a ballot proposition [AN INITIATIVE, REFERENDUM,] or question
22 [RECALL] may have one or more [PERSONS AS] watchers at the polls and counting
23 centers after first obtaining authorization from the director. A candidate, or an
24 organization or organized group with authorization from the director, may
25 appoint at least one watcher for each location where ballots or envelopes are
26 reviewed or counted in a precinct or counting center. A state party chairperson, a
27 precinct party committee, a party district committee, or a candidate may not have more
28 than one watcher on duty at a time in any precinct or counting center. A watcher must
29 be a United States citizen. The watcher may be present at a position inside the place of
30 voting or counting that affords a full view of all action of the election officials taken
31 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. 18.** 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 MAKE ALL FORMS AND PERTINENT MATERIAL AVAILABLE TO CANDIDATES. ALL REPORTS SHALL BE FILED BY CANDIDATES, GROUPS, AND INDIVIDUALS DIRECTLY WITH THE COMMISSION'S CENTRAL DISTRICT OFFICE. THE COMMISSION SHALL ENSURE THAT COPIES OF ALL REPORTS BY STATEWIDE AND LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES IN EACH SENATE DISTRICT ARE FORWARDED PROMPTLY TO THAT DISTRICT OR REGIONAL OFFICE].

* **Sec. 19.** 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. 20.** AS 15.15 is amended by adding a new section to read:

Sec. 15.15.205. Questioning of voter who requested absentee ballot. If a

1 voter appears on the official registration list as having received or voted an absentee
 2 ballot, the election official shall affirmatively advise the voter that the voter may
 3 surrender the absentee ballot for destruction or cast a questioned ballot. If the voter
 4 does not surrender the absentee ballot, the voter shall be allowed to vote a questioned
 5 ballot.

6 * **Sec. 21.** AS 15.15.370 is amended to read:

7 **Sec. 15.15.370. Results [COMPLETION] of ballot count [;**
 8 **CERTIFICATE].** When the count of ballots is completed, and in no event later than
 9 the day after the election, the election board shall make a certificate in duplicate of the
 10 results. The certificate includes the number of votes cast for each candidate, including,
 11 for a candidate in a general election, the number of votes at each **ranking** [ROUND
 12 OF THE RANKED-CHOICE TABULATION PROCESS] under AS 15.15.350, the
 13 number of votes for and against each proposition, yes or no on each question, and any
 14 additional information prescribed by the director. The election board shall,
 15 immediately upon completion of the certificate or as soon thereafter as the local mail
 16 service permits, send in one sealed package to the director one copy of the certificate
 17 and the register. In addition, all ballots properly cast shall be mailed to the director in a
 18 separate, sealed package. Both packages, in addition to an address on the outside, shall
 19 clearly indicate the precinct from which they come. Each board shall, immediately
 20 upon completion of the certification and as soon thereafter as the local mail service
 21 permits, send the duplicate certificate to the respective election supervisor. The
 22 director may authorize election boards in precincts in those areas of the state where
 23 distance and weather make mail communication unreliable to forward their election
 24 results by telephone or radio. The director may authorize the unofficial totaling of
 25 votes on a regional basis by election supervisors, tallying the votes as indicated on
 26 duplicate certificates. To ensure adequate protection, the director shall prescribe the
 27 manner in which the ballots, registers, and all other election records and materials are
 28 thereafter preserved, transferred, and destroyed.

29 * **Sec. 22.** AS 15.15.370 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

30 (b) Each day that the director releases unofficial totals of election results for a
 31 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 and the number of ballots rejected and the reasons for each rejection.

(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. 23.** 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 may be present and assist.**

* **Sec. 24.** 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. 25.** 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. 26.** 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. 27.** AS 15.20.081(d) is amended to read:

(d) Upon receipt of an absentee ballot by mail, the voter [, IN THE

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

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

18 (e) An absentee ballot must be marked on or before the date of the election.
 19 Except as provided in (h) of this section, a voter who returns the absentee ballot by
 20 mail, whether provided to the voter by mail or by electronic transmission, shall use a
 21 mail service at least equal to first class and mail the ballot not later than the day of the
 22 election to the election supervisor for the house district in which the voter seeks to
 23 vote. Except as provided in AS 15.20.480, the ballot may not be counted unless it is
 24 received by the close of business on the 10th day after the election. [IF THE BALLOT
 25 IS POSTMARKED, IT MUST BE POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE ELECTION
 26 DAY.] After the day of the election, ballots may not be accepted unless received by
 27 mail. A ballot received after the day of the election that is not postmarked or is
 28 postmarked after the day of the election may not be counted unless the ballot
 29 envelope is marked with a United States Postal Service tracking barcode
 30 sufficient to verify that the ballot was mailed on or before the day of the election
 31 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. 29.** AS 15.20.081 is amended by adding new subsections to read:

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

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

or

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

(n) If a voter requests under AS 15.07.060(g) or, at least 45 days before an election, requests in writing or by other means designated in regulations adopted by the director to receive a ballot in a language other than English in which the division is required to print election materials under 52 U.S.C. 10503, as amended, the director shall provide the voter with a ballot and election materials under this section in the language requested.

* **Sec. 30.** AS 15.20.201(b) is amended to read:

(b) Counting of absentee ballots that have been reviewed shall begin **not less than seven days preceding** [AT 8:00 P.M., LOCAL TIME, ON] the day of the election at places designated by each election supervisor and shall continue until all absentee ballots reviewed and eligible for counting have been counted. The counting teams shall report the **first** count of absentee ballots to the district absentee ballot counting board **not later than** [. AN ELECTION SUPERVISOR OR AN ELECTION OFFICIAL MAY NOT COUNT ABSENTEE BALLOTS BEFORE] 8:00 p.m., local time, on the day of the election. Counting of the absentee ballots shall continue at times designated by the election supervisor until all absentee ballots are counted.

* **Sec. 31.** AS 15.20.203(b) is amended to read:

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

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

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

TO ATTEST THE VOTER'S CERTIFICATE FAIL TO EXECUTE THE

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

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

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

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

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

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

22 (3) [(5)] after the day of election, the ballot was delivered by a means
 23 other than mail;

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

25 (A) in person and is a

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

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

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

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

12 (i) driver's license, state identification card, current and
13 valid photo identification, birth certificate, passport, or hunting or
14 fishing license; or

15 (ii) current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck,
16 government check, or other government document; an item described
17 in this sub-subparagraph must show the name and current address of
18 the voter; or

19 **(5) the voter did not vote absentee in-person and the signature on**
20 **the certificate is not consistent with the voter's signature in voter registration**
21 **records.**

22 * **Sec. 32.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding a new section to read:

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

28 * **Sec. 33.** AS 15.20.220(b) is amended to read:

29 (b) The state review board shall review and count absentee ballots under
30 AS 15.20.081(e) and (h), **absentee ballots properly cured under AS 15.20.222,** and
31 questioned ballots that have been forwarded to the director and that have not been

1 reviewed or counted by a district counting board.

2 * **Sec. 34.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding new sections to read:

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

7 (1) confirm that the voter's ballot has been sent by the division;

8 (2) track the date of the ballot's delivery to the voter;

9 (3) confirm the division's receipt of the voter's ballot;

10 (4) determine whether the voter's certificate has been reviewed;

11 (5) determine whether the voter's ballot has been counted; and

12 (6) provide the information necessary to cure a rejected ballot.

13 (b) The online ballot-tracking system must

14 (1) verify a voter's identity; and

15 (2) indicate to a voter

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

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

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

23 **Sec. 15.20.222. Procedure for curing uncounted ballot.** (a) If a voter's ballot
24 is rejected because the certificate is missing a signature or the voter provided
25 insufficient voter identification, the director shall immediately make a reasonable
26 effort to contact the voter, explain the ballot deficiency, explain how the deficiency
27 may be cured, and inform the voter of the deadline to cure the ballot. The director
28 shall, within 24 hours, send a notice of deficiency by electronic mail to the voter's
29 electronic mail address if the voter has provided an electronic mail address. If the
30 voter has provided a telephone number, the director shall, within 24 hours, attempt to
31 notify the voter of the deficiency by telephone call and text message. The director

1 shall, within 48 hours, but not later than five days after election day, send a notice of
 2 deficiency by first class, nonforwardable mail to the address in the voter's registration
 3 record.

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

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

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

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

17 (3) the ballot is otherwise valid.

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

22 * **Sec. 35.** AS 15.20 is amended by adding a new section to article 4 to read:

23 **Sec. 15.20.810. Drop boxes for elections conducted by mail.** The director
 24 shall provide secure ballot drop boxes. The director shall adopt regulations governing
 25 the use and location of ballot drop boxes. If practicable, the director shall provide a
 26 drop box at each division regional office. The director shall, for a municipality with
 27 over 20,000 residents, provide one drop box for each 20,000 residents in locations
 28 chosen to ensure that drop boxes are accessible to the most possible voters. When
 29 selecting drop box locations, the director may consult with municipalities, school
 30 districts, tribal organizations, and nonpartisan civic organizations. The director may
 31 provide a drop box in a municipality with fewer than 20,000 residents. The director

1 shall include in the regulations the criteria for selecting the locations of drop boxes,
 2 the security requirements for the drop boxes, and a requirement that drop boxes be
 3 open 24 hours a day in the 10 days before an election day. The regulations must
 4 require that each drop box be open on the election day until 8:00 p.m.

5 * **Sec. 36.** AS 15.56.030(d) is amended to read:

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

7 (1) includes

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

12 (B) government employment or benefits;

13 (2) does not include

14 (A) materials having a nominal value bearing the name,
 15 likeness, or other identification of a candidate, political party, political group,
 16 party district committee, or organization, or stating a position on a ballot
 17 proposition or question;

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

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

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

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

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

31 (G) postage-paid return envelopes required in

1 **AS 15.20.030.**

2 * **Sec. 37.** AS 15.80 is amended by adding a new section to read:

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

8 * **Sec. 38.** AS 15.80 is amended by adding a new section to read:

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

1 visual component;

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

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

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

11 (ii) in a clear manner and in a pitch and at a speed that
12 was easily heard by the average listener; or

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

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

23 (f) In this section,

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

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

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

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

30 (2) "artificial intelligence" means a machine-based system that, for
31 explicit or implicit objectives, infers, from the input the system receives, how to

1 generate outputs, including predictions, content, recommendations, and decisions that
2 can influence physical or virtual environments, with different artificial intelligence
3 systems varying in levels of autonomy and adaptiveness after deployment;

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

5 (A) directly or indirectly identifies a candidate or political
6 party;

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

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

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

20 (5) "synthetic media"

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

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

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

31 (B) does not include an image, audio recording, or video

1 recording that is minimally edited, adjusted, or enhanced by artificial
 2 intelligence without materially altering how the meaning or significance of the
 3 depiction would be perceived by a reasonable person.

4 * **Sec. 39.** AS 19.25.105(a) is amended to read:

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

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

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

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

18 (4) directional signs and notices pertaining to schools;

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

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

26 * **Sec. 40.** AS 24.45.091 is amended to read:

27 **Sec. 24.45.091. Publication of reports.** Copies of the statements and reports
 28 filed under this chapter shall be made available to the public at the commission's
 29 **offices and on the commission's Internet website** [CENTRAL OFFICE, THE
 30 OFFICE OF THE LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR, THE LEGISLATIVE REFERENCE
 31 LIBRARY OF THE LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY, AND AT THE

1 COMMISSION'S DISTRICT OFFICES PRESCRIBED IN AS 15.13.020(j)] as soon
2 as practicable after each reporting period.

3 * **Sec. 41.** AS 24.45.111(b) is amended to read:

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

11 * **Sec. 42.** AS 29.26.050 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

12 (d) Except as a municipality may require for elections held only in specific
13 local election districts or service areas under (b) of this section, a person who has lived
14 within the municipality for at least 30 days, but who has not registered to vote in state
15 elections at a residence address within the municipality at least 30 days before a
16 municipal election, may vote only an absentee, special needs, or questioned ballot in
17 that election. The municipality may not reject the absentee, special needs, or
18 questioned ballot of a qualified voter who registers within 30 days before or on the day
19 of an election on the grounds that the voter is not on the official registration list for the
20 election.

21 * **Sec. 43.** AS 39.50.020(b) is amended to read:

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

1 * **Sec. 44.** AS 39.50.200(b) is amended by adding a new paragraph to read:

2 (65) Redistricting Board.

3 * **Sec. 45.** AS 44.62.310(h)(3) is amended to read:

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

10 * **Sec. 46.** AS 15.10.170(b) is repealed.

11 * **Sec. 47.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
12 read:

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

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

20 (2) "rural community" means a community with a population of 7,500 or less
21 that is not connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks or a community with a
22 population of 3,500 or less that is connected by road or rail to Anchorage or Fairbanks.

23 * **Sec. 48.** The uncodified law of the State of Alaska is amended by adding a new section to
24 read:

25 APPLICABILITY. AS 15.56.030(d), as amended by sec. 36 of this Act, applies to
26 offenses committed on or after the effective date of sec. 36 of this Act.

27 * **Sec. 49.** This Act takes effect July 1, 2026.