

HOUSE No. 1666

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, January 22, 1947.

The committee on Election Laws, to whom were referred the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 130) of Michael J. McCarthy for legislation relative to the registration of voters prior to primaries, preliminary elections and elections, and the petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 200) of George E. Rawson for amendment of the law relative to the dates for the holding of final sessions for the registration of voters before elections, primaries and preliminary elections, report the accompanying bill (House, No. 1666).

For the committee,

GEORGE E. RAWSON.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Forty-Seven.

AN ACT RELATIVE TO THE REGISTRATION OF VOTERS PRIOR TO PRIMARIES, PRELIMINARY ELECTIONS AND ELECTIONS.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives
in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the
same, as follows:*

1 SECTION 1. Section 26 of chapter 51 of the General
2 Laws is hereby further amended by striking out sec-
3 tion 26, as most recently amended by section 20 of
4 chapter 453 of the acts of 1943, and inserting in place
5 thereof the following: —

6 *Section 26.* The registrars, for the purpose of
7 registering voters in the manner hereinafter provided,
8 shall hold such day and such evening sessions as the
9 town by by-law or the city by ordinance shall prescribe,
10 and such other sessions as they deem necessary; but,
11 except as provided in sections thirty-four and fifty,
12 there shall be no registration of voters between ten
13 o'clock in the evening on the thirty-second day pre-
14 ceding, and the day following, the biennial state
15 primary, the presidential primary and the biennial
16 state election, nor in any city between ten o'clock
17 in the evening on the twentieth day preceding and
18 the day following a city election, or a city primary or
19 preliminary election, nor in any town between ten
20 o'clock in the evening on the twentieth day preceding,

21 and the day following the annual town meeting not-
22 withstanding any contrary provision in any special
23 law. The time and place of registration shall be the
24 same for male and female applicants.

1 SECTION 2. Section 27 of said chapter 51, as most
2 recently amended by section 21 of chapter 453 of the
3 acts of 1943, is hereby further amended by striking
4 out section 27 and inserting in place thereof the
5 following:—

6 *Section 27.* They shall hold at least one session
7 at some suitable place in every city or town on or
8 before the last day for registration preceding the
9 biennial state primary, the presidential primary and
10 any city or town primary, or preliminary election.

1 SECTION 3. Said chapter 51 is hereby further
2 amended by striking out section 28, as appearing in
3 the Tercentenary Edition, and inserting in place
4 thereof the following:—

5 *Section 28.* They shall hold a continuous session
6 from twelve o'clock noon until ten o'clock in the
7 evening on the last day for registration prescribed
8 under section twenty-six, except that in towns having
9 less than three hundred voters said session shall be
10 sufficient if it includes the time from two to four
11 o'clock in the afternoon and from seven to ten o'clock
12 in the evening.

1 SECTION 4. Section 29 of chapter 51 of the General
2 Laws, as appearing in the Tercentenary Edition, is
3 hereby amended by striking out, in the third line, the
4 word "fourth" and inserting in place thereof the
5 word:— twentieth, — so as to read as follows:—
6 *Section 29.* They shall, in some suitable place, hold

7 a continuous session from twelve o'clock noon until
8 ten o'clock in the evening, on the twentieth day pre-
9 ceding a special election. Registration shall cease at
10 ten o'clock in the evening of the day on which such
11 session is held.

1 SECTION 5. Section 29A of chapter 51 of the Gen-
2 eral Laws is hereby further amended by striking out
3 section 29A, as most recently amended by section 2
4 of chapter 109 of the acts of 1943, and inserting in
5 place thereof the following: —

6 *Section 29A.* They shall, in some suitable place in
7 every city or town wherein there is to be a special
8 state, city or town primary, hold a session on the
9 twentieth day preceding such primary. Registration
10 shall cease at ten o'clock in the evening of the day on
11 which such a session is held. The provisions of this
12 section applicable in the case of a special city primary
13 shall apply also in the case of a special preliminary
14 election held in any city under chapter forty-three, or
15 in any city or town under any special law.

1 SECTION 6. Section 29B of said chapter 51, as most
2 recently amended by section 22 of chapter 453 of
3 the acts of 1943, is hereby further amended by strik-
4 ing out, in the second line, the word "forty" and in-
5 serting in place thereof the word: — sixty, — so as to
6 read as follows: — *Section 29B.* In cities the registrars
7 shall, within sixty days before the biennial state elec-
8 tion, but on or before the last day fixed for registration,
9 hold one or more sessions in one or more suitable
10 places in each ward of the city, unless the city council
11 votes otherwise.

1 SECTION 7. Said chapter 51 is hereby further
2 amended by striking out section 30, as most recently
3 amended by section 23 of said chapter 453, and in-
4 serting in place thereof the following:—

5 *Section 30.* In towns divided into voting precincts
6 the registrars shall, within sixty days before the bi-
7 ennial state election or the annual town meeting, as
8 the case may be, but in each case on or before the last
9 day fixed for registration, hold one or more sessions
10 in each voting precinct, unless the selectmen or town
11 vote otherwise. In towns not divided into voting
12 precincts they shall, during the same period, hold
13 sessions in one or more suitable places. They shall
14 hold a session before the last day for registration, at
15 some suitable place in any village or locality distant
16 two or more miles from the place of registration, if
17 ten or more voters residing in or near such village or
18 locality file with the town clerk not less than forty-
19 eight days before the biennial state election or annual
20 town meeting a petition stating that in such village
21 or locality there are at least ten citizens who are en-
22 titled and desire to be registered.

