Assembly Bill No. 148–Assemblymembers
Hafen and Yeager

CHAPTER.....

AN ACT relating to elections; revising the deadline for a county or city clerk to distribute mail ballots to each active registered voter who resides within the State; revising the deadline for a county or city clerk to distribute sample ballots; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

Legislative Counsel's Digest:

Existing law requires, with certain exception, a county clerk or city clerk to distribute a sample ballot to each registered voter in the county or city, as applicable, before the period for early voting for any election begins. (NRS 293.565, 293C.530) Existing law further requires, with limited exception, the county clerk or city clerk to distribute a mail ballot for every election to: (1) each active registered voter; and (2) each person who registers to vote or updates his or her voter registration information not later than 14 days before the election. With certain exceptions, the deadline for distributing a mail ballot to: (1) each active registered voter who resides within the State is not later than 20 days before the election; (2) each active registered voter who resides outside the State is not later than 40 days before the election; (3) each active registered voter who registers to vote after certain deadlines is not later than 13 days before the election; and (4) each covered voter who is entitled to have a military-overseas ballot transmitted pursuant to certain provisions of federal and state law is not later than 45 days before the election. (NRS 293.269911, 293C.263, 293D.320) Further, in the case of a special election where no candidate for federal office will appear on the ballot, mail ballots must be distributed to each active registered voter not later than 15 days before the special election. (NRS 293.269911, 293C.263)

Sections 1 and 3 of this bill revise the deadline for distributing a mail ballot to each active registered voter who resides within the State from not later than 20 days before the election to instead on or after the fifth Monday before the election but not later than the fourth Monday before the election. **Sections 1 and 3** also authorize a county or city clerk to allow a voter to elect to receive a mail ballot before that deadline. **Sections 2 and 4** of this bill require a county clerk or city clerk, as applicable, to distribute a sample ballot to each registered voter before the applicable deadline for the clerk to distribute a mail ballot to the registered voter. **Section 5** of this bill makes a conforming change to require sample ballots for an election relating to incorporating a city to be distributed before the applicable deadline for the county clerk or registrar of voters to distribute a mail ballot to a registered voter for such an election.

EXPLANATION – Matter in ***bolded italics*** is new; matter between brackets [~~omitted material~~] is material to be omitted.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. NRS 293.269911 is hereby amended to read as follows:

293.269911 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the county clerk shall prepare and distribute to each active registered voter in the county and each person who registers to vote or updates his or her voter registration information not later than the 14 days before the election a mail ballot for every election. The county clerk shall make reasonable accommodations for the use of the mail ballot by a person who is elderly or disabled, including, without limitation, by providing, upon request, the mail ballot in 12-point type to a person who is elderly or disabled.

2. The county clerk shall allow a voter to elect not to receive a mail ballot pursuant to this section by submitting to the county clerk a written notice in the form prescribed by the county clerk which must be received by the county clerk not later than 60 days before the day of the election.

3. The county clerk shall not distribute a mail ballot to any person who:

(a) Registers to vote for the election pursuant to the provisions of NRS 293.5772 to 293.5887, inclusive; or

(b) Elects not to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subsection 2.

4. ***The county clerk may allow a voter to elect to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subparagraph (1) of paragraph (a) of subsection 6 before the fifth Monday before the election. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a county clerk to provide a mail ballot to any voter before mail ballots are available for distribution.***

5. The mail ballot must include all offices, candidates and measures upon which the voter is entitled to vote at the election.

[~~5.~~] ***6.*** Except as otherwise provided in subsections 2 **,** [~~and~~] 3 [~~,~~] ***and 4,*** the mail ballot must be distributed to:

(a) Each active registered voter who:

(1) Resides within the State, ***on or after the fifth Monday before the election but*** not later than [~~20 days~~] ***the fourth Monday*** before the election; and

(2) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c), resides outside the State, not later than 40 days before the election.

(b) Each active registered voter who registers to vote after the dates set for distributing mail ballots pursuant to paragraph (a) but who is eligible to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subsection 1, not later than 13 days before the election.

(c) Each covered voter who is entitled to have a military-overseas ballot transmitted pursuant to the provisions of chapter 293D of NRS or the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20301 et seq., not later than the time required by those provisions.

~~[6.]~~ ***7.*** In the case of a special election where no candidate for federal office will appear on the ballot, the mail ballot must be distributed to each active registered voter not later than 15 days before the special election.

~~[7.]~~ ***8.*** Any untimely legal action which would prevent the mail ballot from being distributed to any voter pursuant to this section is moot and of no effect.

Sec. 2. NRS 293.565 is hereby amended to read as follows:

293.565 1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, sample ballots must include:

(a) If applicable, the statement required by NRS 293.267;

(b) The fiscal note or description of anticipated financial effect, as provided pursuant to NRS 218D.810, 293.250, 293.481, 295.015, 295.095 or 295.230 for each proposed constitutional amendment, statewide measure, measure to be voted upon only by a special district or political subdivision and advisory question;

(c) An explanation, as provided pursuant to NRS 218D.810, 293.250, 293.481, 295.121 or 295.230, of each proposed constitutional amendment, statewide measure, measure to be voted upon only by a special district or political subdivision and advisory question;

(d) Arguments for and against each proposed constitutional amendment, statewide measure, measure to be voted upon only by a special district or political subdivision and advisory question, and rebuttals to each argument, as provided pursuant to NRS 218D.810, 293.250, 293.252 or 295.121; and

(e) The full text of each proposed constitutional amendment.

2. If, pursuant to the provisions of NRS 293.2565, the word "Incumbent" must appear on the ballot next to the name of the candidate who is the incumbent, the word "Incumbent" must appear on the sample ballot next to the name of the candidate who is the incumbent.

3. Sample ballots that are mailed to registered voters may be printed without the full text of each proposed constitutional amendment if:

(a) The cost of printing the sample ballots would be significantly reduced if the full text of each proposed constitutional amendment were not included;

(b) The county clerk ensures that a sample ballot that includes the full text of each proposed constitutional amendment is provided at no charge to each registered voter who requests such a sample ballot; and

(c) The sample ballots provided to each polling place include the full text of each proposed constitutional amendment.

4. A county clerk may establish a system for distributing sample ballots by electronic means to each registered voter who elects to receive a sample ballot by electronic means. Such a system may include, without limitation, electronic mail or electronic access through an Internet website. If a county clerk establishes such a system and a registered voter elects to receive a sample ballot by electronic means, the county clerk shall distribute the sample ballot to the registered voter by electronic means pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth by regulations adopted by the Secretary of State.

5. If a registered voter does not elect to receive a sample ballot by electronic means pursuant to subsection 4, the county clerk shall distribute the sample ballot to the registered voter by mail.

6. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 7, before the ~~[period for early voting for any election begins,]~~ ***applicable deadline for distributing a mail ballot to a registered voter established by NRS 293.269911,*** the county clerk shall distribute to each registered voter in the county by mail or electronic means, as applicable, the sample ballot for his or her precinct, with a notice informing the voter of the location of his or her polling place or places. If the location of the polling place or places has changed since the last election:

(a) The county clerk shall mail a notice of the change to each registered voter in the county not sooner than 10 days before distributing the sample ballots; or

(b) The sample ballot must also include a notice in bold type immediately above the location which states:

NOTICE: THE LOCATION OF YOUR POLLING PLACE OR PLACES HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST ELECTION

7. If a person registers to vote less than 20 days before the date of an election, the county clerk is not required to distribute to the person the sample ballot for that election by mail or electronic means.

8. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 9, a sample ballot required to be distributed pursuant to this section must:

(a) Be prepared in at least 12-point type; and

(b) Include on the front page, in a separate box created by bold lines, a notice prepared in at least 20-point bold type that states:

NOTICE: TO RECEIVE A SAMPLE BALLOT IN LARGE TYPE, CALL (Insert appropriate telephone number)

9. A portion of a sample ballot that contains a facsimile of the display area of a voting device may include material in less than 12-point type to the extent necessary to make the facsimile fit on the pages of the sample ballot.

10. The sample ballot distributed to a person who requests a sample ballot in large type by exercising the option provided pursuant to NRS 293.508, or in any other manner, must be prepared in at least 14-point type, or larger when practicable.

11. If a person requests a sample ballot in large type, the county clerk shall ensure that all future sample ballots distributed to that person from the county are in large type.

12. The county clerk shall include in each sample ballot a statement indicating that the county clerk will, upon request of a voter who is elderly or disabled, make reasonable accommodations to allow the voter to vote at his or her polling place or places and provide reasonable assistance to the voter in casting his or her vote, including, without limitation, providing appropriate materials to assist the voter. In addition, if the county clerk has provided pursuant to subsection 4 of NRS 293.2955 for the placement at centralized voting locations of specially equipped voting devices for use by voters who are elderly or disabled, the county clerk shall include in the sample ballot a statement indicating:

(a) The addresses of such centralized voting locations;

(b) The types of specially equipped voting devices available at such centralized voting locations; and

(c) That a voter who is elderly or disabled may cast his or her ballot at such a centralized voting location rather than at his or her regularly designated polling place or places.

13. The cost of distributing sample ballots for any election other than a primary election, presidential preference primary

election or general election must be borne by the political subdivision holding the election.

Sec. 3. NRS 293C.263 is hereby amended to read as follows:

293C.263 1. Except as otherwise provided in this section, the city clerk shall prepare and distribute to each active registered voter in the city and each person who registers to vote or updates his or her voter registration information not later than the 14 days before the election a mail ballot for every election. The city clerk shall make reasonable accommodations for the use of the mail ballot by a person who is elderly or disabled, including, without limitation, by providing, upon request, the mail ballot in 12-point type to a person who is elderly or disabled.

2. The city clerk shall allow a voter to elect not to receive a mail ballot pursuant to this section by submitting to the city clerk a written notice in the form prescribed by the city clerk which must be received by the city clerk not later than 60 days before the day of the election.

3. The city clerk shall not distribute a mail ballot to any person who:

(a) Registers to vote for the election pursuant to the provisions of NRS 293.5772 to 293.5887, inclusive; or

(b) Elects not to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subsection 2.

4. ***The city clerk may allow a voter to elect to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subparagraph (1) of paragraph (a) of subsection 6 before the fifth Monday before the election. Nothing in this section shall be construed to require a city clerk to provide a mail ballot to any voter before mail ballots are available for distribution.***

5. The mail ballot must include all offices, candidates and measures upon which the voter is entitled to vote at the election.

~~[5.]~~ ***6.*** Except as otherwise provided in subsections 2 ***,*** ~~[and]~~ 3 ~~[,]~~ ***and 4,*** the mail ballot must be distributed to:

(a) Each active registered voter who:

(1) Resides within the State, ***on or after the fifth Monday before the election but*** not later than ~~[20 days]~~ ***the fourth Monday*** before the election; and

(2) Except as otherwise provided in paragraph (c), resides outside the State, not later than 40 days before the election.

(b) Each active registered voter who registers to vote after the dates set for distributing mail ballots pursuant to paragraph (a) but who is eligible to receive a mail ballot pursuant to subsection 1, not later than 13 days before the election.

(c) Each covered voter who is entitled to have a military-overseas ballot transmitted pursuant to the provisions of chapter 293D of NRS or the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20301 et seq., not later than the time required by those provisions.

~~[6.]~~ ***7.*** In the case of a special election where no candidate for federal office will appear on the ballot, the mail ballot must be distributed to each active registered voter not later than 15 days before the special election.

~~[7.]~~ ***8.*** Any untimely legal action which would prevent the mail ballot from being distributed to any voter pursuant to this section is moot and of no effect.

Sec. 4. NRS 293C.530 is hereby amended to read as follows:

293C.530 1. A city clerk may establish a system for distributing sample ballots by electronic means to each registered voter who elects to receive a sample ballot by electronic means. Such a system may include, without limitation, electronic mail or electronic access through an Internet website. If a city clerk establishes such a system and a registered voter elects to receive a sample ballot by electronic means, the city clerk shall distribute the sample ballot to the registered voter by electronic means pursuant to the procedures and requirements set forth by regulations adopted by the Secretary of State.

2. If a registered voter does not elect to receive a sample ballot by electronic means pursuant to subsection 1, the city clerk shall distribute the sample ballot to the registered voter by mail.

3. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 4, before the ~~[period for early voting for any election begins,]~~ ***applicable deadline for distributing a mail ballot to a registered voter established by NRS 293C.263,*** the city clerk shall distribute to each registered voter in the city by mail or electronic means, as applicable, the sample ballot for his or her precinct, with a notice informing the voter of the location of his or her polling place or places. If the location of the polling place or places has changed since the last election:

(a) The city clerk shall mail a notice of the change to each registered voter in the city not sooner than 10 days before distributing the sample ballots; or

(b) The sample ballot must also include a notice in bold type immediately above the location which states:

NOTICE: THE LOCATION OF YOUR POLLING PLACE OR PLACES HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST ELECTION

4. If a person registers to vote less than 20 days before the date of an election, the city clerk is not required to distribute to the person the sample ballot for that election by mail or electronic means.

5. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 7, a sample ballot required to be distributed pursuant to this section must:

(a) Be prepared in at least 12-point type;

(b) Include the description of the anticipated financial effect and explanation of each citywide measure and advisory question, including arguments for and against the measure or question, as required pursuant to NRS 295.205 or 295.217; and

(c) Include on the front page, in a separate box created by bold lines, a notice prepared in at least 20-point bold type that states:

NOTICE: TO RECEIVE A SAMPLE BALLOT IN
LARGE TYPE, CALL (Insert appropriate telephone number)

6. The word "Incumbent" must appear on the sample ballot next to the name of the candidate who is the incumbent, if required pursuant to NRS 293.2565.

7. A portion of a sample ballot that contains a facsimile of the display area of a voting device may include material in less than 12-point type to the extent necessary to make the facsimile fit on the pages of the sample ballot.

8. The sample ballot distributed to a person who requests a sample ballot in large type by exercising the option provided pursuant to NRS 293.508, or in any other manner, must be prepared in at least 14-point type, or larger when practicable.

9. If a person requests a sample ballot in large type, the city clerk shall ensure that all future sample ballots distributed to that person from the city are in large type.

10. The city clerk shall include in each sample ballot a statement indicating that the city clerk will, upon request of a voter who is elderly or disabled, make reasonable accommodations to allow the voter to vote at his or her polling place or places and provide reasonable assistance to the voter in casting his or her vote, including, without limitation, providing appropriate materials to assist the voter. In addition, if the city clerk has provided pursuant to subsection 4 of NRS 293C.281 for the placement at centralized voting locations of specially equipped voting devices for use by voters who are elderly or disabled, the city clerk shall include in the sample ballot a statement indicating:

(a) The addresses of such centralized voting locations;

(b) The types of specially equipped voting devices available at such centralized voting locations; and

(c) That a voter who is elderly or disabled may cast his or her ballot at such a centralized voting location rather than at the voter's regularly designated polling place or places.

11. The cost of distributing sample ballots for a city election must be borne by the city holding the election.

Sec. 5. NRS 266.0325 is hereby amended to read as follows:

266.0325 1. ~~[At least 10 days before]~~ ***Before the applicable deadline for distributing mail ballots for*** an election held pursuant to NRS 266.029, the county clerk or registrar of voters shall distribute to each qualified elector by mail or electronic means, as applicable, a sample ballot for the elector's precinct with a notice informing the elector of the location of the polling place for that precinct. A sample ballot may be distributed by electronic means to an elector only if the county clerk has established a system for distributing sample ballots by electronic means pursuant to NRS 293.565 and the elector elects to receive a sample ballot by electronic means.

2. The sample ballot must:

(a) Be in the form required by NRS 266.032.

(b) Include the information required by NRS 266.032.

(c) Except as otherwise provided in subsection 3, be prepared in at least 12-point type.

(d) Describe the area proposed to be incorporated by assessor's parcel maps, existing boundaries of subdivision or parcel maps, identifying visible ground features, extensions of the visible ground features, or by any boundary that coincides with the official boundary of the State, a county, a city, a township, a section or any combination thereof.

(e) Contain a copy of the map or plat that was submitted with the petition pursuant to NRS 266.019 and depicts the existing dedicated streets, sewer interceptors and outfalls and their proposed extensions.

(f) Include on the front page, in a separate box created by bold lines, a notice prepared in at least 20-point bold type that states:

NOTICE: TO RECEIVE A SAMPLE BALLOT IN
LARGE TYPE, CALL (Insert appropriate telephone number)

3. A portion of a sample ballot that contains a facsimile of the display area of a voting device may include material in less than

12-point type to the extent necessary to make the facsimile fit on the pages of the sample ballot.

4. The sample ballot distributed to a person who requests a sample ballot in large type by exercising the option provided pursuant to NRS 293.508, or in any other manner, must be prepared in at least 14-point type, or larger when practicable.

5. If a person requests a sample ballot in large type, the county clerk shall ensure that all future sample ballots distributed to that person from the county are in large type.

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