

By Mr. Businger of Brookline, petition of John A. Businger and Lawrence R. Alexander relative to voter registration in state agencies. Election Laws.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

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

AN ACT RELATIVE TO VOTER REGISTRATION IN STATE AGENCIES.

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

1 Chapter 51 of the General Laws is hereby amended by inserting
2 after Section 25 the following section: —

3 Section 25A. The governor shall appoint state deputy
4 registrars of voters in sufficient numbers to insure that voter
5 registration is readily available in all offices of all state agencies
6 during all hours in which said offices are open to the public. State
7 deputy registrars shall have the authority to receive affidavits of
8 registration from persons registering as voters of any city or town
9 of the Commonwealth, and for this purpose shall have the
10 authority to conduct registration sessions during all hours in
11 which the office or offices for which they have been appointed
12 to conduct voter registration are open to the public. Section thirty-
13 two shall not apply to such sessions, but all penalties concerning
14 registration shall apply. State deputy registrars shall forthwith
15 transmit completed affidavits of registration to the board of
16 registrars of voters of the city or town of the registrant's residence
17 and that board of registrars of voters shall receive the affidavits
18 as provided in sections forty-six to forty-seven B, inclusive. The
19 state secretary may adopt regulations governing the qualifications
20 and proceedings of state deputy registrars, and shall prepare in
21 sufficient quantity for their use standard forms for affidavits of
22 registration under section thirty-six.

23 State officials shall allow a reasonable number of community
24 volunteers to have access to public areas of the offices of state

25 agencies for purposes of publicizing and otherwise facilitating
26 voter registration opportunities in said offices.

27 Any Massachusetts resident who seeks to register to vote in an
28 office of a state agency, or to facilitate the registration of others
29 in such offices, shall have standing to bring an action in the
30 superior court for damages and such equitable relief, including
31 an injunction, as the court deems necessary and proper to compel
32 compliance with the provisions of this section.

1 SECTION 2. Section 42 of said chapter 51 is hereby amended
2 by striking out the second sentence, as appearing in section 8 of
3 chapter 1137 of the acts of 1973, and inserting in place thereof
4 the following sentence: — Except as provided in section forty-two
5 A, every person whose name has not been entered in the annual
6 register in accordance with sections thirty-four through thirty-
7 seven inclusive or a corresponding provision of law applicable to
8 a city or town having a listing board, must, in order to register
9 as a voter, or to qualify under section one A for voting for electors
10 of president and vice-president, as the case may be, appear in
11 person and make an affidavit of registration before a registrar,
12 assistant registrar, or state deputy registrar.

1 SECTION 3. Said Chapter 51 is hereby further amended by
2 striking out section 44, as appearing in section 9 of said chapter
3 1157, and inserting in place thereof the following section: —

4 Section 44. A person seeking to register shall complete an
5 affidavit in the form prescribed by section thirty-six and shall sign
6 the affidavit under the pains and penalties of perjury in the
7 presence of a registrar, assistant registrar, absent registration
8 officer, or state deputy registrar. If the person is unable to sign
9 his name, he shall make his mark, which shall be witnessed by
10 the registration official. A person registering as a voter may at
11 the same time and place establish his enrollment in a political party
12 as provided, in section thirty-eight of chapter fifty-three, by
13 indicating his desire to be enrolled on the affidavit of registration.
14 The registration official shall certify that the affidavit was signed
15 in his presence and shall date the affidavit which shall be the date
16 of registration.