
OLR Bill Analysis

HB 5844

AN ACT REQUIRING HOUSING AUTHORITIES TO PROVIDE VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATIONS TO PROSPECTIVE TENANTS.

SUMMARY

Starting January 1, 2020, this bill requires that housing authorities include voter registration applications with the applications that they distribute to individuals or families for admission to, or continued occupancy with, the authority. In the case of a family, a housing authority must provide a voter registration application for each individual who is eligible to be admitted as an elector (see BACKGROUND). (It is unclear whether the bill applies to 17-year-olds who, by law, are eligible to apply for admission, to take effect upon turning age 18.) Under the bill, a housing authority must assist an individual in completing the voter registration application upon request.

The bill also requires that housing authorities make voter registration materials publicly available, just as existing law requires for the departments of Social Services, Labor, and Motor Vehicles, as well as for the State Library and libraries of the state's public higher education institutions. Under the bill, (1) housing authorities must make voter registration information and materials available in their public areas and (2) the secretary of the state must provide housing authorities with the voter registration applications, materials, including nonpartisan literature, and any needed display furniture.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2019

BACKGROUND

Admission as an Elector

By law, an individual is eligible for admission as an elector if he or

she is (1) a U.S. citizen, (2) age 18 or older, and (3) a bona fide resident of the municipality in which he or she applies for admission. A 17-year-old who will turn age 18 by the day of the next regular election may apply for admission and, if otherwise qualified, becomes an elector on his or her 18th birthday (CGS § 9-12).

A mentally incompetent individual cannot be admitted as an elector. An individual convicted of a felony and committed to any federal or state prison forfeits his or her electoral rights while incarcerated (CGS § 9-46).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Housing Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 9 Nay 5 (03/07/2019)