



# House of Representatives

General Assembly

**File No. 175**

*February Session, 2004*

House Bill No. 5180

*House of Representatives, March 23, 2004*

The Committee on Government Administration and Elections reported through REP. O'ROURKE of the 32nd Dist., Chairperson of the Committee on the part of the House, that the bill ought to pass.

## ***AN ACT CONCERNING VOTER EDUCATION.***

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

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective January 1, 2005*) (a) Not later than October  
2 first in each year in which a state election, as defined in section 9-1 of  
3 the general statutes, is to be held, the Secretary of the State, in  
4 consultation with the State Elections Enforcement Commission, shall  
5 prepare a voter guide for such state election and shall publish such  
6 voter guide on the Internet.

7 (b) The voter guide shall contain:

8 (1) A photograph, biographical information and contact information  
9 submitted by each candidate (A) who is nominated or qualifies as a  
10 petitioning candidate for election to the office of President of the  
11 United States, Vice-President of the United States, senator in Congress,  
12 representative in Congress, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Attorney

13 General, State Treasurer, State Comptroller, Secretary of the State, State  
14 Senator or State Representative at the state election, and (B) who pays  
15 a twenty-five-dollar fee to the Secretary of the State for the purposes of  
16 this section;

17 (2) The following three maps produced pursuant to the most recent  
18 decennial reapportionment of General Assembly and Connecticut  
19 congressional districts: One map showing the boundaries of state  
20 senatorial districts, one map showing the boundaries of state house of  
21 representatives districts and one map showing the boundaries of state  
22 congressional districts;

23 (3) A description of each office to be filled at the state election;

24 (4) An absentee ballot application in printable format;

25 (5) Instructions regarding voting by absentee ballot;

26 (6) Information on the procedure for registering to vote;

27 (7) A voter registration application in printable format;

28 (8) The full text of each proposed constitutional amendment that  
29 will appear on the ballot at the state election; and

30 (9) The explanatory text as to the content and purpose of each such  
31 proposed constitutional amendment, which is prepared by the Office  
32 of Legislative Research pursuant to section 2-30a of the general  
33 statutes.

34 (c) Not later than one week after the date on which nominating  
35 primaries are required to be held under section 9-423 of the general  
36 statutes, as amended, for offices to be filled at a state election, each  
37 candidate described in subdivision (1) of subsection (b) of this section  
38 may file with the Secretary of the State one photograph of the  
39 candidate, biographical information and contact information. In the  
40 case of a candidate for the office of President of the United States, Vice-  
41 President of the United States, senator in Congress or representative in

42 Congress, the state central committee of the candidate's political party  
 43 may file such photograph, biographical information and contact  
 44 information on behalf of the candidate. Each filing under this  
 45 subsection shall be on an electronic medium that the Secretary of the  
 46 State, in consultation with the State Elections Enforcement  
 47 Commission, shall prescribe. No candidate or state central committee  
 48 may change, add to or delete any photograph, biographical  
 49 information or contact information filed with the Secretary of the State  
 50 under this section, unless such deletion is to effectuate a complete  
 51 withdrawal of the candidate's photograph, biographical information  
 52 and contact information from the Internet voter guide for the year in  
 53 which the state election is being held.

54 (d) Each such candidate shall have the equivalent of one printed  
 55 page of space in the Internet voter guide for such photograph,  
 56 biographical information and contact information. Each such  
 57 candidate's page shall contain the statement, "Photograph,  
 58 Biographical Information and Contact Information Provided by the  
 59 Candidate". Each candidate's biographical information shall consist of  
 60 not more than one hundred fifty words. All photographs of candidates  
 61 in the voter guide shall be black and white, of uniform size as  
 62 prescribed by the Secretary of the State, and shall have been taken  
 63 within two years of the year of the state election.

64 (e) The Secretary of the State, in consultation with the State Elections  
 65 Enforcement Commission, may adopt regulations, in accordance with  
 66 the provisions of chapter 54 of the general statutes, to carry out the  
 67 purposes of this section.

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| This act shall take effect as follows: |                 |
| Section 1                              | January 1, 2005 |

**GAE**      *Joint Favorable*

The following fiscal impact statement and bill analysis are prepared for the benefit of members of the General Assembly, solely for the purpose of information, summarization, and explanation, and do not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either House thereof for any purpose:

**OFA Fiscal Note**

**State Impact:**

| Agency Affected         | Fund-Effect       | FY 05 \$ | FY 06 \$ | FY 07 \$           |
|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|----------|--------------------|
| Secretary of the State  | GF - Revenue Gain | None     | None     | Less than \$10,000 |
| Secretary of the State  | GF - Cost         | None     | None     | Minimal            |
| Elect. Enforcement Com. | GF                | None     | None     | None               |

Note: GF=General Fund

**Municipal Impact:** None

**Explanation**

This bill requires the Secretary of the State (SOTS), in consultation with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC), to prepare and publish on the Internet a voter guide for each state election.

Candidates for U. S. President and vice-president, U. S. senator, member of Congress, the constitutional offices, and the state legislature are required to pay a \$25 fee to have their photograph and biographical information published on the Internet voter guide. This will result in a general fund revenue gain. The revenue generated is dependent on the number of candidates who submit material for the Internet voter guide.

In the 2002 gubernatorial election, there were 386 candidates for the U. S. congressional districts, constitutional offices, and state legislature. If all 386 candidates submitted material for the Internet voter guide and paid the \$25 fee there would be a revenue gain of \$9,650. It is not anticipated that every candidate will participate in the Internet voter guide.

The SOTS is not expected to incur costs to develop the Internet voter guide until FY 07, as the voter guide does not need to be completed until October 1, 2006. The SOTS will incur a workload increase and minimal costs in FY 07 to develop and host the Internet voter guide on its website. This bill is not expected to have a fiscal impact on the SEEC.

**OLR Bill Analysis**

HB 5180

***AN ACT CONCERNING VOTER EDUCATION*****SUMMARY:**

This bill requires the secretary of the state, in consultation with the State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC), to prepare and publish on the Internet a voter guide for each state election. She must complete it by October 1 in the even-numbered years.

The voter guide must include:

1. a photograph and biographical and contact information submitted by each candidate for the offices of U. S. President and vice-president, U. S. senator and representative, the six state constitutional offices, and the state legislature;
2. maps showing the current boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts;
3. a description of each office to be filled;
4. an absentee ballot application form in printable format with instructions on how to vote by absentee ballot;
5. a voter registration form in printable format with information on voter registration procedures; and
6. the text of each proposed constitutional amendment, if any, and the explanatory text for it.

Party-nominated and qualified petitioning candidates for the offices included in the guide may submit their photographs and biographical and contact information. A state central party committee may file the photographs and information on behalf of its candidates for U. S. President, vice-president, U. S. senator, and representative.

The candidates have one week after the primary for state offices to file the material with the secretary of the state and pay a \$25 fee. They must file in an electronic format that the secretary prescribes, in consultation with the SEEC. The photograph and information cannot be changed unless a candidate withdraws all the information from the guide for that election.

In the Internet voter guide, each candidate gets the equivalent of one printed page that includes the statement: "Photograph, Biographical Information and Contact Information Provided by the Candidate." Each candidate's biographical information must be 150 words or less. Photographs of all the candidates must be black and white, the same size as prescribed by the secretary, and no more than two years old.

The bill authorizes the secretary, in consultation with the SEEC, to adopt regulations to implement the preparation and publication of the voter guide.

EFFECTIVE DATE: January 1, 2005

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Report

Yea 17      Nay 0