



General Assembly

January Session, 2003

Raised Bill No. 887

LCO No. 3079

Referred to Committee on Government Administration and
Elections

Introduced by:
(GAE)

AN ACT CONCERNING POLLING PLACE ACCESSIBILITY.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 9-168d of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective January 1, 2004*):

3 (a) [On or before July 1, 1980, each] Each polling place shall be made
4 accessible to and usable by physically disabled persons by [complying
5 with the following standards of accessibility: (1) Doors, entrances, and
6 exits used to gain access to or egress from the polling place shall have a
7 minimum width of thirty-one inches; (2) temporary ramps shall be
8 made available or curb cuts provided where necessary for accessibility
9 to the entrance; (3) any stairs necessarily used to enter the polling place
10 shall have a temporary handrail and ramp; (4) in the polling place, no
11 barrier shall impede the path of the physically disabled to the voting
12 booth] substantially complying with the standards of the State
13 Building Code, as revised pursuant to section 29-269, relating to
14 accessibility to, and use of, buildings and structures by persons with
15 disabilities.

16 (b) The registrars of voters in each town, or the legislative body of
17 the town, shall select as polling places only those sites which [meet the
18 standards of accessibility required under the State Building Code, as
19 revised pursuant to section 29-269, if applicable, or this section]
20 substantially comply with the standards of the State Building Code, as
21 revised pursuant to section 29-269, relating to accessibility to, and use
22 of, buildings and structures by persons with disabilities.

23 (c) The registrars or such legislative body may select a site [not
24 meeting] that does not substantially comply with such standards if (1)
25 no available site within the voting district or town can reasonably be
26 made accessible, [if] and (2) an application for waiver is filed with the
27 Secretary of the State and approved by the Office of Protection and
28 Advocacy for Persons with Disabilities. An application for waiver shall
29 be filed at least sixty days prior to the date on which the primary or
30 election will be held and shall include evidence of the town's efforts to
31 secure an accessible location and reasons why the town is unable to
32 provide a polling place that substantially complies with such
33 standards. The Secretary of the State shall, within seven days after
34 receipt of any such application, refer the application to said office of
35 protection and advocacy. Said office shall, within thirty days, review
36 the application and inform the Secretary of the State of its approval or
37 disapproval. The Secretary of the State shall notify the applicant for
38 waiver of such approval or disapproval within seven days after the
39 secretary is so informed.

This act shall take effect as follows:	
Section 1	January 1, 2004

Statement of Purpose:

To use the same standards for accessibility of buildings and structures by disabled persons under the State Building Code for the accessibility of polling places by disabled persons, and to require towns applying for waivers from such accessibility standards for new polling place locations to document their efforts and explain why they are unable to substantially comply with such standards.

[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]