

HOUSE No. 647

By Ms. Fox of Boston, petition of Gloria L. Fox and others for legislation to establish a statewide voter registration database, voter education, and to expand the authority of local election district review commissions. Election Laws.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PETITION OF:

Gloria L. Fox	Patricia D. Jehlen
Benjamin Swan	Ellen Story
William Lantigua	Carl M. Sciortino, Jr.
Elizabeth A. Malia	Steven J. D’Amico
Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.	Dianne Wilkerson
Barbara A. L’Italien	

In the Year Two Thousand and Seven.

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A STATEWIDE VOTER REGISTRATION DATABASE, VOTER EDUCATION AND EXPAND THE AUTHORITY OF THE LOCAL ELECTION DISTRICTS REVIEW COMMISSION.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 M.G.L. Chapter 9 is hereby amended by inserting after Section
2 9A, Section 9B which reads as follows:—
3 “The Secretary of State shall work with the local election districts
4 review commission to develop and maintain an online statewide
5 voter registration database that local election districts must use. The
6 local election districts review commission will designate procedures
7 for adding, maintaining, and removing names of voters from the
8 database. The local election districts review commission in conjunc-
9 tion with the Secretary of State will adopt procedures that will pro-
10 vide for uniformity and accuracy in the composition and operation
11 of the database. The database must include, at a minimum, each
12 voter’s name, address, date of birth, gender, party affiliation if
13 applicable, precinct, ward, county, legislative, and congressional dis-
14 trict. No privately collected database and no private company may

15 be used to purge voters from the statewide voter registration data-
16 base. The local election districts review commission will adopt
17 regulations prescribing minimum standards for nonpartisan voter edu-
18 cation. Working with community organizations and leaders, each
19 local election district will implement the minimum voter education
20 standards, and will conduct additional nonpartisan education efforts
21 as necessary to ensure that voters have a working knowledge of the
22 voting process. The minimum voter education standards will
23 address, but not be limited to: voter registration; balloting proce-
24 dures, absentee ballots and polling place; voter rights and responsi-
25 bilities; distribution of sample ballots; and public service
26 announcements. The local election districts review commission will
27 conduct a study of the administration of elections to: determine
28 whether state elections laws and regulation were followed in the
29 prior election cycle, and if not, why they were not followed; deter-
30 mine whether current election procedures are fair and appropriate;
31 determine the number and percentage of over votes and under votes
32 in the prior election, along with the reasons for these over votes and
33 under votes, and other information as may be used in evaluating the
34 performance of state voting systems, and identifying problems with
35 ballot design and instructions which may have contributed to over
36 votes and under votes; determine whether precincts have adequate
37 facilities for the number of voters served; examine what election
38 practices or proposals increase or diminish voter participation; and
39 recommend how election procedures can and should be improved.
40 The commission shall report its findings and recommendations to
41 the legislature on or before February first following each general
42 election.”