

1 **VOTER CHALLENGE REVISIONS**

2 2010 GENERAL SESSION

3 STATE OF UTAH

4 **Chief Sponsor: Peter C. Knudson**

5 House Sponsor: Craig A. Frank

6

LONG TITLE

7 **General Description:**

8 This bill modifies provisions in the Election Code relating to the procedures for
9 challenging a person's eligibility to vote.

10 **Highlighted Provisions:**

11 This bill:

- 12 ▶ provides the grounds upon which a person's right to vote in an election may be
13 challenged during or before an election;
- 14 ▶ requires that written challenges to a person's right to vote in an election be filed in
15 advance of the election and provides procedures for filing and resolving the
16 challenges before the date of the election;
- 17 ▶ requires the election officer to notify each person whose right to vote in the election
18 has been challenged in writing and permits the person who has been challenged to
19 provide information in response to the challenge;
- 20 ▶ requires that written challenges be submitted under oath and be subject to criminal
21 penalties for false statements;
- 22 ▶ provides that an election officer's determination regarding a challenge to a person's
23 right to vote is subject to judicial appeal;
- 24 ▶ requires all documents filed in relation to a written challenge to be public records;
- 25 ▶ provides requirements for challenging a person's right to vote at the polling place;
- 26 and
- 27



28 ▶ makes technical changes.

29 **Monies Appropriated in this Bill:**

30 None

31 **Other Special Clauses:**

32 None

33 **Utah Code Sections Affected:**

34 AMENDS:

35 **20A-3-105.5**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapter 75

36 ENACTS:

37 **20A-3-201.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

38 **20A-3-202.3**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

39 **20A-3-202.5**, Utah Code Annotated 1953

40 REPEALS AND REENACTS:

41 **20A-3-202**, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2007, Chapter 75



43 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

44 Section 1. Section **20A-3-105.5** is amended to read:

45 **20A-3-105.5. Manner of voting -- Provisional ballot.**

46 (1) The poll workers shall follow the procedures and requirements of this section

47 when:

48 (a) the person's right to vote is challenged as provided in Section 20A-3-202 or

49 20A-3-202.5;

50 (b) the person's name is not found on the official register; or

51 (c) the poll worker is not satisfied that the voter has provided valid voter identification.

52 (2) When faced with one of the circumstances outlined in Subsection (1)(a) or ~~(1)(b)~~,
53 the poll worker shall:

54 (a) request that the person provide valid voter identification; and

55 (b) review the identification provided by the person.

56 (3) If the poll worker is satisfied that the person has provided valid voter identification

57 that establishes the person's identity and residence in the voting precinct:

58 (a) the poll worker in charge of the official register shall:

59 (i) record in the official register the type of identification that established the person's
60 identity and place of residence;

61 (ii) write the provisional ballot envelope number opposite the name of the voter in the
62 official register; and

63 (iii) direct the voter to sign his name in the election column in the official register;

64 (b) another poll worker shall list the ballot number and voter's name in the pollbook;

65 and

66 (c) the poll worker having charge of the ballots shall:

67 (i) endorse his initials on the stub;

68 (ii) check the name of the voter on the pollbook list with the number of the stub;

69 (iii) give the voter a ballot and a provisional ballot envelope; and

70 (iv) allow the voter to enter the voting booth.

71 (4) If the poll worker is not satisfied that the voter has provided valid voter

72 identification that establishes the person's identity and residence in the voting precinct:

73 (a) the poll worker in charge of the official register shall:

74 (i) record in the official register that the voter did not provide valid voter identification;

75 (ii) record in the official register the type of identification that was provided by the
76 voter, if any;

77 (iii) write the provisional ballot envelope number opposite the name of the voter in the
78 official register; and

79 (iv) direct the voter to sign his name in the election column in the official register;

80 (b) another poll worker shall list the ballot number and voter's name in the pollbook;

81 and

82 (c) the poll worker having charge of the ballots shall:

83 (i) endorse his initials on the stub;

84 (ii) check the name of the voter on the pollbook list with the number of the stub;

85 (iii) give the voter a ballot and a provisional ballot envelope; and

86 (iv) allow the voter to enter the voting booth.

87 (5) Whenever the election officer is required to furnish more than one kind of official

88 ballot to a voting precinct, the poll workers of that voting precinct shall give the registered

89 voter the kind of ballot that the voter is qualified to vote.

90 Section 2. Section **20A-3-201.5** is enacted to read:

91 **20A-3-201.5. Definitions.**

92 As used in this part:

93 (1) "Challenged voter" means a person whose right to vote is challenged as provided in
94 this part.

95 (2) "Filer" means a person who files a written statement challenging another person's
96 right to vote as provided in Section 20A-3-202.3.

97 Section 3. Section **20A-3-202** is repealed and reenacted to read:

98 **20A-3-202. Challenges to a voter's eligibility -- Basis for challenge -- Procedures.**

99 (1) A person's right to vote may be challenged because:

100 (a) the voter is not the person whose name appears in the official register or under
101 which name the right to vote is claimed;

102 (b) the voter is not a resident of Utah;

103 (c) the voter is not a citizen of the United States;

104 (d) the voter has not or will not have resided in Utah for 30 days immediately before
105 the date of the election;

106 (e) the voter's principal place of residence is not in the voting precinct claimed;

107 (f) the voter's principal place of residence is not in the geographic boundaries of the
108 election area;

109 (g) the voter has already voted in the election;

110 (h) the voter is not at least 18 years of age;

111 (i) the voter is a convicted felon and the voter's right to vote in an election has not been
112 restored under Section 20A-2-101.5; or

113 (j) in a regular primary election or in the Western States Presidential Primary, the voter
114 does not meet the political party affiliation requirements for the ballot the voter seeks to vote.

115 (2) A person who challenges another person's right to vote at an election shall do so
116 according to the procedures and requirements of:

117 (a) Section 20A-3-202.3, for challenges issued in writing more than ~~15~~ **21** ~~15~~ days
117a before the

118 day on which early voting commences; or

119 (b) Section 20A-3-202.5, for challenges issued in person at the time of voting.

120 Section 4. Section **20A-3-202.3** is enacted to read:

121 20A-3-202.3. Pre-election challenges to a voter's eligibility in writing -- Procedure
 122 -- Form of challenge.

123 (1) (a) A person may challenge the right to vote of a person whose name appears on the
 124 official register by filing with the election officer, during regular business hours and not later
 125 than ~~15~~ 21 ~~15~~ days before the date that early voting commences, a written statement that:

126 (i) lists the name and address of the person filing the challenge;

127 (ii) for each voter who is challenged:

128 (A) identifies the name of the challenged voter;

129 (B) lists the last known address or telephone number of the challenged voter;

130 (C) provides the basis for the challenge, as provided under Section 20A-3-202; and

131 (D) provides facts and circumstances supporting the basis provided; and

132 (iii) includes a signed affidavit, which is subject to penalties of perjury, swearing that:

133 (A) the filer exercised due diligence to personally verify the facts and circumstances
 134 establishing the basis for the challenge; and

135 (B) according to the filer's personal knowledge and belief, the basis for the challenge
 136 under Section 20A-3-202 for each challenged voter is valid.

137 (b) The challenge may not be based on unsupported allegations or allegations by an
 138 anonymous person.

139 (c) The election officer may provide a form that meets the requirements of this section
 140 for challenges filed under this section.

141 (2) (a) If the challenge is not in the proper form or if the basis for the challenge does
 142 not meet the requirements of this part, the election officer may dismiss the challenge and notify
 143 the filer in writing of the reasons for the dismissal.

144 (b) A challenge is not in the proper form if the challenge form is incomplete.

145 (3) Upon receipt of a challenge that meets the requirements for filing under this
 146 section, the election officer shall, at least ~~12~~ 14 ~~12~~ days before the day on which
 146a early voting

147 commences, attempt to notify each challenged voter:

148 (a) that a challenge has been filed against the challenged voter and the challenged voter
 149 may be required to cast a provisional ballot at the time of voting;

150 (b) of the basis for the challenge, which may include providing a copy of the written
 151 statement to the challenged voter; and

152 (c) that the challenged voter may submit information, a sworn statement, or other
153 evidence supporting the challenged voter's right to vote in the election to the election officer no
154 later than seven days before the day on which early voting commences.

155 (4) (a) Before the day on which early voting commences, the election officer shall
156 determine whether each challenged voter is eligible to vote.

157 (b) (i) The filer of the challenge has the burden to prove, by clear and convincing
158 evidence, that the basis for challenging the voter's right to vote is valid.

159 (ii) The election officer shall resolve the challenge based on the available facts and
160 information submitted, which may include voter registration records and other documents or
161 information available to the election officer.

162 (5) A person who files a challenge under the requirements of this section is subject to
163 criminal penalties for false statements as provided under Sections 76-8-503 and 76-8-504 and
164 any other applicable criminal provision.

165 (6) A decision of the election officer regarding a person's eligibility to vote may be
166 appealed to the district court having jurisdiction over the location where the challenge was
167 filed.

168 (7) A challenged voter may register to vote or change the location of the voter's voter
169 registration if otherwise legally entitled to do so.

170 (8) All documents pertaining to a voter challenge are public records.

171 Section 5. Section **20A-3-202.5** is enacted to read:

172 **20A-3-202.5. Challenges to a voter's eligibility at time of voting -- Procedure.**

173 (1) (a) A poll worker or a person who lives in the voting precinct may challenge a
174 voter's right to vote in that voting precinct or in that election if:

175 (i) the person making the challenge and the challenged voter are both present at the
176 polling place at the time the challenge is made; and

177 (ii) the challenge is made when the challenged voter applies for a ballot.

178 (b) A person may make a challenge by orally stating the challenged voter's name and
179 the basis for the challenge, as provided under Section 20A-3-202.

180 (2) The poll worker shall record a challenge in the official register and on the challenge
181 sheets in the pollbook, including:

182 (a) the name of the challenged voter;

183 (b) the name of the person making the challenge; and
184 (c) the basis asserted for the challenge.
185 (3) If a voter's right to vote is challenged under this section, the poll worker shall
186 follow the procedures and requirements of Section 20A-3-105.5.

Legislative Review Note
as of 1-26-10 11:20 AM

Office of Legislative Research and General Counsel

S.B. 53 - Voter Challenge Revisions

Fiscal Note

2010 General Session

State of Utah

State Impact

Enactment of this bill will not require additional appropriations.

Individual, Business and/or Local Impact

Enactment of this bill likely will not result in direct, measurable costs and/or benefits for individuals, businesses, or local governments.
