

No. 1986-11

AN ACT

HB 1000

Amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), entitled "An act concerning elections, including general, municipal, special and primary elections, the nomination of candidates, primary and election expenses and election contests; creating and defining membership of county boards of elections; imposing duties upon the Secretary of the Commonwealth, courts, county boards of elections, county commissioners; imposing penalties for violation of the act, and codifying, revising and consolidating the laws relating thereto; and repealing certain acts and parts of acts relating to elections," requiring a statement of purpose and explanation to be prepared, published and posted for any ballot question; further providing for the powers and duties of the county boards of elections and certain courts; providing for nominations by minor political parties; and eliminating cross-filing for Statewide judicial candidates.

The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania hereby enacts as follows:

Section 1. The act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 201.1. Explanation of Ballot Question.—Whenever a proposed constitutional amendment or other State-wide ballot question shall be submitted to the electors of the Commonwealth in referendum, the Attorney General shall prepare a statement in plain English which indicates the purpose, limitations and effects of the ballot question on the people of the Commonwealth. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall include such statement in his publication of a proposed constitutional amendment as required by Article XI of the Constitution of Pennsylvania. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall certify such statement to the county boards of elections who shall publish such statement as a part of the notice of elections required by section 1201 or any other provision of this act. The county board of elections shall also require that at least three copies of such statement be posted in or about the voting room outside the enclosed space with the specimen ballots and other instructions and notices of penalties. In election questions which affect only one county or portion thereof, the county board of elections shall fulfill these requirements in the place of the Attorney General and the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Section 2. Section 502 of the act, amended July 11, 1980 (P.L.600, No.128), is amended to read:

Section 502. Court to Create New Election Districts.—Subject to the provisions of section 501 of this act, the court of common pleas of the county in which the same are located, may form or create new election districts by dividing or redividing any borough, township, ward or election district into two or more election districts of compact and contiguous territory, *having boundaries with clearly visible physical features and wholly contained within any larger district from which any Federal, State, county, municipal*

or school district officers are elected, or alter the bounds of any election district, or form an election district out of two or more adjacent districts or parts of districts, or consolidate adjoining election districts or form an election district out of two or more adjacent wards, so as to suit the convenience of the electors and to promote the public interests. Election districts so formed shall contain between six hundred (600) and eight hundred (800) registered electors as nearly as may be. No election district shall be formed that shall contain less than one hundred (100) registered electors. When a school district crosses county lines, the regions of the school district shall be composed of contiguous election districts.

Section 3. Sections 503 and 504 of the act, reenacted April 4, 1945 (P.L.143, No.64) and repealed in part April 28, 1978 (P.L.202, No.53), are amended to read:

Section 503. Petitions for New Election Districts; Reference to County Board of Elections; Report.—Upon the petition of twenty registered electors of any township, borough, ward or election district, to the court of the proper county, praying for the division or redivision of such township, borough, ward or election district into two or more election districts, or for the alteration of the bounds of any election district, or for the formation of one or more election districts out of two or more existing election districts, or parts thereof, or for the consolidation of adjoining election districts, the said court shall refer the said petition to the county board of elections, which shall make a full investigation of the facts, and shall report to the court its findings and recommendations as to the division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts prayed for. If the county board shall find that a division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts will promote the convenience of the electors and the public interests, it shall recommend a proper division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts, **[and shall accompany its report with a map, plot or draft of the new election district or districts proposed by it, if the same cannot be fully designated by natural lines]** *which must have clearly visible physical boundaries, and shall accompany its report with a map and a verbal description of the boundaries.* Such petitions may specify the boundaries desired by the petitioners, and may be accompanied by a map setting forth such boundaries.

Section 504. Petitions by County Board; Action by Court on Petition or Report.—The county board of elections may also petition the court for the division or redivision of any township, borough, ward or election district into two or more election districts, or for the alteration of the bounds of any election district, or for the formation of one or more election districts out of two or more existing election districts, or parts thereof, or for the consolidation of adjoining election districts, accompanying its petition **[by a description of the proposed new election districts and by a map, plot or draft thereof, if the same cannot be fully designated by natural lines]** *with a map and a verbal description of the boundaries of the proposed new election districts which must have clearly visible physical features.* Upon the presentation of any such petition by the county board, or upon the filing by the board

of its report and recommendations as to any petition presented by qualified electors under the provisions of section 503 of this act, the court may make such order for the division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts, as will, in its opinion, promote the convenience of electors and the public interests: Provided, however, That the court shall not make any final order for the division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts until at least ten days after notice shall have been posted in at least five public and conspicuous places in the district or districts to be affected thereby, one of which notices shall be posted on or in the immediate vicinity of the polling place in each such district. Such notice shall state in brief form the division, redivision, alteration, formation or consolidation of election districts recommended by the county board, and the date upon which the same will be considered by the court, and shall contain a warning that any person objecting thereto must file his objections with the clerk of the court prior to such date. Upon the making of any such final order by the court, a copy thereof shall be certified by the clerk to the county board of elections.

Section 4. Section 532(a) of the act, reenacted and amended November 23, 1976 (P.L.1124, No.236), is amended to read:

Section 532. Wards in Cities of the First Class May be Created, Divided, Realigned, or Consolidated.—

(a) Wards in a city of the first class may be created, divided, realigned or consolidated, *along clearly visible physical boundaries*, by the court of common pleas of the county in which said city is located, upon application thereto for those purposes by the petition of at least a total of one hundred qualified electors from the ward or wards sought to be affected, or of the council of such city.

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Section 5. Section 630.1 of the act, added April 18, 1985 (P.L.5, No.4), is amended to read:

Section 630.1. Affidavits of Candidates.—Each candidate for any State, county, city, borough, incorporated town, township, school district or poor district office, or for the office of United States Senator or Representative in Congress, selected as provided in section 630 of this act, shall file with the nomination certificate an affidavit stating—(a) his residence, with street and number, if any, and his post-office address; (b) his election district, giving city, borough, town or township; (c) the name of the office for which he consents to be a candidate; (d) that he is eligible for such office; (e) that he will not knowingly violate any provision of this act, or of any law regulating and limiting election expenses and prohibiting corrupt practices in connection therewith; (f) unless he is a candidate for judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school board in a district where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace, that he is not a candidate for the same office of any party or political body other than the one designated in such certificate; and (g) that he is aware of the provisions of section 1626 of this act requiring election and post-election reporting of cam-

paign contributions and expenditures. In cases of certificates for candidates for the General Assembly, the candidate's affidavit shall state (1) that the candidate will satisfy the eligibility requirements contained in sections 5 and 7 of Article II of the Constitution of Pennsylvania; (2) (i) that, in the case of a candidate for the office of Senator in the General Assembly, the candidate will be twenty-five (25) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election or (ii) that, in the case of a candidate for the office of Representative in the General Assembly, the candidate will be twenty-one (21) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election; (3) that the candidate shall have been a citizen and an inhabitant of Pennsylvania four (4) years and an inhabitant of the respective district one (1) year next before the election (unless absent on the public business of the United States or of this State); and (4) that the candidate has not been convicted of embezzlement of public moneys, bribery, perjury or other infamous crime.

Section 6. Section 909 of the act, amended December 22, 1971 (P.L.613, No.165), is amended to read:

Section 909. *Petition May Consist of Several Sheets; Affidavit of Circulator.*—Said nomination petition may be on one or more sheets, and different sheets must be used for signers resident in different counties. If more than one sheet is used, they shall be bound together when offered for filing if they are intended to constitute one petition, and each sheet shall be numbered consecutively beginning with number one, at the foot of each page. In cases of petitions for delegate or alternate delegate to National conventions, each sheet shall contain a notation indicating the presidential candidate to whom he is committed or the term "uncommitted." Each sheet shall have appended thereto the affidavit of the circulator of each sheet, setting forth— (a) that he or she is a qualified elector duly registered and enrolled as a member of the designated party of the State, or of the political district, as the case may be, referred to in said petition, unless said petition relates to the nomination of a **[judicial]** candidate *for a court of common pleas, for the Philadelphia Municipal Court or for the Traffic Court of Philadelphia or for justice of the peace*, in which event the circulator need not be a duly registered and enrolled member of the designated party; (b) his residence, giving city, borough or township, with street and number, if any; (c) that the signers thereto signed with full knowledge of the contents of the petition; (d) that their respective residences are correctly stated therein; (e) that they all reside in the county named in the affidavit; (f) that each signed on the date set opposite his name; and (g) that, to the best of affiant's knowledge and belief, the signers are qualified electors and duly registered and enrolled members of the designated party of the State, or of the political district, as the case may be.

Section 7. Section 910 of the act, amended April 18, 1985 (P.L.5, No.4), is amended to read:

Section 910. *Affidavits of Candidates.*—Each candidate for any State, county, city, borough, incorporated town, township, ward, school district, poor district, election district, party office, party delegate or alternate, or for

the office of United States Senator or Representative in Congress, shall file with his nomination petition his affidavit stating—(a) his residence, with street and number, if any, and his post-office address; (b) his election district, giving city, borough, town or township; (c) the name of the office for which he consents to be a candidate; (d) that he is eligible for such office; (e) that he will not knowingly violate any provision of this act, or of any law regulating and limiting nomination and election expenses and prohibiting corrupt practices in connection therewith; (f) unless he is a candidate for judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school director in a district where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace that he is not a candidate for nomination for the same office of any party other than the one designated in such petition; (g) if he is a candidate for a delegate, or alternate delegate, member of State committee, National committee or party officer, that he is a registered and enrolled member of the designated party; (h) if he is a candidate for delegate or alternate delegate the presidential candidate to whom he is committed or the term “uncommitted”; and (i) that he is aware of the provisions of section 1626 of this act requiring pre-election and post-election reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures. In cases of petitions for candidates for the General Assembly, the candidate’s affidavit shall state (1) that the candidate will satisfy the eligibility requirements contained in sections 5 and 7 of Article II of the Constitution of Pennsylvania; (2) (i) that in the case of a candidate for the office of Senator in the General Assembly that the candidate will be twenty-five (25) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election or (ii) that in the case of a candidate for the office of Representative in the General Assembly that the candidate will be twenty-one (21) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election; (3) that the candidate shall have been a citizen and inhabitant of Pennsylvania four (4) years and an inhabitant of the respective district one (1) year next before the election (unless absent on the public business of the United States or of this State); and (4) that the candidate has not been convicted of embezzlement of public moneys, bribery, perjury or other infamous crime. In cases of petitions for delegate and alternate delegate to National conventions, the candidate’s affidavit shall state that his signature to the delegate’s statement, as hereinafter set forth, if such statement is signed by said candidate, was affixed to the sheet or sheets of said petition prior to the circulation of same. In the case of a candidate for nomination as President of the United States, it shall not be necessary for such candidate to file the affidavit required in this section to be filed by candidates, but the post-office address of such candidate shall be stated in such nomination petition.

Section 8. The act is amended by adding a section to read:

Section 912.2. Nominations by Minor Political Parties.—
(a) Notwithstanding any other provision in this act to the contrary, minor political parties shall nominate all of their candidates for the offices to be filled at the ensuing November election pursuant to section 903 in accor-

dance with the requirements of section 951, other than subsection (e)(6) and (7) thereof, and section 954, and shall obtain the required signatures during the same time frame available to political bodies. Minor political parties shall be subject to the provisions of this act applicable to political parties with respect to special elections, voter registration forms, substituted nominations and all other purposes except as otherwise expressly provided in this section. "Minor political party" shall mean a political party as defined in section 801(a) or (b) whose State-wide registration is less than fifteen per centum of the combined State-wide registration for all State-wide political parties as of the close of the registration period immediately preceding the most recent November election. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall prescribe forms or, if there is insufficient time, make appropriate conforming changes in existing forms to carry out the purposes of this section.

(b) All nomination papers circulated and filed pursuant to this section shall specify—(1) the name or appellation of the minor political party which the candidates nominated thereby represent and, in the case of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, the names of the candidates for President and Vice President of such minor political party; (2) the name of each candidate nominated therein, his profession, business or occupation, if any, and his place of residence with street and number, if any; and (3) the office for which such candidate is nominated. No words shall be used in any nomination paper to designate the name or appellation of the minor political party represented by the candidate's name in such nomination paper which are identical with or deceptively similar to the words used for a like purpose by any minor political party which has already filed nomination papers for the same office. Any petition to set aside a nomination paper on account of the name or appellation used therein, or involving the right of the signers thereof to use such name or appellation, or on any other account, shall be decided as in the case of other petitions to set aside nomination papers, in the manner provided by this article.

(c) Each person filing any nomination paper for public office shall be given a statement composed by the Secretary of the Commonwealth setting forth his duties under law to file pre-election and post-election campaign finance reports and the penalties for nonfiling. Each person filing any nomination paper for public office shall be given a form to file expenses if the amount received or expended or liabilities incurred shall exceed the sum of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250), and a form containing a sworn statement that the amount received or expended or liabilities incurred do not exceed the sum of two hundred fifty dollars (\$250), with written instructions prepared by the Secretary of the Commonwealth. Within three weeks after such candidate has filed, the appropriate supervisor shall mail the same forms and instructions to such candidate by first class mail.

Section 9. The first paragraph of section 976 of the act, amended June 27, 1974 (P.L.413, No.146) and repealed in part April 28, 1978 (P.L.202, No.53), is amended to read:

Section 976. Examination of Nomination Petitions, Certificates and Papers; Return of Rejected Nomination Petitions, Certificates and

Papers.—When any nomination petition, nomination certificate or nomination paper is presented in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth or of any county board of elections for filing within the period limited by this act, it shall be the duty of the said officer or board to examine the same. No nomination petition, nomination paper or nomination certificate shall be permitted to be filed if—(a) it contains material errors or defects apparent on the face thereof, or on the face of the appended or accompanying affidavits; or (b) it contains material alterations made after signing without the consent of the signers; or (c) it does not contain a sufficient number of signatures as required by law; Provided, however, That the Secretary of the Commonwealth or the county board of elections, although not hereby required so to do, may question the genuineness of any signature or signatures appearing thereon, and if he or it shall thereupon find that any such signature or signatures are not genuine, such signature or signatures shall be disregarded in determining whether the nomination petition, nomination paper or nomination certificate contains a sufficient number of signatures as required by law; or (d) in the case of nomination petitions, if nomination petitions have been filed for printing the name of the same person for the same office, except the office of judge of a court of [record] *common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia*, or the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or the office of justice of the peace upon the official ballot of more than one political party; or (e) in the case of nomination papers, if the candidate named therein has filed a nomination petition for any public office for the ensuing primary, or has been nominated for any such office by nomination papers previously filed; or (f) if the nomination petitions or papers are not accompanied by the filing fee or certified check required for said office; or (g) in the case of nomination papers, the appellation set forth therein is identical with or deceptively similar to the words used by any existing party or by any political body which has already filed nomination papers for the same office, or if the appellation set forth therein contains part of the name, or an abbreviation of the name or part of the name of an existing political party, or of a political body which has already filed nomination papers for the same office. The invalidity of any sheet of a nomination petition or nomination paper shall not affect the validity of such petition or paper if a sufficient petition or paper remains after eliminating such invalid sheet. The action of said officer or board in refusing to receive and file any such nomination petition, certificate or paper, may be reviewed by the court upon an application to compel its reception as of the date when it was presented to the office of such officer or board: Provided, however, That said officer or board shall be entitled to a reasonable time in which to examine any petitions, certificates or papers, and to summon and interrogate the candidates named therein, or the persons presenting said petitions, certificates or papers, and his or their retention of same for the purpose of making such examination or interrogation shall not be construed as an acceptance or filing.

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Section 10. Section 981.1 of the act, added April 18, 1985 (P.L.5, No.4), is amended to read:

Section 981.1. Affidavits of Candidates.—Each candidate for any State, county, city, borough, incorporated town, township, ward, school district, poor district or election district office, or for the office of United States Senator or Representative in Congress, selected as provided in sections 979 and 980 of this act, shall file with the substituted nomination certificate an affidavit stating—(a) his residence, with street and number, if any, and his post-office address; (b) his election district, giving city, borough, town or township; (c) the name of the office for which he consents to be a candidate; (d) that he is eligible for such office; (e) that he will not knowingly violate any provision of this act, or of any law regulating and limiting election expenses and prohibiting corrupt practices in connection therewith; (f) unless he is a candidate for judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school board in a district where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace, that he is not a candidate for the same office of any party or political body other than the one designated in such certificate; and (g) that he is aware of the provisions of section 1626 of this act requiring election and post-election reporting of campaign contributions and expenditures. In cases of certificates for candidates for the General Assembly, the candidate's affidavit shall state (1) that the candidate will satisfy the eligibility requirements contained in sections 5 and 7 of Article II of the Constitution of Pennsylvania; (2) (i) that, in the case of a candidate for the office of Senator in the General Assembly, the candidate will be twenty-five (25) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election or (ii) that, in the case of a candidate for the office of Representative in the General Assembly, the candidate will be twenty-one (21) years of age on or before the first day of the term for which the candidate seeks election; (3) that the candidate shall have been a citizen and an inhabitant of Pennsylvania four (4) years and an inhabitant of the respective district one (1) year next before the election (unless absent on the public business of the United States or of this State); and (4) that the candidate has not been convicted of embezzlement of public moneys, bribery, perjury or other infamous crime.

Section 11. Sections 993(a) and 998(a) and (b) of the act, amended June 27, 1974 (P.L.413, No.146), are amended to read:

Section 993. Filling of Certain Vacancies in Public Office by Means of Nomination Certificates and Nomination Papers.—(a) In all cases where a vacancy shall occur for any cause in an elective public office, including that of judge of a court of record, at a time when such vacancy is required by the provisions of the Constitution or the laws of this Commonwealth to be filled at the ensuing election but at a time when nominations for such office cannot be made under any other provision of this act, nominations to fill such vacancies shall be made by political parties in accordance with party rules relating to the filling of vacancies by means of nomination certificates in the form prescribed in section nine hundred ninety-four of this act, and by political bodies by means of nomination papers in accordance with the provisions

of sections nine hundred fifty-one, nine hundred fifty-two and nine hundred fifty-four of this act. No such nomination certificate shall nominate any person who has already been nominated by any other political party or by any political body for the same office unless such person is a candidate for the office of judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace. No such nomination papers shall nominate any person who has already been nominated by any political party or by any other political body for any office to be filled at the ensuing November election, unless such person is a candidate for the office of judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace.

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Section 998. Substituted Nominations to Fill Certain Vacancies for a November Election.—(a) Any vacancy happening or existing in any party nomination made in accordance with the provisions of section nine hundred ninety-three of this act for a November election by reason of the death or withdrawal of any candidate may be filled by a substituted nomination made by such committee as is authorized by the rules of the party to make nominations in the event of vacancies on the party ticket, in the form prescribed by section nine hundred ninety-four of this act. But no substituted nomination certificate shall nominate any person who has already been nominated by any other political party or by any political body for the same office, unless such person is a candidate for the office of judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace.

(b) In case of the death or withdrawal of any candidate nominated by a political body for an election, the committee named in the original nomination papers may nominate a substitute in his place by filing a substituted nomination certificate in the form and manner prescribed by section nine hundred eighty of this act. In the case of a vacancy caused by the death of any candidate, said nomination certificate shall be accompanied by a death certificate properly certified. No substituted nomination certificate shall nominate any person who has already been nominated by any political party or by any other political body for any office to be filled at the ensuing November election, unless such person is a candidate for the office of judge of a court of **[record] common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia**, or for the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or for the office of justice of the peace.

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Section 12. Section 1004 of the act, amended December 10, 1974 (P.L.835, No.280), is amended to read:

Section 1004. Form of Ballots; Printing Ballots; Stubs; Numbers.—From the lists furnished by the Secretary of the Commonwealth under the

provisions of sections 915 and 984, and from petitions and papers filed in their office, the county election board shall print the official primary and election ballots in accordance with the provisions of this act: Provided, however, That in no event, shall the name of any person consenting to be a candidate for nomination for any one office, except the office of judge of a court of [record] *common pleas, the Philadelphia Municipal Court or the Traffic Court of Philadelphia*, or the office of school director in districts where that office is elective or the office of justice of the peace be printed as a candidate for such office upon the official primary ballot of more than one party. All ballots for use in the same election district at any primary or election shall be alike. They shall be at least six inches long and four inches wide, and shall have a margin extending beyond any printing thereon. They shall be printed with the same kind of type (which shall not be smaller than the size known as "brevier" or "eight point body") upon white paper of uniform quality, without any impression or mark to distinguish one from another, and with sufficient thickness to prevent the printed matter from showing through. Each ballot shall be attached to a stub, and all the ballots for the same election district shall be bound together in books of fifty, in such manner that each ballot may be detached from its stub and removed separately. The ballots for each party to be used at a primary shall be bound separately. The stubs of the ballots shall be consecutively numbered, and in the case of primary ballots, the number shall be preceded by an initial or abbreviation designating the party name. The number and initial or abbreviation which appears upon the stub shall also be printed in the upper right hand corner of the back of the ballot, separated from the remainder of the ballot by a diagonal perforated line so prepared that the upper right hand corner of the back of the ballot containing the number may be detached from the ballot before it is deposited in the ballot box and beside that corner shall also be printed, "Remove numbered stub immediately before depositing your ballot in ballot box."

Section 13. This act shall take effect immediately.

APPROVED—The 19th day of February, A. D. 1986.

DICK THORNBURGH