

---

By Mr. D'Amico, a petition (accompanied by bill, Senate, No. 398) of Gerard D'Amico, Paul D. Harold, Paul Kollios and Jack H. Backman for legislation to improve voter registration in under-registered areas. Election Laws.

---

*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts*

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty-three.

AN ACT TO IMPROVE VOTER REGISTRATION IN UNDERREGISTERED  
AREAS.

*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. Chapter 51 of the General Laws, as most re-  
2 cently amended by chapter 269 of the Acts of 1980 is hereby  
3 amended by inserting, after Section 32 thereof, the following  
4 Section 32A: —

5 1) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter or  
6 any general or special law, the board of registrars or election  
7 commissioners in each city and town shall, not later than May  
8 15 of the Year of each biennial state election, identify and  
9 designate each precinct in their respective city or town which  
10 has a total ratio of registered voters to eligible voters, as evi-  
11 denced by a comparison of the annual list of residents with  
12 the annual register of voters, below the statewide ratio, as such  
13 statewide ratio of registered voters to eligible voters is de-  
14 termined biennially by the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

15 2) The registrars of each town or city shall make public  
16 and issue a list of all precincts designated pursuant to para-  
17 graph (1) above, by, within time limits therein specified, pub-  
18 lishing said list and causing said list to be conspicuously  
19 posted in the office of the City Clerk, and to be printed in one  
20 or more newspapers published in such city, and in Boston, in  
21 at least two daily newspapers published therein, plus in each  
22 city or town, in each daily or weekly newspaper which serves  
23 the designated precinct(s), and causing notice of said list to

24 be broadcast through public service announcements on radio  
25 stations serving the designated precincts. Such publication of  
26 the list of designated precincts shall include the numerical cal-  
27 culations used to determine which precincts are below the  
28 statewide ratio of registered voters to eligible voters.

29 3) Each board of registrars or election commissioners that  
30 is required by paragraph (1) to designate one or more pre-  
31 cincts as below the statewide ratio of registered voters to eli-  
32 gible voters shall, at least (90) days prior to the last day of  
33 voter registration for the biennial state election; establish and  
34 commence operation of at least one (1) widely accessible voter  
35 registration site in each of the said precinct(s). The location  
36 of said voter registration site(s) shall be published, in the  
37 same manner set forth in paragraph (2), above, at least (20)  
38 days prior to the first day of required operation of said  
39 site(s).

40 4) Each voter registration site that is established pursuant  
41 to paragraph (3), above, shall be open for eligible persons to  
42 register to vote at least two (2) nights per week from 5:00  
43 P.M. until 8:00 P.M. and on Saturday from 10:00 A.M. until  
44 6:00 P.M. during the 90-day period required by paragraph  
45 (3). Alternatively, registrars or commissioners may use any  
46 other means to make registration as widely accessible in each  
47 of said precincts as such special sites would provide, including  
48 but not limited to rotating sites in each precinct, using mobile  
49 vans, and implementing door to door registration. Publica-  
50 tion of the location and the hours of operation of each such  
51 voter registration site or other method shall be made weekly  
52 by the local registrars in the manner prescribed in paragraph  
53 (2), above.

54 5) In addition, the local registrars or commissioners of  
55 each city or town required by paragraph (1) to designate  
56 precincts, shall utilize whatever other means are necessary to  
57 bring the ratio of registered voters to eligible voters up to the  
58 statewide ratio by the conclusion of the registration for the  
59 second biennial state election to occur subsequent to the en-  
60 actment of this section, and thereafter as is necessary at least  
61 to maintain said ratio.

62 6) In order to comply with this section the registrars of  
63 voters or election commissioners shall appoint special assist-

64 ant registrars or deputies as needed. Such appointees shall be  
65 selected from among the enrolled voters of their respective  
66 cities and towns and as nearly as may be possible, equally rep-  
67 resent the two leading political parties. Such appointees shall  
68 be appointed with or without compensation.

1 SECTION 2. Chapter 51 of the General Laws is further  
2 amended by inserting after Section 7 thereof, the following  
3 Section 7A: —

4 *Section 7A.* On or before April 15 in each year of the bi-  
5 ennial state election, the registrars of voters or election com-  
6 missioners shall submit to the Secretary of the Commonwealth  
7 the list of residents, with designation of registered voters, as  
8 required to be compiled by sections six and seven of this chap-  
9 ter. Based on such lists, the Secretary shall determine the  
10 statewide ratio of all registered voters in the state to all eli-  
11 gible voters in the state and shall notify the registrars and  
12 commissioners of each city and town of such ratio no later  
13 than May 1 of said year.

