

LEGISLATIVE BILL 287

Approved by the Governor April 16, 2024

Introduced by Brewer, 43; Linehan, 39.

A BILL FOR AN ACT relating to law; to amend sections 2-3213, 2-3214, 16-202, 18-2518, 25-1274, 32-233, 32-564, 32-565, 32-569, 32-613, 32-617, 32-630, 32-632, 32-713, 32-1205, 32-1301, 32-1304, 32-1308, 32-1546, 49-1499.03, 58-230, 58-817, 60-483, 60-484.02, 84-217, and 85-1514, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, sections 31-727.02, 32-304, 32-320.01, 32-330, 32-404, 32-405, 32-552, 32-553, 32-570, 32-606, 32-607, 32-608, 32-615, 32-716, 32-802, 32-808.01, 32-903, 32-947, 32-950.01, 32-1203, 32-1303, 32-1305, 32-1306, 32-1405, 32-1407, 32-1524, 32-1525, 70-663, 79-1218, and 84-1411, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, and sections 32-101, 32-103, 32-123, 32-202.01, 32-308, 32-318.01, 32-912.01, 32-912.02, 32-915.03, 32-941, 32-942, 32-1002.01, 32-1027, and 60-4,115, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023; to eliminate obsolete provisions relating to adjusting certain boundaries after the federal decennial census and charter amendment procedures for certain public power districts; to change provisions relating to remonstrance petitions in the sale and conveyance of real estate owned by a city of the first class; to change provisions relating to the Election Act; to provide and change penalty provisions; to change provisions relating to conflicts of interest by certain officeholders and public employees; to change provisions relating to state identification cards; to change proof of publication requirements for legal notices and requirements for published notice and virtual conferencing under the Open Meetings Act; to eliminate provisions relating to opinions of the Attorney General regarding the unconstitutionality of legislative bills; to harmonize provisions; to provide operative dates; to repeal the original sections; to outright repeal section 84-215, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska; and to declare an emergency.

Be it enacted by the people of the State of Nebraska,

Section 1. Section 2-3213, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

2-3213 (1) Except as provided in subsections (2), (3), and (4) of this section, each district shall be governed by a board of directors of five, seven, nine, eleven, thirteen, fifteen, seventeen, nineteen, or twenty-one members. The board of directors shall determine the number of directors and in making such determination shall consider the complexity of the foreseeable programs and the population and land area of the district. Districts shall be political subdivisions of the state, shall have perpetual succession, and may sue and be sued in the name of the district.

(2) ~~At Except as provided by subsection (7) of this section,~~ at least six months prior to the primary election, the board of directors of any natural resources district may change the number of directors for the district and may change subdistrict boundaries to accommodate the increase or decrease in the number of directors.

(3) The board of directors shall utilize the criteria found in subsection (1) of this section and in subsection (2) of section 2-3214 when changing the number of directors. Except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, no director's term of office shall be shortened as a result of any change in the number of directors. Any reduction in the number of directors shall be made as directors take office during the two succeeding elections or more quickly if the reduction can be made by not filling vacancies on the board and if desired by the board. If necessary to preserve staggered terms for directors when the reduction in number is made in whole or in part through unfilled vacancies, the board may provide for a one-time election of one or more directors for a two-year term. The board of directors shall inform the Secretary of State whenever any such one-time elections have been approved. Notwithstanding subsection (1) of this section, the district may be governed by an even number of directors during the two-year transition to a board of reduced number.

(4) Whenever any change of boundaries, division, or merger results in a natural resources district director residing in a district other than the one to which such director was elected to serve, such director shall automatically become a director of the board of the district in which he or she then resides. Except as provided in subsection (6) of this section, all such directors shall continue to serve in office until the expiration of the term of office for which they were elected. Directors or supervisors of other special-purpose districts merged into a natural resources district shall not become members of the natural resources district board but may be appointed as advisors in accordance with section 2-3228. No later than six months after any change, division, or merger, each affected board, in accordance with the procedures and criteria found in this section and section 2-3214, shall determine the number of directors for the district as it then exists, the option chosen for nomination and election of directors, and, if appropriate, new subdistrict boundaries.

(5) To facilitate the task of administration of any board increased in size by a change of boundaries or merger, such board may appoint an executive committee to conduct the business of the board in the interim until board size reductions can be made in accordance with this section. An executive committee shall be empowered to act for the full board in all matters within its purview unless specifically limited by the board in the establishment and appointment of the executive committee.

(6) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 2-3214 and subsections (4) and (5) of this section, the board of directors of any natural resources district established by merging two or more districts in their entirety may provide that all directors be nominated and elected at the first primary and general elections following the year in which such merger becomes effective. In districts which have one director elected from each subdistrict, each director elected from an even-numbered subdistrict shall be elected for a two-year term and each director from an odd-numbered district and any member to be elected at large shall be elected for a four-year term. In districts which have two directors elected from each subdistrict, the four candidates receiving the highest number of votes at the primary election shall be carried over to the general election, and at such general election the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected for a four-year term and the candidate receiving the second highest number of votes shall be elected for a two-year term. Thereafter each director shall be elected for a four-year term.

~~(7) Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, any natural resources district that will have a change to the number of directors as a result of any adjustment to the boundaries of election districts shall provide to the election commissioner or county clerk (a) written notice of the need and necessity of his or her office to perform such adjustments and (b) a revised election district boundary map that has been approved by the board of directors and subjected to all public review and challenge ordinances of the natural resources district by December 30, 2021.~~

Sec. 2. Section 2-3214, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

2-3214 (1) District directors shall be elected as provided in section 32-513. Elections shall be conducted as provided in the Election Act. Registered voters residing within the district shall be eligible for nomination as candidates for any at-large position or, in those districts that have established subdistricts, as candidates from the subdistrict within which they reside.

(2) The board of directors may choose to: (a) Nominate candidates from subdistricts and from the district at large who shall be elected by the registered voters of the entire district; (b) nominate and elect each candidate from the district at large; or (c) nominate and elect candidates from subdistricts of substantially equal population except that any at-large candidate would be nominated and elected by the registered voters of the entire district. Unless the board of directors determines that the nomination and election of all directors will be at large, the board shall strive to divide the district into subdistricts of substantially equal population, except that no subdistrict shall have a population greater than three times the population of any other subdistrict within the district. Such subdistricts shall be consecutively numbered and shall be established with due regard to all factors including, but not limited to, the location of works of improvement and the distribution of population and taxable values within the district. ~~The Except as provided by subsection (7) of this section,~~ the boundaries and numbering of such subdistricts shall be designated at least six months prior to the primary election. Unless the district has been divided into subdistricts with substantially equal population, all directors shall be elected by the registered voters of the entire district and all registered voters shall vote on the candidates representing each subdistrict and any at-large candidates. If a district has been divided into subdistricts with substantially equal population, the board of directors may determine that directors shall be elected only by the registered voters of the subdistrict except that an at-large director may be elected by registered voters of the entire district.

(3) Except in districts which have chosen to have a single director serve from each subdistrict, the number of subdistricts for a district shall equal a number which is one less than a majority of directors for the district. In districts which have chosen to have a single director serve from each subdistrict, the number of subdistricts shall equal a number which is equal to the total number of directors of the district or which is one less than the total number of directors for the district if there is an at-large candidate. If the number of directors to be elected exceeds the number of subdistricts or if the term of the at-large director expires in districts which have chosen to have a single director serve from each subdistrict, candidates may file as a candidate from the district at large. Registered voters may each cast a number of votes not larger than the total number of directors to be elected.

(4) Elected directors shall take their oath of office in the same manner provided for county officials.

(5) At least six months prior to the primary election, the board of directors may choose to have a single director serve from each subdistrict.

(6) The board of directors shall certify to the Secretary of State and the election commissioners or county clerks the number of directors to be elected at each election and the length of their terms as provided in section 32-404.

~~(7) Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the~~

~~United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, any board of directors requesting the adjustment of the boundaries of election districts shall provide to the election commissioner or county clerk (a) written notice of the need and necessity of his or her office to perform such adjustments and (b) a revised election district boundary map that has been approved by the board and subjected to all public review and challenge ordinances of the natural resources district by December 30, 2021.~~

Sec. 3. Section 16-202, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

16-202 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) of this section, the power to sell and convey any real estate owned by a city of the first class, including park land, shall be exercised by ordinance directing the conveyance of such real estate and the manner and terms thereof. Notice of such sale and the terms thereof shall be published for three consecutive weeks in a legal newspaper in or of general circulation in such city immediately after the passage and publication of such ordinance.

(2) If within thirty days after the passage and publication of such ordinance a remonstrance petition against such sale, that conforms to section 32-628, is signed by registered voters of the city equal in number to thirty percent of the registered voters of the city voting at the last regular city election held therein and is filed with the city council, the property shall not then, nor within one year thereafter, be sold. If the date for filing the petition falls upon a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the signatures shall be collected within the thirty-day period, but the filing shall be considered timely if filed or postmarked on or before the next business day. Upon the receipt of the petition, the city council, with the aid and assistance of the election commissioner or county clerk, shall determine the validity and sufficiency of signatures on the petition. The city council shall deliver the petition to the election commissioner or county clerk by hand carrier, by use of law enforcement officials, or by certified mail, return receipt requested. Upon receipt of the petition, the election commissioner or county clerk shall issue to the city council a written receipt that the petition is in the custody of the election commissioner or county clerk. The election commissioner or county clerk shall compare the signature of each person signing the petition with the voter registration records to determine if each signer was a registered voter on or before the date on which the petition was filed with the city council. The election commissioner or county clerk shall also compare the signer's printed name, street and number or voting precinct, and city, village, or post office address with the voter registration records to determine whether the signer was a registered voter. The signature and address shall be presumed to be valid only if the election commissioner or county clerk determines that the printed name, street and number or voting precinct, and city, village, or post office address matches the registration records and that the registration was received on or before the date on which the petition was filed with the city council. The determinations of the election commissioner or county clerk may be rebutted by any credible evidence which the city council finds sufficient. The express purpose of the comparison of names and addresses with the voter registration records, in addition to helping to determine the validity of the petition, the sufficiency of the petition, and the qualifications of the signer, shall be to prevent fraud, deception, and misrepresentation in the petition process. Upon completion of the comparison of names and addresses with the voter registration records, the election commissioner or county clerk shall prepare in writing a certification under seal setting forth the name and address of each signer found not to be a registered voter and the signature page number and line number where the name is found, and if the reason for the invalidity of the signature or address is other than the nonregistration of the signer, the election commissioner or county clerk shall set forth the reason for the invalidity of the signature. If the election commissioner or county clerk determines that a signer has affixed his or her signature more than once to the petition and that only one person is registered by that name, the election commissioner or county clerk shall prepare in writing a certification under seal setting forth the name of the duplicate signature and shall count only the earliest dated signature. The election commissioner or county clerk shall certify to the city council the number of valid signatures necessary to constitute a valid petition. The election commissioner or county clerk shall deliver the petition and the certifications to the city council within forty days after the receipt of the petition from the city council. The delivery shall be by hand carrier, by use of law enforcement officials, or by certified mail, return receipt requested. Not more than twenty signatures on one signature page shall be counted.

(3) The city council shall, within thirty days after the receipt of the petition and certifications from the election commissioner or county clerk, hold a public hearing to review the petition and certifications and receive testimony regarding them. The city council shall, following the hearing, vote on whether or not the petition is valid and shall uphold the petition if sufficient valid signatures have been received.

(4) This section does not apply to (a) real estate used in the operation of public utilities, (b) real estate for state armory sites for the use of the State of Nebraska as expressly provided in section 16-201, or (c) real estate for state veterans' cemetery sites for the use of the State of Nebraska as expressly provided in section 12-1301.

Sec. 4. Section 18-2518, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

18-2518 (1) Each signed petition ~~Signed petitions~~ shall be filed with the city clerk for signature verification. The city clerk shall immediately notify the county clerk or election commissioner of the signed petition. Upon the filing of a petition, a municipality, upon passage of a resolution by the governing body of such municipality, and the county clerk or election commissioner of the county in which such municipality is located may by mutual agreement provide that the county clerk or election commissioner shall ascertain whether the petition is signed by the requisite number of voters. The municipality shall reimburse the county for any costs incurred by the county clerk or election commissioner. When the verifying official has determined that one hundred percent of the necessary signatures required by the Municipal Initiative and Referendum Act have been obtained, he or she shall notify the governing body of the municipality of that fact and shall immediately forward to the governing body a copy of the petition.

(2) In order for an initiative or referendum proposal to be submitted to the governing body and the voters, the necessary signatures shall be on file with the city clerk within six months from the date the prospective petition was authorized for circulation. If the necessary signatures are not obtained by such date, the petition shall be void.

Sec. 5. Section 25-1274, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

25-1274 Publications required by law to be made in a newspaper or on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository of public notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, may be proved by affidavit of any person having knowledge of the fact, specifying the time when and the paper in which or the website whereon the publication was made, and, if made by publication in a newspaper, that such said newspaper is a legal newspaper under the statutes of the State of Nebraska, but such affidavit must, for the purposes now contemplated, be made within six months after the last day of publication, in the office where the original affidavit of publication is required to be filed.

Sec. 6. Section 31-727.02, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

31-727.02 (1) Except as provided in subsection ~~(6)~~ ~~(5)~~ of section 84-1411, the clerk or administrator of each sanitary and improvement district shall notify any municipality or county within whose zoning jurisdiction such district is located of all meetings of the district board of trustees or called by the administrator by sending a notice of such meeting to the clerk of the municipality or county not less than seven days prior to the date set for any meeting. In the case of meetings called by the administrator, notice shall be provided to the clerk of the district not less than seven days prior to the date set for any meeting.

(2) Except as provided in subsection ~~(6)~~ ~~(5)~~ of section 84-1411, within thirty days after any meeting of a sanitary and improvement district board of trustees or called by the administrator, the clerk or administrator of the district shall transmit to the municipality or county within whose zoning jurisdiction the sanitary and improvement district is located a copy of the minutes of such meeting.

Sec. 7. Section 32-101, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-101 Sections 32-101 to 32-1551 and sections 9, 26, 30, 46, and 64 of this act shall be known and may be cited as the Election Act.

Sec. 8. Section 32-103, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-103 For purposes of the Election Act, the definitions found in sections 32-104 to 32-120 and 32-123 and section 9 of this act shall be used.

Sec. 9. (1) Electioneering means the deliberate, visible display or audible or physical dissemination of information for the purpose of advocating for or against:

(a) Any candidate for an office on the ballot for the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring;

(b) Any officeholder of an elected state constitutional office or federal office at the time of the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring; or

(c) Any political party on the ballot for the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring.

(2) For purposes of this section, information includes: (a) A candidate's name, likeness, logo, or symbol; (b) a button, hat, pencil, pen, shirt, sign, or sticker containing information described by this section; and (c) audible information or any literature, writing, or drawing referring to a candidate, an officeholder, or a political party described in this section.

Sec. 10. Section 32-123, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-123 Valid photographic identification means:

(1) A document issued by the United States, the State of Nebraska, an agency or a political subdivision of the State of Nebraska, or a postsecondary institution within the State of Nebraska that:

(a) Shows the name of the individual to whom the document was issued; and

(b) Shows a photograph or digital image of the individual to whom the document was issued;

(2) A document issued by the United States Department of Defense, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs or its predecessor, the Veterans Administration, a branch of the uniformed services as defined in section 85-2902, or a Native American Indian tribe or band recognized by the United

States Government that:

- (a) Shows the name of the individual to whom the document was issued; and
- (b) Shows a photograph or digital image of the individual to whom the document was issued; or
- (3) A hospital, an assisted-living facility, a nursing home, or any other intermediate skilled care facility record that:
 - (a) Shows the name of the individual who is the subject of the record; and
 - (b) Shows a photograph or digital image of the individual who is the subject of the record.

Sec. 11. Section 32-202.01, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-202.01 The Secretary of State shall develop a process to use the information in possession of or available to his or her office to match and verify the citizenship of the corresponding registered voter. The process developed shall ensure that no registered voter is removed from the voter registration register in violation of state or federal law. The Attorney General and the Department of Motor Vehicles shall cooperate with the Secretary of State for such purpose. The Secretary of State may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out this section.

Sec. 12. Section 32-233, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-233 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) of this section, judges Judges and clerks of election, district inspectors, messengers, and other temporary election workers shall receive wages at no less than the minimum rate set in section 48-1203 for each hour of service rendered. The county clerk shall determine the rate of pay and may vary the rate based on the duties of each position. Each such election worker shall sign an affidavit stating the number of hours he or she has worked.

(2) Any judge or clerk of election, district inspector, messenger, or other temporary election worker may choose either:

(a) Not to be paid for the hours he or she works. An election worker that chooses not to be paid shall sign a waiver agreeing not to be paid for each election for which he or she chooses not to be paid; or

(b) To have his or her election pay used by the county clerk to contract with an organization authorized by the county clerk to recruit election workers if the county clerk contracts with such an organization. To be eligible to enter into such a contract, the organization shall be exempt for federal tax purposes under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, as defined in section 49-801.01.

Sec. 13. Section 32-304, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-304 (1) The Secretary of State in conjunction with the Department of Motor Vehicles shall implement a registration application process which may be used statewide to register to vote and update voter registration records electronically using the Secretary of State's website. An applicant who has a valid Nebraska motor vehicle operator's license or state identification card may use the application process to register to vote or to update his or her voter registration record with changes in his or her personal information or other information related to his or her eligibility to vote. For each electronic application, the Secretary of State shall obtain a copy of the electronic representation of the applicant's digital image and signature from the Department of Motor Vehicles' records of his or her motor vehicle operator's license or state identification card for purposes of voter registration, and electronic poll books, and voting.

(2) The application shall contain substantially all the information provided in section 32-312 and the following informational statements:

(a) An applicant who submits this application electronically is affirming that the information in the application is true. Any applicant who submits this application electronically knowing that any of the information in the application is false shall be guilty of a Class IV felony under section 32-1502 of the statutes of Nebraska. The penalty for a Class IV felony is up to two years imprisonment and twelve months post-release supervision, a fine of up to ten thousand dollars, or both;

(b) An applicant who submits this application electronically is agreeing to the use of his or her digital image and signature from the Department of Motor Vehicles' records of his or her motor vehicle operator's license or state identification card for purposes of voter registration;

(c) To vote at the polling place on election day, the completed application must be submitted on or before the third Friday before the election and prior to midnight on such Friday; and

(d) The election commissioner or county clerk will, upon receipt of the application for registration, send an acknowledgment of registration to the applicant indicating whether the application is proper or not.

Sec. 14. Section 32-308, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-308 (1) The Secretary of State and the Director of Motor Vehicles shall enter into an agreement to match information in the computerized statewide voter registration list with information in the database of the Department of Motor Vehicles to the extent required to enable each such official to verify the accuracy of the information, including citizenship, provided on applications for voter registration. The Director of Motor Vehicles shall enter into an agreement with the Commissioner of Social Security under section 205(r) (8) of the federal Social Security Act, 42 U.S.C. 405(r)(8), as such section

existed on April 17, 2003, for purposes of the Election Act.

(2) The Department of Motor Vehicles, with the assistance of the Secretary of State, shall prescribe a voter registration application which may be used to register to vote or change his or her address for voting purposes at the same time an elector applies for an original or renewal motor vehicle operator's license, an original or renewal state identification card, or a replacement thereof. The voter registration application shall contain the information required pursuant to section 32-312 and shall be designed so that it does not require the duplication of information in the application for the motor vehicle operator's license or state identification card, except that it may require a second signature of the applicant. The department and the Secretary of State shall make the voter registration application available to any person applying for an operator's license or state identification card. The application shall be completed at the office of the department by the close of business on the third Friday preceding any election to be registered to vote at such election. A registration application received after the deadline shall not be processed by the election commissioner or county clerk until after the election.

(3) The Department of Motor Vehicles, in conjunction with the Secretary of State, shall develop a process to electronically transmit voter registration application information received under subsection (2) of this section to the election commissioner or county clerk of the county in which the applicant resides within the time limits prescribed in subsection (4) of this section. The Director of Motor Vehicles shall designate an implementation date for the process which shall be on or before January 1, 2016.

(4) The voter registration application information shall be transmitted to the election commissioner or county clerk of the county in which the applicant resides not later than ten days after receipt, except that if the voter registration application information is received within five days prior to the third Friday preceding any election, it shall be transmitted not later than five days after its original submission. Any information on whether an applicant registers or declines to register and the location of the office at which he or she registers shall be confidential and shall only be used for voter registration purposes.

(5) For each voter registration application for which information is transmitted electronically pursuant to this section, the Secretary of State shall obtain a copy of the electronic representation of the applicant's digital image and signature from the Department of Motor Vehicles' records of his or her motor vehicle operator's license or state identification card for purposes of voter registration and voting. Each voter registration application electronically transmitted under this section shall include information provided by the applicant that includes whether the applicant is a citizen of the United States, whether the applicant is of sufficient age to register to vote, the applicant's residence address, the applicant's postal address if different from the residence address, the date of birth of the applicant, the party affiliation of the applicant or an indication that the applicant is not affiliated with any political party, the applicant's motor vehicle operator's license number, the applicant's previous registration location by city, county, or state, if applicable, and the applicant's signature.

(6) State agency personnel involved in the voter registration process pursuant to this section and section 32-309 shall not be considered deputy registrars or agents or employees of the election commissioner or county clerk.

Sec. 15. Section 32-318.01, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-318.01 (1)(a) Except as provided by subsection (2) of this section, a person who registers to vote by mail after January 1, 2003, and has not previously voted in an election within the state shall present a photographic identification which is current and valid or a copy of a utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck, or other government document which is dated within the sixty days immediately prior to the date of presentation and which shows the same name and residence address of the person provided on the registration application in order to avoid identification requirements at the time of voting pursuant to section 32-914 or 32-947.

(b) Such documentation may be presented at the time of application for registration, after submission of the application for registration, or at the time of voting. The documentation must be received by the election commissioner or county clerk not later than 6 p.m. on the second Friday preceding the election to avoid additional identification requirements at the time of voting at the polling place if the voter votes in person. If the voter is voting using a ballot for early voting, the documentation must be received by the election commissioner or county clerk prior to the date on which the ballot is mailed to the voter to avoid additional identification requirements at the time of voting. Documentation received after the ballot has been mailed to the voter but not later than the deadline for the receipt of ballots specified in subsection (2) of section 32-908 will be considered timely for purposes of determining the applicant's eligibility to vote in the election.

(c) Such documentation may be presented in person, by mail, or by facsimile transmission, or by electronic mail.

(d) Failure to present such documentation may result in the ballot not being counted pursuant to verification procedures prescribed in sections 32-1002 and 32-1027.

(2) This section shall not apply to a person who registers to vote by mail after January 1, 2003, and has not previously voted in an election within the state if he or she:

(a) Has provided his or her Nebraska driver's license number or the last four digits of his or her social security number and the election commissioner or county clerk verifies the number provided pursuant to subsection (2) of section 32-312.03;

(b) Is a member of the armed forces of the United States who by reason of active duty is absent from his or her place of residence where the member is otherwise eligible to vote;

(c) Is a member of the United States Merchant Marine who by reason of service is away from his or her place of residence where the member is otherwise eligible to vote;

(d) Is a spouse or dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States or United States Merchant Marine who is absent from his or her place of residence due to the service of that member;

(e) Resides outside the United States and but for such residence would be qualified to vote in the state if the state was the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States; or

(f) Is elderly or handicapped and has requested to vote by alternative means other than by casting a ballot at his or her polling place on election day.

(3) In addition to the requirements of this section, a qualified voter shall present valid photographic identification before casting a ballot.

Sec. 16. Section 32-320.01, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-320.01 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, any person or organization distributing voter registration applications by mail shall:

(a) Use the form prescribed by the Secretary of State. The form shall contain on the top of the first page in bold type (i) the identity of the person or organization distributing the form and (ii) the following statements:

You may submit this form if you wish to register to vote or update your voter registration. You do not need to complete this form if you have already registered to vote; and -

(b) If enclosing a return envelope, have either a blank address or the address of the election commissioner or county clerk printed on the envelope.

(2) This section shall not apply to voter registration applications distributed by the Secretary of State, an election commissioner, a county clerk, the State Department of Education, the Department of Health and Human Services, or the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Sec. 17. Section 32-330, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-330 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of section 32-301, the voter registration register shall be a public record. Any person may examine the register at the office of the election commissioner or county clerk, but no person other than the Secretary of State, the election commissioner, the county clerk, or law enforcement shall be allowed to make copies of the register. Copies of the register shall only be used for list maintenance as provided in section 32-329 or law enforcement purposes. The electronic records of the original voter registrations created pursuant to section 32-301 may constitute the voter registration register. The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall withhold information in the register designated as confidential under section 32-331. No portion of the register made available to the public and no list distributed pursuant to this section shall include the digital signature of any voter.

(2) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall make available a list of registered voters that contains no more than the information authorized in subsections (3) and (7) of this section and, if requested, a list that only contains such information for registered voters who have voted in an election held more than thirty days prior to the request for the list. The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall establish the price of the lists at a rate that fairly covers the actual production cost of the lists, not to exceed three cents per name. Lists shall be used solely for purposes related to elections, political activities, voter registration, law enforcement, or jury selection. Lists shall not be posted, displayed, or used for commercial purposes or made accessible on the Internet.

(3)(a) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall withhold from any list of registered voters distributed pursuant to subsection (2) of this section any information in the voter registration records which is designated as confidential under section 32-331 or marked private on the voter registration application or voter registration record.

(b) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (a) of this subsection, a list of registered voters distributed pursuant to subsection (2) of this section shall contain no more than the following information:

- (i) The registrant's name;
- (ii) The registrant's residential address;
- (iii) The registrant's mailing address;
- (iv) The registrant's telephone number;
- (v) The registrant's voter registration status;
- (vi) The registrant's voter identification number;
- (vii) The registrant's birth year;
- (viii) The registrant's date of voter registration;
- (ix) The registrant's voting precinct;
- (x) The registrant's polling site;

- (xi) The registrant's political party affiliation;
- (xii) The political subdivisions in which the registrant resides; and
- (xiii) The registrant's voter history.

(4) Any person who acquires a list of registered voters under subsection (2) of this section shall provide his or her name, address, telephone number, email address, and campaign committee name or organization name, if applicable, the state of organization, if applicable, and the reason for requesting the list, and shall take and subscribe to an oath in substantially the following form:

I hereby swear that I will use the list of registered voters of County, Nebraska, (or the State of Nebraska) only for the purposes prescribed in section 32-330 and for no other purpose, that I will not permit the use or copying of such list for unauthorized purposes, and that I will not post, display, or make such list accessible on the Internet.

I hereby declare under the penalty of election falsification that the statements above are true to the best of my knowledge.

The penalty for election falsification is a Class IV felony.

(Signature of person acquiring list)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this day of 20.. .

(Signature of officer)

(Name and official title of officer)

(5) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall provide, upon request and free of charge, a complete and current listing of all registered voters and their addresses to the Clerk of the United States District Court for the District of Nebraska. Such list shall be provided no later than December 31 of each even-numbered year.

(6)(a) (6) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall provide, upon request and free of charge, a complete and current listing of all registered voters containing only the information authorized under subsection (3) of this section to the state party headquarters of each political party and to the county chairperson of each political party.

(b) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall not be required to provide more than one list of registered voters free of charge to the state party headquarters of each political party or the county chairperson of each political party per calendar month.

(7) The Secretary of State shall make available to each jury commissioner a list of registered voters that contains the information authorized in this section and in subsection (1) of section 25-1654 the registrant's motor vehicle operator's license number or state identification card number.

(8) Nothing in this section shall prevent a political party or candidate from using the list of registered voters for campaign activities.

(9) Any person who acquires a list of registered voters under subsection (2) of this section shall, following discovery or notification of a breach in the security of the storage of the information, disclose the breach in security to the Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk without delay.

Sec. 18. Section 32-404, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-404 (1) When any political subdivision holds an election in conjunction with the statewide primary or general election, the election shall be held as provided in the Election Act. Any other election held by a political subdivision shall be held as provided in the act unless otherwise provided by the charter, code, or bylaws of the political subdivision.

(2) No later than December 1 of each odd-numbered year, the Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall give notice to each political subdivision of the filing deadlines for the statewide primary election. No later than January 5 of each even-numbered year, the governing board of each political subdivision which will hold an election in conjunction with a statewide primary election shall certify to the Secretary of State, the election commissioner, or the county clerk the name of the subdivision, the number of officers to be elected, the length of the terms of office, the vacancies to be filled by election and length of remaining term, and the number of votes to be cast by a registered voter for each office.

(3) No later than June 15 of each even-numbered year, the governing board of each reclamation district, county weed district, village, county under township organization, public power district receiving annual gross revenue of less than forty million dollars, or educational service unit which will hold an election in conjunction with a statewide general election shall certify to the Secretary of State, the election commissioner, or the county clerk the name of the subdivision, the number of officers to be elected, the length of the terms of office, the vacancies to be filled by election and length of remaining term, and the number of votes to be cast by a registered voter for each office.

(4) The Secretary of State shall prescribe the forms to be used for certification to him or her, and the election commissioner or county clerk shall prescribe the forms to be used for certification to him or her.

(5) Each city, village, township, school district, public power district, sanitary and improvement district, metropolitan utilities district, fire protection district, natural resources district, regional metropolitan transit authority, community college area, learning community coordinating council, educational service unit, hospital district, reclamation district, library board, and airport authority shall furnish to the Secretary of State and election commissioner or county clerk any maps and additional information which the Secretary of State and election commissioner or county clerk may require in

the proper performance of their duties in the conduct of elections and certification of results.

Sec. 19. Section 32-405, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-405 Any special election under the Election Act shall be held on the first Tuesday following the second Monday of the selected month unless otherwise specifically provided. Except as otherwise specifically provided, no special election shall be held under the Election Act in April, May, June, October, November, or December of an even-numbered year unless it is held in conjunction with the statewide primary or general election. No special election shall be held under the Election Act in September of an even-numbered year except as provided in section 32-564 and except for a special election by a political subdivision pursuant to section 13-519 or 77-3444 to approve a property tax levy or exceed a property tax levy limitation. A special election for a Class III, IV, or V school district which is located in whole or in part in a county in which a city of the primary or metropolitan class is located may be held in conjunction with the primary or general election for a city of the primary or metropolitan class which is governed by a home rule charter.

Sec. 20. Section 32-552, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-552 (1) ~~At Except as provided by subsection (4) of this section,~~ at least five months prior to an election, the governing board of any political subdivision requesting the adjustment of the boundaries of election districts shall provide to the election commissioner or county clerk (a) written notice of the need and necessity of his or her office to perform such adjustments and (b) a revised election district boundary map that has been approved by the requesting political subdivision's governing board and subjected to all public review and challenge ordinances of the political subdivision.

(2) After each ~~the next~~ federal decennial census, the election commissioner of the county in which the greater part of a Class IV school district is situated shall, subject to review by the school board, divide the school district into seven numbered districts, substantially equal in population as determined by the most recent federal decennial census. The election commissioner shall consider the location of schools within the district and their boundaries. The election commissioner shall adjust the boundaries of the election districts, subject to final review and adjustment by the school board, to conform to changes in the territory and population of the school district and also following each federal decennial census. Except when specific procedures are otherwise provided, section 32-553 shall apply to all Class IV school districts.

(3) For purposes of election of members to the board of education of a Class V school district, such ~~:(a)(i) The Legislature hereby divides such school district shall be divided into~~ nine numbered election districts of compact and contiguous territory and of as nearly equal population as may be practical. Each election district shall be entitled to one member on the board of education of such Class V school district. ~~The Legislature adopts the official population figures and maps from the 2010 Census Redistricting (Public Law 94-171) TIGER/Line Shapefiles published by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census. The numbers and boundaries of the election districts are designated and established by a map identified and labeled as OPS-13-002, filed with the Clerk of the Legislature, and incorporated by reference as part of Laws 2013, LB125. Such districts are drawn using the boundaries of the Class V school district as they existed on February 12, 2013; (ii) the Clerk of the Legislature shall transfer possession of the map referred to in subdivision (a)(i) of this subsection to the Secretary of State and the election commissioner of the county in which the greater part of the school district is situated on February 12, 2013; (iii) when questions of interpretation of such election district boundaries arise, the map referred to in subdivision (a)(i) of this subsection in possession of such election commissioner shall serve as the indication of the legislative intent in drawing the election district boundaries; and (iv) the Secretary of State and such election commissioner shall also have available for viewing on his or her website the map referred to in subdivision (a)(i) of this subsection identifying the boundaries for such election districts; and (b) After each the next federal decennial census, the election commissioner of the county in which the greater part of a Class V school district is situated shall divide the school district into nine numbered districts of compact and contiguous territory and of as nearly equal population as may be practical. The election commissioner shall adjust the boundaries of such districts, subject to final review and adjustment by the school board, to conform to changes in the territory of the school district and also following each federal decennial census.~~

(4) ~~Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, the governing board of any political subdivision requesting the adjustment of the boundaries of election districts shall provide to the election commissioner or county clerk (a) written notice of the need and necessity of his or her office to perform such adjustments and (b) a revised election district boundary map that has been approved by the requesting political subdivision's governing board and subjected to all public review and challenge ordinances of the political subdivision by December 30, 2021.~~

(5) ~~The Secretary of State may grant additional days upon request of the political subdivision if precinct maps are not delivered to the political~~

~~subdivision by November 1, 2021, or for an extraordinary circumstance.~~

Sec. 21. Section 32-553, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-553 (1)(a) When any political subdivision except a public power district nominates or elects members of the governing board by districts, such districts shall be substantially equal in population as determined by the most recent federal decennial census.

~~(b) Any Except as provided by subdivision (c) of this subsection, (i) any such political subdivision that which has districts in place on the date the census figures used in drawing district boundaries for the Legislature are required to be submitted to the state by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, shall, if necessary to maintain substantial population equality as required by this subsection, have new district boundaries drawn within six months after the passage and approval of the legislative bill providing for reestablishing legislative districts. Any and (ii) any such political subdivision in existence on the date the census figures used in drawing district boundaries for the Legislature are required to be submitted to the state by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, and which has not established any district boundaries shall establish district boundaries pursuant to this section within six months after such date.~~

~~(c) Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, any such political subdivision which has districts in place on the date the census figures used in drawing district boundaries for the Legislature are required to be submitted to the state by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, shall, if necessary to maintain substantial population equality as required by this subsection, have new district boundaries drawn and submitted to the election commissioner or county clerk by December 30, 2021, after the passage and approval of the legislative bill providing for reestablishing legislative districts. Any such political subdivision in existence on the date the census figures used in drawing district boundaries for the Legislature are required to be submitted to the state by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, and which has not established any district boundaries shall establish district boundaries and submit the boundaries to the election commissioner or county clerk pursuant to this section by December 30, 2021.~~

~~(d) The Secretary of State may grant additional days upon request of the political subdivision if precinct maps are not delivered to the political subdivision by November 1, 2021, or for an extraordinary circumstance.~~

~~(c) (e) If the deadline for drawing or redrawing district boundary lines imposed by this section is not met, the procedures set forth in section 32-555 shall be followed.~~

(2) The governing board of each such political subdivision shall be responsible for drawing its own district boundaries and shall, as nearly as possible, follow the precinct lines created by the election commissioner or county clerk after each federal decennial census, except that the election commissioner of any county in which a Class IV or V school district is located shall draw district boundaries for such school district as provided in this section and section 32-552.

Sec. 22. Section 32-564, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-564 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) of this section:

(a) If a vacancy occurs in the office of Representative in Congress on or after August 1 in an even-numbered year and prior to the statewide general election in such year, the Governor shall order a special election to be held in conjunction with such statewide general election. The only candidates who may appear on the ballot for such office at such special election are those who were nominated at the statewide primary election in such year, those who comply with section 32-616, and those who comply with section 32-627 to fill a vacancy on the ballot if such a vacancy exists. The candidate receiving the most votes at such special election shall serve for the remainder of the vacated term and for the succeeding term of office;

(b) If a vacancy occurs in the office of Representative in Congress on or after the day of the statewide general election and prior to the end of the term of the office which is vacated, no special election shall be called; and

(c) If a vacancy occurs in such office at any time other than as described in subdivision (a) or (b) of this subsection, the Governor shall order a special election to be held not less than seventy-five days nor more than within ninety days after the vacancy occurs. Such election shall be held on a Tuesday. Each political party which polled at least five percent of the entire vote in the district in which the vacancy occurs may select a candidate following the applicable procedures in subsection (2) of section 32-627, except that the certificate and filing fee shall be submitted at least sixty-seven sixty-five days prior to the day of the election. Any candidate so selected shall have his or her name placed on the ballot with the appropriate political party designation. Any other person may have his or her name placed on the ballot without a political party designation by filing petitions pursuant to sections 32-617 and 32-618 and paying the filing fee as provided by section 32-608, except that the deadline for filing the petitions and paying the fee shall be sixty-seven sixty-five days prior to the day of the election. The candidate receiving the most votes at such special election shall serve for the remainder of the vacated term.

(2)(a) If the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives announces that there are more than one hundred vacancies in the House of Representatives requiring special elections according to 2 U.S.C. 8, as such section existed on July 18, 2008, and there is any vacancy in the office of Representative in Congress representing Nebraska, the Governor shall issue a writ of election. The writ of election shall specify the date of a special election to fill such vacancy to be held within forty-nine days after the Speaker's announcement.

(b) The Secretary of State shall notify the chairperson and secretary of each political party which polled at least five percent of the entire vote in the district in which the vacancy occurs that the party may select a candidate following the applicable procedures in subsection (2) of section 32-627, except that the certificate and filing fee shall be submitted within seven days after notification by the Secretary of State. Any candidate so selected shall have his or her name placed on the ballot with the appropriate political party designation.

(c) The ballot for any voter meeting the criteria of section 32-939 shall be transmitted to such voter within fifteen days after the Speaker's announcement and shall be accepted if received by the election commissioner or county clerk within forty-five days after transmission to the voter.

(d) The candidate receiving the most votes at such special election shall serve for the remainder of the vacated term.

Sec. 23. Section 32-565, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-565 (1) When a vacancy occurs in the representation of the State of Nebraska in the Senate of the United States, the office shall be filled by the Governor. The Governor shall appoint a suitable person possessing the qualifications necessary for senator to fill such vacancy.

(2)(a) If the vacancy occurs on or after August 1 ~~sixty days or less~~ prior to a statewide general election and if the term vacated expires on the following January 3, the appointee shall serve until the following January 3.

(b) If the vacancy occurs on or after August 1 ~~sixty days or less~~ prior to a statewide general election and if the term extends beyond the following January 3, the appointee shall serve until January 3 following the second statewide general election next succeeding the vacancy ~~his or her appointment~~ and at such election a senator shall be elected to serve the unexpired term if any.

(c) ~~(3)~~ If the vacancy occurs at any time not described in subdivision (a) or (b) of this subsection ~~more than sixty days prior to a statewide general election~~, the appointee shall serve until January 3 following the next statewide general election next succeeding the vacancy and at such election a senator shall be elected to serve the unexpired term if any.

Sec. 24. Section 32-569, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-569 (1)(a) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) or (3) of this section or section 32-568, vacancies in city and village elected offices shall be filled by the mayor and council or board of trustees for the balance of the unexpired term. Notice of a vacancy, except a vacancy resulting from the death of the incumbent, shall be in writing and presented to the council or board of trustees at a regular or special meeting and shall appear as a part of the minutes of such meeting. The council or board of trustees shall at once give public notice of the vacancy by causing to be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the city or village or by posting in three public places in the city or village the office vacated and the length of the unexpired term.

(b) The mayor or chairperson of the board shall call a special meeting of the council or board of trustees or place the issue of filling such vacancy on the agenda at the next regular meeting at which time the mayor or chairperson shall submit the name of a qualified registered voter to fill the vacancy for the balance of the unexpired term. The regular or special meeting shall occur upon the death of the incumbent or within four weeks after the meeting at which such notice of vacancy has been presented. The council or board of trustees shall vote upon such nominee, and if a majority votes in favor of such nominee, the vacancy shall be declared filled. If the nominee fails to receive a majority of the votes, the nomination shall be rejected and the mayor or chairperson shall at the next regular or special meeting submit the name of another qualified registered voter to fill the vacancy. If the subsequent nominee fails to receive a majority of the votes, the mayor or chairperson shall continue at such meeting to submit the names of qualified registered voters in nomination and the council or board of trustees shall continue to vote upon such nominations at such meeting until the vacancy is filled. The mayor shall cast his or her vote for or against the nominee in the case of a tie vote of the council. All council members and trustees present shall cast a ballot for or against the nominee. Any member of the city council or board of trustees who has been appointed to fill a vacancy on the council or board shall have the same rights, including voting, as if such person were elected.

(2) The mayor and council or chairperson and board of trustees may, in lieu of filling a vacancy in a city or village elected office as provided in subsection (1) of this section or subsection (3) of section 32-568, call a special city election to fill such vacancy.

(3) If vacancies exist in the offices of one-half or more of the members of a city council or village board, the Secretary of State shall conduct a special city election to fill such vacancies. Candidates for such special

election shall file a candidate filing form pursuant to section 26 of this act.

Sec. 25. Section 32-570, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-570 (1) A vacancy in the membership of a school board shall occur as set forth in section 32-560 or in the case of absences, unless excused by a majority of the remaining members of the board, when a member is absent from the district for a continuous period of sixty days at one time or from more than two consecutive regular meetings of the board. The resignation of a member or any other reason for a vacancy shall be made a part of the minutes of the school board. The school board shall give notice of the date the vacancy occurred, the office vacated, and the length of the unexpired term (a) in writing to the election commissioner or county clerk and (b) by a notice published in a newspaper of general circulation in the school district.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, a vacancy in the membership of a school board resulting from any cause other than the expiration of a term shall be filled by appointment of a qualified registered voter by the remaining members of the board for the remainder of the unexpired term. A registered voter appointed pursuant to this subsection shall meet the same requirements as the member whose office is vacant.

(3) Any vacancy in the membership of a school board of a school district described in section 79-549 which does not nominate candidates at a primary election and elect members at the following general election shall be filled by appointment of a qualified registered voter by the remaining members of the board for the remainder of the unexpired term.

(4) If any school board fails to fill a vacancy on the board, the vacancy may be filled by election at a special election or school district meeting called for that purpose. Such election or meeting shall be called in the same manner and subject to the same procedures as other special elections or school district meetings.

(5) If there are vacancies in the offices of one-half or more of the members of a school board, the Secretary of State shall conduct a special school district election to fill such vacancies. Candidates for such special election shall file a candidate filing form pursuant to section 26 of this act.

Sec. 26. (1) Except as provided in section 32-564, any candidate in a special election to fill a vacancy for an office of a political subdivision may have his or her name placed on the special election ballot by filing a candidate filing form prescribed by the Secretary of State as provided in section 32-607 and this section. The filing period for filing the candidate filing form shall be:

(a) On or before March 1 for a special election to be held in conjunction with the statewide primary election;

(b) On or before August 1 for a special election to be held in conjunction with the statewide general election; and

(c) Between the eighth Friday prior to the election and the fifth Friday prior to the election for all other elections.

(2) A candidate filing form for such special election shall meet the requirements of section 32-607, except that the form shall contain the following statement: "I hereby swear that I will abide by the laws of the State of Nebraska regarding the results of the special election, that I am a registered voter and qualified to be elected, and that I will serve if elected."

(3) A candidate filing form for such special election shall be filed with the filing officer specified in subsection (2) of section 32-607.

Sec. 27. Section 32-606, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-606 (1) Any candidate may place his or her name on the primary election ballot by filing a candidate filing form prescribed by the Secretary of State as provided in section 32-607. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) of this section, if a candidate for an elective office is an incumbent of any elective office, the filing period for filing the candidate filing form shall be between January 5 and February 15 prior to the date of the primary election. No incumbent who resigns from elective office prior to the expiration of his or her term shall file for any office after February 15 of that election year. All other candidates shall file for office between January 5 and March 1 prior to the date of the primary election. A candidate filing form and a copy of payment of the filing fee, if applicable, may be transmitted by facsimile for the offices listed in subdivision (2)(a) ~~(1)~~ of section 32-607 if (a) the transmission is received in the office of the filing officer by the filing deadline and (b) the original filing form and payment of the filing fee, if applicable, is mailed to the filing officer with a legible postmark bearing a date on or prior to the filing deadline and is in the office of the filing officer no later than seven days after the filing deadline.

(2) Any candidate for a township office in a county under township organization, the board of trustees of a village, the board of directors of a reclamation district, the county weed district board, the board of directors of a public power district receiving annual gross revenue of less than forty million dollars, or the board of an educational service unit may place his or her name on the general election ballot by filing a candidate filing form prescribed by the Secretary of State as provided in section 32-607. Except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) of this section, if a candidate for an elective office is an incumbent of any elective office, the filing period for filing the candidate filing form shall be between January 5 and July 15 prior to the date of the general election. No incumbent who resigns from elective

office prior to the expiration of his or her term shall file for any office after July 15 of that election year. All other candidates shall file for office between January 5 and August 1 prior to the date of the general election. A candidate filing form may be transmitted by facsimile for the offices listed in subdivision ~~(2)(a)~~ ~~(1)~~ of section 32-607 if (a) the transmission is received in the office of the filing officer by the filing deadline and (b) the original filing form is mailed to the filing officer with a legible postmark bearing a date on or prior to the filing deadline and is in the office of the filing officer no later than seven days after the filing deadline.

(3) Any city having a home rule charter may provide for filing deadlines for any person desiring to be a candidate for the office of council member or mayor.

(4) If a candidate for an elective office was appointed to an elective office to fill a vacancy after the deadline for an incumbent to file a candidate filing form in subsection (1) or (2) of this section but before the deadline for all other candidates, the candidate may file a candidate filing form for any office on or before the deadline for all other candidates.

Sec. 28. Section 32-607, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-607 ~~(1)(a)~~ All candidate filing forms shall contain the following statement: I hereby swear that I will abide by the laws of the State of Nebraska regarding the results of the primary and general elections, that I am a registered voter and qualified to be elected, and that I will serve if elected. Candidate filing forms shall also contain the following information regarding the candidate: Name, as provided under subdivision (b) of this subsection; residence address; mailing address if different from the residence address; telephone number; office sought; party affiliation if the office sought is a partisan office; a statement as to whether or not civil penalties are owed pursuant to the Nebraska Political Accountability and Disclosure Act; and, if civil penalties are owed, whether or not a surety bond has been filed pursuant to subdivision (4)(b) of section 32-602. An email address shall also be included on the filing form as an optional field.

(b) The name contained on a candidate filing form shall be the name by which the candidate is generally known in the community and by which the candidate is distinguished from others and shall not contain titles, characterizations, or designations.

(2) Candidate filing forms shall be filed with the following filing officers:

(a) ~~(1)~~ For candidates for national, state, or congressional office, directors of public power and irrigation districts, directors of reclamation districts, directors of natural resources districts, directors of metropolitan utilities districts, members of the boards of educational service units, members of governing boards of community colleges, delegates to national conventions, and other offices filled by election held in more than one county and judges desiring retention, in the office of the Secretary of State;

(b) ~~(2)~~ For officers elected within a county, in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk;

(c) ~~(3)~~ For officers in school districts which include land in adjoining counties, in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk of the county in which the greatest number of registered voters entitled to vote for the officers reside; and

(d) ~~(4)~~ For city or village officers, in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk.

(3) Objections to the name of a candidate submitted on a candidate filing form may be made and passed upon in the same manner as objections to a candidate filing form pursuant to section 32-624.

Sec. 29. Section 32-608, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-608 (1) Except as provided in subsection (4) or (5) of this section, a filing fee shall be paid by or on behalf of each candidate prior to filing for office. For candidates who file in the office of the Secretary of State as provided in subdivision ~~(2)(a)~~ ~~(1)~~ of section 32-607, the filing fee shall be paid to the Secretary of State who shall remit the fee to the State Treasurer for credit to the Election Administration Fund. For candidates for any city or village office, the filing fee shall be paid to the city or village treasurer of the city or village in which the candidate resides. For candidates who file in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk, the filing fee shall be paid to the election commissioner or county clerk in the county in which the office is sought. The election commissioner or county clerk shall remit the fee to the county treasurer. The fee shall be placed in the general fund of the county, city, or village. No candidate filing forms shall be filed until the proper payment or the proper receipt showing the payment of such filing fee is presented to the filing officer. On the day of the filing deadline, the city or village treasurer's office shall remain open to receive filing fees until the hour of the filing deadline.

(2) Except as provided in subsection (4) or (5) of this section, the filing fees shall be as follows:

(a) For the office of United States Senator, state officers, including members of the Legislature, Representatives in Congress, county officers, and city or village officers, except the mayor or council members of cities having a home rule charter, a sum equal to one percent of the annual salary as of November 30 of the year preceding the election for the office for which he or she files as a candidate;

(b) For directors of public power and irrigation districts in districts receiving annual gross revenue of forty million dollars or more, twenty-five dollars, and in districts receiving annual gross revenue of less than forty million dollars, ten dollars;

(c) For directors of reclamation districts, ten dollars; and

(d) For Regents of the University of Nebraska, members of the State Board of Education, and directors of metropolitan utilities districts, twenty-five dollars.

(3) All declared write-in candidates shall pay the filing fees that are required for the office at the time that they present the write-in affidavit to the filing officer.

(4) No filing fee shall be required for any candidate filing for an office in which a per diem is paid rather than a salary or for which there is a salary of less than five hundred dollars per year. No filing fee shall be required for any candidate for membership on a school board, on the board of an educational service unit, on the board of governors of a community college area, on the board of directors of a natural resources district, or on the board of trustees of a sanitary and improvement district.

(5) No filing fee shall be required of any candidate completing an affidavit requesting to file for elective office in forma pauperis. A pauper shall mean a person whose income and other resources for maintenance are found under assistance standards to be insufficient for meeting the cost of his or her requirements and whose reserve of cash or other available resources does not exceed the maximum available resources that an eligible individual may own. Available resources shall include every type of property or interest in property that an individual owns and may convert into cash except:

(a) Real property used as a home;

(b) Household goods of a moderate value used in the home; and

(c) Assets to a maximum value of three thousand dollars used by a recipient in a planned effort directed towards self-support.

(6) If any candidate dies prior to an election, the spouse of the candidate may file a claim for refund of the filing fee with the proper governing body prior to the date of the election. Upon approval of the claim by the proper governing body, the filing fee shall be refunded.

Sec. 30. (1) Any person who has filed for elective office pursuant to subsection (1) of section 32-606 whose legal name has changed since filing may change the name to appear on the ballot to reflect the person's changed legal name by March 1 before the primary election. The candidate shall provide any documentation verifying the legal name change to the filing officer by March 1.

(2) Any person who has filed for elective office pursuant to subsection (2) of section 32-606 or a nominee for elective office for the general election whose legal name has changed since filing may change the name to appear on the ballot to reflect the person's changed legal name by September 1 before the general election. The candidate shall provide any documentation verifying the legal name change to the filing officer by September 1.

(3) Any objection to a name change pursuant to subsection (1) or (2) of this section may be made and passed upon in the same manner as an objection to a candidate filing form pursuant to section 32-624, except that any objection pursuant to this subsection shall be made within seven days after the documentation verifying the legal name change is provided to the filing officer.

(4) Any candidate may file a name change on or before the filing deadline, and such name change shall conform to the requirements of subdivision (1)(b) of section 32-607. Any objection to a name change pursuant to this subsection may be made pursuant to subsection (3) of section 32-607.

Sec. 31. Section 32-613, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-613 Any petition to place a person's name on the primary election ballot for President of the United States shall contain the names of not less than one hundred voters registered with the appropriate political party from each congressional district of the state, except that if the political party dissolves as provided in subsection (2) of section 32-720, the Secretary of State shall not accept a petition under this section. The name of the candidate for President shall be placed upon the ballot only when written consent of such person has been filed with the Secretary of State not less than sixty days before the primary election. The form of the petition shall comply with the requirements of section 32-628 and shall as nearly as possible conform to the form prescribed by the Secretary of State. All signed petitions not filed with the Secretary of State shall become invalid if not filed by August 1 of the presidential election year.

Sec. 32. Section 32-615, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-615 (1) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) of this section, any candidate engaged in or pursuing a write-in campaign shall file a notarized affidavit of his or her intent together with the receipt for any filing fee with the filing officer as provided in section 32-608 no earlier than January 5 and no later than the second Friday prior to the election.

(2) For any county office elected pursuant to sections 32-517 to 32-529 which is subject to subdivision (1)(b) of section 32-811, a candidate may engage in or pursue a write-in campaign if he or she files a notarized affidavit of his or her intent together with the receipt for the filing fee with the filing officer as provided in section 32-608 on or before March 3 of the year of the statewide primary election. If such an affidavit is filed as

prescribed, the election commissioner or county clerk shall place that county office on the statewide primary election ballot with the names of the candidate properly filed for the nomination of the applicable political party and a line for write-in candidates.

(3) A candidate submitting an affidavit under this section for a partisan office on the statewide primary election ballot shall be a registered voter of the political party named in the affidavit unless the political party allows candidates not affiliated with the party by not adopting a rule under section 32-702.

(4) A candidate who has been defeated as a candidate in the primary election or defeated as a write-in candidate in the primary election shall not be eligible as a write-in candidate for the same office in the general election unless (a) a vacancy on the ballot exists pursuant to section 32-625 or (b) the candidate was a candidate for an office described in sections 32-512 to 32-550 and the candidate lost the election as a result of a determination pursuant to section 32-1122 in the case of a tie vote.

(5) A candidate who files a notarized affidavit shall be entitled to all write-in votes for the candidate even if only the last name of the candidate has been written if such last name is reasonably close to the proper spelling.

Sec. 33. Section 32-617, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-617 (1) Petitions for nomination for partisan and nonpartisan offices shall conform to the requirements of section 32-628. Petitions shall state the office to be filled and the name and address of the candidate. Petitions for partisan office shall also indicate the party affiliation of the candidate. A sample copy of the petition shall be filed with the filing officer prior to circulation. Petitions shall be signed by registered voters residing in the district or political subdivision in which the officer is to be elected and shall be filed with the filing officer in the same manner as provided for candidate filing forms in section 32-607. Petition signers and petition circulators shall conform to the requirements of sections 32-629 and 32-630. No petition for nomination shall be filed unless there is attached thereto a receipt showing the payment of the filing fee required pursuant to section 32-608. Such petitions shall be filed by September 1 in the year of the general election, and all signed petitions not filed with the Secretary of State by such date shall become invalid.

(2) The filing officer shall verify the signatures according to section 32-631. Within three days after the signatures on a petition for nomination have been verified pursuant to such section and the filing officer has determined that pursuant to section 32-618 a sufficient number of registered voters signed the petitions, the filing officer shall notify the candidate so nominated by registered or certified mail or electronic mail, and the candidate shall, within five days after the date of receiving such notification, file with such officer his or her acceptance of the nomination or his or her name will not be printed on the ballot.

(3) A candidate placed on the ballot by petition shall be termed a candidate by petition. The words BY PETITION shall be printed upon the ballot after the name of each candidate by petition.

Sec. 34. Section 32-630, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-630 (1) Each person who signs a petition shall, at the time of and in addition to signing, personally affix the date, print his or her last name and first name in full, and affix his or her date of birth and address, including the street and number or a designation of a rural route or voting precinct and the city or village or a post office address. A person signing a petition may use his or her initials in place of his or her first name if such person is registered to vote under such initials. ~~No signer shall use ditto marks as a means of personally affixing the date or address to any petition. A wife shall not use her husband's first name when she signs a petition but shall personally affix her first name and her last name by marriage or her surname. Any signature using ditto marks as a means of personally affixing the date or address of any petition or any signature using a spouse's first name instead of his or her own shall be invalid.~~

(2) Each circulator of a petition shall personally witness the signatures on the petition and shall sign the circulator's affidavit.

(3) No person shall:

- (a) Sign any name other than his or her own to any petition;
- (b) Knowingly sign his or her name more than once for the same petition effort or measure;
- (c) Sign a petition if he or she is not a registered voter and qualified to sign the same except as provided in section 32-1404;
- (d) Falsely swear to any signature upon any such petition;
- (e) Accept money or other thing of value for signing any petition; or
- (f) Offer money or other thing of value in exchange for a signature upon any petition.

Sec. 35. Section 32-632, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-632 (1) Any person may remove his or her name from a petition by signing and delivering a written letter to the Secretary of State, an affidavit signed and sworn to by such person before the election commissioner, or the county clerk, or a notary public. Name removal letters shall be filed with the following officers:

- (a) For initiative and referendum petitions, new political party

petitions, and petitions for President of the United States, with the Secretary of State;

(b) For candidate petitions, with the filing officer prescribed in section 32-607;

(c) For recall petitions, with the filing officer prescribed in section 32-1301; and

(d) For all other petitions, with the applicable election commissioner, county clerk, or city clerk.

(2) The name removal letter affidavit shall be delivered presented to and received by the officer prescribed in subsection (1) of this section by the following deadlines:

(a) For initiative and referendum petitions, by the deadline for filing petitions pursuant to section 32-1407;

(b) For new political party petitions, prior to or on the day the petition is filed for verification with the Secretary of State;

(c) For petitions for President of the United States, by the deadline for filing petitions pursuant to section 32-613 for the primary election or pursuant to section 32-620 for the general election;

(d) For candidate petitions, by the deadline for filing petitions pursuant to section 32-617;

(e) For recall petitions, by the deadline for filing petitions prescribed by section 32-1305; and

(f) For all other petitions, prior to or on the day the petition is filed for verification with the election commissioner, county clerk, or city clerk. Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk prior to or on the day the petition is filed for verification with the election commissioner or county clerk.

(3) The Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall verify the signature in the letter with the signature appearing in the voter registration records.

Sec. 36. Section 32-713, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-713 (1) The certificates of appointment for presidential electors shall be served by the Governor on each person appointed. The Governor shall notify the presidential electors to be at the meeting location designated by the Governor State Capitol at noon on the first Tuesday Monday after the second Wednesday in December after appointment and report to the Governor at the designated meeting location his or her office in the capitol as being in attendance. The Governor shall serve the certificates of appointment by registered or certified mail. In submitting this state's certificate of ascertainment as required by 3 U.S.C. 5 6, the Governor shall certify this state's presidential electors, include a security feature for purposes of verifying the authenticity of the certificate, and state in the certificate that:

(a) The presidential electors will serve as presidential electors unless a vacancy occurs in the office of presidential elector before the end of the meeting at which the presidential electors cast their votes, in which case a substitute presidential elector will fill the vacancy; and

(b) If a substitute presidential elector is appointed to fill a vacancy, the Governor will submit an amended certificate of ascertainment stating the names on the final list of this state's presidential electors.

(2) The presidential electors shall convene at 2 p.m. of such Tuesday Monday at the meeting location designated by the Governor Governor's office in the capitol. Each presidential elector shall execute the following pledge: As a presidential elector duly selected (or appointed) for this position, I agree to serve and to mark my ballots for President and Vice President for the presidential and vice-presidential candidates who received the highest number of votes in the state if I am an at-large presidential elector or the highest number of votes in my congressional district if I am a congressional district presidential elector.

Sec. 37. Section 32-716, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-716 (1) Any person, group, or association desiring to form a new political party shall present to the Secretary of State petitions containing signatures totaling not less than one percent of the total votes cast for Governor at the most recent general election for such office. The signatures of registered voters on such petitions shall be so distributed as to include registered voters totaling at least one percent of the votes cast for Governor in the most recent gubernatorial election in each of the three congressional districts in this state. Petition signers and petition circulators shall conform to the requirements of sections 32-629 and 32-630. The petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of State no later than January 15 before any statewide primary election for the new political party to be entitled to have ballot position in the primary election of that year. If the new political party desires to be established and have ballot position for the general election and not in the primary election of that year, the petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of State on or before July 15 of that year. Prior to the circulation of petitions to form a new political party, a sample copy of the petitions shall be filed with the Secretary of State by the person, group, or association seeking to establish the new party. The sample petition shall be accompanied by the name and address of the person or the names and addresses of the members of the group or association sponsoring the petition to form a new political party. Sponsors of the petition may be added or removed with the

unanimous written consent of the original sponsor or sponsors at any time prior to or on the day the petition is filed for verification with the Secretary of State. The sponsor or sponsors of the petition shall file, as one instrument, all petition papers comprising a new political party petition for signature verification with the Secretary of State. All signed petitions in circulation but not filed with the Secretary of State shall become invalid after July 15 in the year of the statewide general election.

(2) The petition shall conform to the requirements of section 32-628. The Secretary of State shall prescribe the form of the petition for the formation of a new political party. The petition shall be addressed to and filed with the Secretary of State and shall state its purpose and the name of the party to be formed. Such name shall not be or include the name of any political party then in existence or any word forming any part of the name of any political party then in existence, and in order to avoid confusion regarding party affiliation of a candidate or registered voter, the name of the party to be formed shall not include the word "independent" or "nonpartisan". The petition shall contain a statement substantially as follows:

We, the undersigned registered voters of the State of Nebraska and the county of, being severally qualified to sign this petition, respectfully request that the above-named new political party be formed in the State of Nebraska, and each for himself or herself says: I have personally signed this petition on the date opposite my name; I am a registered voter of the State of Nebraska and county of and am qualified to sign this petition; and my date of birth and city, village, or post office address and my street and number or voting precinct are correctly written after my name.

Sec. 38. Section 32-802, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-802 The notice of election for any election shall state the date on which the election is to be held and the hours the polls will be open and list all offices, candidates, and issues that will appear on the ballots. The notice of election shall be printed in English and in any other language required pursuant to the Voting Rights Act Language Assistance Amendments of 1992. In the case of a primary election, the notice of election shall list all offices and candidates that are being forwarded to the general election. The notice of election shall only state that amendments or referendums will be voted upon and that the Secretary of State will publish a true copy of the title and text of any amendments or referendums once each week for three consecutive weeks preceding the election. Such notice of election shall appear in at least one newspaper designated by the election commissioner, county clerk, city council, or village board no later than forty-two days prior to the election. The election commissioner or county clerk shall, not later than forty-two days prior to the election, (1) post in his or her office the same notice of election published in the newspaper and (2) provide a copy of the notice to the political subdivisions appearing on the notice of election ballot. The election commissioner or county clerk shall correct the ballot to reflect any corrections received within five days after mailing the notice as provided in section 32-819. The notice of election shall be posted in lieu of sample ballots until such time as sample ballots are printed. If joint elections are held in conjunction with the statewide primary or general election by a county, city, or village, only one notice of election need be published and signed by the election commissioner or county clerk.

Sec. 39. Section 32-808.01, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-808.01 (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, any person or organization distributing an application by mail for a ballot for early voting shall:

(a) Use use the form prescribed by the Secretary of State. The form shall contain on the top of the first page in bold type (i) ~~(a)~~ the identity of the person or organization distributing the form and (ii) ~~(b)~~ the following statements:

You may submit this form if you wish to request a ballot for early voting. You do not need to complete this form if you have already requested a ballot for early voting for this election; and -

(b) If enclosing a return envelope, have either a blank address or the address of the election commissioner or county clerk printed on the envelope.

(2) This section shall not apply to an application for a ballot for early voting distributed by the Secretary of State, an election commissioner, or a county clerk.

Sec. 40. Section 32-903, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-903 (1) The election commissioner or county clerk shall create precincts composed of compact and contiguous territory within the boundary lines of legislative districts. The precincts shall contain not less than seventy-five nor more than one thousand seven hundred fifty registered voters based on the number of voters voting at the last statewide general election, except that a precinct may contain less than seventy-five registered voters if in the judgment of the election commissioner or county clerk it is necessary to avoid creating an undue hardship on the registered voters in the precinct. The election commissioner or county clerk shall create precincts based on the number of votes cast at the immediately preceding presidential election or the current list of registered voters for the precinct. The election commissioner or county clerk shall revise and rearrange the precincts and increase or

decrease them at such times as may be necessary to make the precincts contain as nearly as practicable not less than seventy-five nor more than one thousand seven hundred fifty registered voters voting at the last statewide general election. The election commissioner or county clerk shall, when necessary and possible, readjust precinct boundaries to coincide with the boundaries of cities, villages, and school districts which are divided into districts or wards for election purposes. The election commissioner or county clerk shall not make any precinct changes in precinct boundaries or divide precincts into two or more parts between the statewide primary and general elections unless he or she has been authorized to do so by the Secretary of State. If changes are authorized, the election commissioner or county clerk shall notify each state and local candidate affected by the change.

(2) The election commissioner or county clerk may alter and divide the existing precincts, except that when any city of the first class by ordinance divides any ward of such city into two or more voting districts or polling places, the election commissioner or county clerk shall establish precincts or polling places in conformity with such ordinance. No such alteration or division shall take place between the statewide primary and general elections except as provided in subsection (1) of this section.

~~(3) Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, the election commissioner or county clerk shall create, revise, or rearrange precincts in compliance with subsections (1) and (2) of this section and deliver maps of the updated precinct boundaries to all applicable political subdivisions within the jurisdiction of the election commissioner or county clerk by November 1, 2021.~~

~~(4) The Secretary of State may grant additional days for election commissioners and county clerks to meet the requirements of subsection (3) of this section for an extraordinary circumstance.~~

Sec. 41. Section 32-912.01, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-912.01 (1) A voter with a religious objection to being photographed may inform the election commissioner or county clerk of the county in which the voter resides of such objection in writing prior to an election. If the election commissioner or county clerk receives written notice not later than 6 p.m. on the second Friday preceding the election, the election commissioner or county clerk shall place a notation on the precinct list of registered voters for the polling place that the voter has a religious objection to being photographed.

(2) For all subsequent elections, the election commissioner or county clerk shall place a notation on the precinct list of registered voters for the polling place that the voter has a religious objection to being photographed if such voter:

(a) Completes a reasonable impediment certification pursuant to section 32-912.02;

(b) Has a ballot accepted pursuant to section 32-1002.01; and

(c) Is otherwise eligible to vote.

(3) The election commissioner or county clerk shall remove a notation if the election commissioner or county clerk receives written notice from the voter that the voter no longer has a religious objection to being photographed.

Sec. 42. Section 32-912.02, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-912.02 (1) The Secretary of State shall provide a standard certification for a voter with a reasonable impediment preventing the voter from obtaining presenting valid photographic identification. A voter with a reasonable impediment shall check to identify the applicable reasonable impediment box on the certification, which shall be limited to only the following reasons. The certification shall include the following as separate boxes that a voter may check to identify the applicable reasonable impediment:

(a) Inability to obtain valid photographic identification due to:

(i) Disability or illness that prevents the voter from obtaining valid photographic identification; or

(ii) Lack of a birth certificate or other required documents and an inability to obtain a birth certificate or other required documents without significant difficulty or expense; or

(b) Religious objection to being photographed.

(2) The Secretary of State shall provide the form of the certification to the election commissioners and county clerks. A voter who has a reasonable impediment shall execute the certification under penalty of election falsification. The election commissioner or county clerk shall verify:

(a) The signature on the certification with the signature appearing on the voter registration record; and -

(b) That the voter does not have a current, unexpired driver's license or state identification card issued by the State of Nebraska.

(3) A voter who casts a ballot by mail shall include the certification with the application, except that a voter who casts a ballot pursuant to section 32-953 shall include the certification within the ballot envelope.

Sec. 43. Section 32-915.03, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-915.03 (1) A registered voter shall fill out a provisional voter identification verification envelope if:

(a)(i) The voter fails to produce valid photographic identification at the polling place; and

(ii) The voter's name appears on the precinct list of registered voters for the polling place or the voter has voted a provisional ballot as provided in section 32-915;

(b) The voter fails to produce valid photographic identification at the time of voting early in person at the office of the election commissioner or county clerk; or

(c) The voter has a reasonable impediment preventing the voter from ~~obtaining~~ ~~presenting~~ valid photographic identification or the voter's name appears on the precinct list of registered voters for the polling place with a notation that the voter has a religious objection to being photographed.

(2) Each voter casting a ballot using a provisional voter identification verification envelope shall enclose the ballot in an envelope marked provisional voter identification verification and shall, by signing the certification on the front of the envelope or a separate form attached to the envelope, certify to the following facts:

(a) My name is

(b) I am registered to vote at

(c) I did not ~~present~~ ~~provide~~ valid photographic identification as required by law or I have a reasonable impediment preventing me from ~~obtaining~~ ~~presenting~~ valid photographic identification;

(d) I am eligible to vote in this election and have not voted and will not vote in this election except by this ballot; and

(e) I acknowledge that my ballot will not be counted if:

(i) I do not ~~present~~ ~~provide~~ valid photographic identification to my county election office on or before the Tuesday after the election; or

(ii) I have a reasonable impediment that prevents me from ~~obtaining~~ ~~presenting~~ valid photographic identification and:

(A) I do not complete a reasonable impediment certification; or

(B) My county election official cannot verify the signature on my reasonable impediment certification.

(3) The voter shall sign the certification under penalty of election falsification. The following statements shall be on the front of the envelope or on the attached form: By signing the front of this envelope or the attached form you are certifying to the information contained on this envelope or the attached form under penalty of election falsification. Election falsification is a Class IV felony and may be punished by up to two years imprisonment and twelve months post-release supervision, a fine of up to ten thousand dollars, or both.

Sec. 44. Section 32-941, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-941 (1) Any registered voter permitted to vote early pursuant to section 32-938 may, not more than one hundred twenty days before any election and not later than the close of business on the second Friday preceding the election, request a ballot for the election to be mailed to a specific address. A registered voter shall request a ballot in writing to the election commissioner or county clerk in the county where the registered voter has established his or her home, shall indicate his or her residence address, the address to which the ballot is to be mailed if different, and his or her telephone number if available, and shall include:

(a) The identification number of the voter's driver's license or state identification card issued by the State of Nebraska;

(b) A photocopy of any other valid photographic identification issued to or related to the voter; or

(c) The voter's reasonable impediment certification.

(2) If the identification number of the voter's driver's license or state identification card issued by the State of Nebraska is provided, the election commissioner or county clerk shall verify the driver's license or state identification card data with the information provided by the Department of Motor Vehicles pursuant to section 32-308.

(3) (2) If such identification or certification is not provided or cannot be verified, the election commissioner or county clerk shall contact the voter and inform the voter that the ballot will not be issued until the voter provides the identification or certification required under this section.

(4) (3) The registered voter may use the form published by the election commissioner or county clerk pursuant to section 32-808. The registered voter shall sign the request. A registered voter may use a facsimile machine or electronic mail for the submission of a request for a ballot.

(5) (4) The election commissioner or county clerk shall include a registration application with the ballots if the person is not registered. Registration applications shall not be mailed after the third Friday preceding the election. If the person is not registered to vote, the registration application shall be returned not later than the closing of the polls on the day of the election. No ballot issued under this section shall be counted unless such registration application is properly completed and processed.

(6) (5) Subdivisions (1)(a) through (c) of this section do not apply to any voter who casts a ballot pursuant to section 32-939.02 or 32-939.03.

Sec. 45. Section 32-942, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-942 (1)(a) A registered voter of this state who anticipates being absent from the county of his or her residence on the day of any election may appear in person before the election commissioner or county clerk not more than thirty days prior to the day of election for a statewide primary or general election, and not more than fifteen days prior to the election for all other

elections, present valid photographic identification, and obtain his or her ballot unless otherwise entitled to vote in the office under section 32-915.03. The registered voter shall vote the ballot in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk or shall return the ballot to the office not later than the closing of the polls on the day of the election.

(b) A registered voter who is present in the county on the day of the election and who chooses to vote on the day of the election shall vote at the polling place assigned to the precinct in which he or she resides unless he or she is returning a ballot for early voting or voting pursuant to section 32-943.

(2) If a person registers to vote and requests a ballot at the same time under this section, he or she shall, in addition to the requirements of subsection (1) of this section, (a)(i) present one of the address confirmation documents as prescribed in subdivision (1)(a) of section 32-318.01, (ii) present proof that he or she is a member of the armed forces of the United States who by reason of active duty has been absent from his or her place of residence where the member is otherwise eligible to vote, is a member of the United States Merchant Marine who by reason of service has been away from his or her place of residence where the member is otherwise eligible to vote, is a spouse or dependent of a member of the armed forces of the United States or United States Merchant Marine who has been absent from his or her place of residence due to the service of that member, or resides outside the United States and but for such residence would be qualified to vote in the state if the state was the last place in which the person was domiciled before leaving the United States, or (iii) state that he or she is elderly or handicapped and has requested to vote by alternative means other than by casting a ballot at his or her polling place on election day or (b) vote a ballot which is placed in an envelope with the voter's name and address and other necessary identifying information and kept securely for counting as provided in this subsection. This subsection does not extend the deadline for voter registration specified in section 32-302. A ballot cast pursuant to subdivision (b) of this subsection shall be rejected and shall not be counted if the acknowledgment of registration sent to the registrant pursuant to section 32-322 is returned as undeliverable for a reason other than clerical error within ten days after it is mailed, otherwise after such ten-day period, the ballot shall be counted.

(3) This section applies only to a person who appears in person to obtain a ballot as provided in subsection (1) of this section and does not apply to a ballot mailed to a voter pursuant to section 32-945.

Sec. 46. If a person becomes a naturalized citizen of the United States after the voter registration deadline for any election, such person may register to vote after the voter registration deadline by completing the necessary voter registration application in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk of the county of such person's residence before one hour prior to the closing of the polls on election day. After completing the voter registration application and the citizenship attestation provided by section 32-928, such person shall then be allowed to vote in the office of the election commissioner or county clerk.

Sec. 47. Section 32-947, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-947 (1) Upon receipt of an application or other request for a ballot to vote early, the election commissioner or county clerk shall determine whether the applicant is a registered voter and is entitled to vote as requested. If the election commissioner or county clerk determines that the applicant is a registered voter entitled to vote early and the application was received not later than the close of business on the second Friday preceding the election, the election commissioner or county clerk shall deliver a ballot to the applicant in person or by nonforwardable first-class mail, postage paid. The election commissioner or county clerk or any employee of the election commissioner or county clerk shall write or cause to be affixed his or her customary signature or initials on the ballot.

(2) An unsealed identification envelope shall be delivered with the ballot, and upon the back of the envelope shall be printed a form substantially as follows:

VOTER'S OATH

I, the undersigned voter, declare that the enclosed ballot or ballots contained no voting marks of any kind when I received them, and I caused the ballot or ballots to be marked, enclosed in the identification envelope, and sealed in such envelope.

To the best of my knowledge and belief, I declare under penalty of election falsification that:

(a) I,, am a registered voter in County;

(b) I reside in the State of Nebraska at

(c) I have voted the enclosed ballot and am returning it in compliance with Nebraska law; and

(d) I have not voted and will not vote in this election except by this ballot.

ANY PERSON WHO SIGNS THIS FORM KNOWING THAT ANY OF THE INFORMATION IN THE FORM IS FALSE SHALL BE GUILTY OF ELECTION FALSIFICATION, A CLASS IV FELONY UNDER SECTION 32-1502 OF THE STATUTES OF NEBRASKA. THE PENALTY FOR ELECTION FALSIFICATION IS IMPRISONMENT FOR UP TO TWO YEARS AND TWELVE MONTHS POST-RELEASE SUPERVISION OR A FINE NOT TO EXCEED TEN THOUSAND DOLLARS, OR BOTH.

I also understand that failure to sign below will invalidate my ballot.

Signature

(3) If the ballot and identification envelope will be returned by mail or by someone other than the voter, the election commissioner or county clerk shall include with the ballot an identification envelope upon the face of which shall be printed the official title and post office address of the election commissioner or county clerk.

(4) The election commissioner or county clerk shall also enclose with the ballot materials:

(a) A registration application, if the election commissioner or county clerk has determined that the applicant is not a registered voter pursuant to section 32-945, with instructions that failure to return the completed and signed application indicating the residence address as it appears on the voter's request for a ballot to the election commissioner or county clerk by the close of the polls on election day will result in the ballot not being counted;

(b) A registration application and the oath pursuant to section 32-946, if the voter is without a residence address, with instructions that the residence address of the voter shall be deemed that of the office of the election commissioner or county clerk of the county of the voter's prior residence and that failure to return the completed and signed application and oath to the election commissioner or county clerk by the close of the polls on election day will result in the ballot not being counted; or

(c) Written instructions directing the voter to submit a copy of an identification document pursuant to section 32-318.01 if the voter is required to present identification under such section and advising the voter that failure to submit identification to the election commissioner or county clerk by the close of the polls on election day will result in the ballot not being counted.

(5) The election commissioner or county clerk may enclose with the ballot materials a separate return envelope for the voter's use in returning his or her identification envelope containing the voted ballot, registration application, and other materials that may be required.

Sec. 48. Section 32-950.01, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-950.01 (1) If an election commissioner or county clerk maintains a secure ballot drop-box for voters to deposit completed ballots, the election commissioner or county clerk shall ensure that the secure ballot drop-box:

(a) Is securely fastened to the ground or a concrete slab connected to the ground;

(b) Is secured by a lock that can only be opened by the election commissioner or county clerk or by an election official designated by the election commissioner or county clerk; and

(c) Complies with the federal Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and is accessible as determined by the election commissioner or county clerk.

(2) The election commissioner or county clerk shall inform the Secretary of State of each secure ballot drop-box's location no later than forty-two days prior to any statewide primary or general election.

(3) Except for a secure ballot drop-box for an election conducted under section 32-960, the ~~The~~ election commissioner or county clerk or an election official designated by the election commissioner or county clerk shall open each secure ballot drop-box no later than the sixth Friday prior to any statewide primary or general election and no later than the fourth Friday prior to any special election. For any statewide primary or general election, each secure ballot drop-box shall remain accessible to voters until the deadline for the receipt of ballots as provided in section 32-908. For any special election, at least one secure ballot drop-box shall remain accessible to voters until the deadline for the receipt of ballots as provided in section 32-954.

(4) After a secure ballot drop-box is made available for depositing ballots, the election commission or county clerk shall ensure that ballots deposited in such secure ballot drop-box are collected and returned to the office of the election commissioner or county clerk at least once during each business day.

Sec. 49. Section 32-1002.01, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-1002.01 (1) As the ballots are removed from the ballot box pursuant to sections 32-1012 to 32-1018, the receiving board shall separate the provisional voter identification verification envelopes from the rest of the ballots and deliver them to the election commissioner or county clerk.

(2) Upon receipt of a provisional voter identification verification envelope, the election commissioner or county clerk shall verify that the certificate on the front of the envelope or the form attached to the envelope is in proper form and that the certification has been signed by the voter.

(3) The election commissioner or county clerk shall also verify that such person has not voted anywhere else in the county or been issued a ballot for early voting.

(4) A ballot cast by a voter pursuant to section 32-915.03 shall be counted if the voter completed and signed the certification on the provisional voter identification verification envelope and the voter:

(a) Presented valid photographic identification to the election commissioner or county clerk on or before the Tuesday after the election; or

(b) Has a reasonable impediment preventing the voter from ~~presenting~~ obtaining valid photographic identification, the voter completes a reasonable impediment certification, and the election commissioner or county clerk

verifies:

(i) ~~The the~~ signature on the reasonable impediment certification with the signature appearing on the voter registration record; and -

(ii) That the voter does not have a current, unexpired driver's license or state identification card issued by the State of Nebraska.

(5) A ballot cast by a voter pursuant to section 32-915.03 shall not be counted if:

(a) The voter failed to complete and sign the certification on the provisional voter identification verification envelope pursuant to subsection (2) of section 32-915.03;

(b) The voter failed to present valid photographic identification to the election commissioner or county clerk on or before the Tuesday after the election; or

(c) The voter has a reasonable impediment preventing the voter from obtaining ~~presenting~~ valid photographic identification and:

(i) The voter did not complete a reasonable impediment certification; or

(ii) The election commissioner or county clerk was not able to verify the signature on the reasonable impediment certification with the signature appearing on the voter registration record.

(6) Upon determining that the voter's ballot is eligible to be counted, the election commissioner or county clerk shall remove the ballot from the provisional voter identification verification envelope without exposing the marks on the ballot and shall place the ballot with the ballots to be counted by the county canvassing board.

(7) The election commissioner or county clerk shall notify the system administrator of the free access system created pursuant to section 32-202 as to whether the ballot was counted and, if not, the reason the ballot was not counted.

(8) The verification shall be completed within seven business days after the election.

Sec. 50. Section 32-1027, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

32-1027 (1) The election commissioner or county clerk shall appoint two or more registered voters to the counting board for early voting. One registered voter shall be appointed from the political party casting the highest number of votes for Governor or for President of the United States in the county in the immediately preceding general election, and one registered voter shall be appointed from the political party casting the next highest vote for such office. The election commissioner or county clerk may appoint additional registered voters to serve on the counting board and may appoint registered voters to serve in case of a vacancy among any of the members of the counting board. Such appointees shall be balanced between the political parties and may include registered voters unaffiliated with any political party. The counting board may begin carrying out its duties not earlier than the second Friday before the election and shall meet as directed by the election commissioner or county clerk.

(2) The counting board shall place all identification envelopes in order and shall review each returned identification envelope pursuant to verification procedures prescribed in subsections (3) and (4) of this section.

(3) In its review, the counting board shall determine if:

(a) The voter has provided his or her name, residence address, and signature on the voter identification envelope;

(b) The ballot has been received from the voter who requested it and the residence address is the same address provided on the voter's request for a ballot for early voting, by comparing the information provided on the identification envelope with information recorded in the record of early voters or the voter's request;

(c) A completed and signed registration application has been received from the voter by the deadline in section 32-302, 32-321, or 32-325 or by the close of the polls pursuant to section 32-945;

(d) An identification document has been received from the voter not later than the close of the polls on election day if required pursuant to section 32-318.01; and

(e) A completed and signed registration application and oath has been received from the voter by the close of the polls on election day if required pursuant to section 32-946.

(4) On the basis of its review, the counting board shall determine whether the ballot shall be counted or rejected as follows:

(a) A ballot received from a voter who was properly registered on or prior to the deadline for registration pursuant to section 32-302 or 32-321 shall be accepted for counting without further review if:

(i) The name on the identification envelope appears to be that of a registered voter to whom a ballot for early voting has been issued or sent;

(ii) The residence address provided on the identification envelope is the same residence address at which the voter is registered or is in the same precinct and subdivision of a precinct, if any; and

(iii) The identification envelope has been signed by the voter;

(b) In the case of a ballot received from a voter who was not properly registered prior to the deadline for registration pursuant to section 32-302 or 32-321, the ballot shall be accepted for counting if:

(i) A valid registration application completed and signed by the voter has been received by the election commissioner or county clerk prior to the close of the polls on election day;

(ii) The name on the identification envelope appears to be that of the person who requested the ballot;

(iii) The residence address provided on the identification envelope and on the registration application is the same as the residence address as provided on the voter's request for a ballot for early voting; and

(iv) The identification envelope has been signed by the voter;

(c) In the case of a ballot received from a voter without a residence address who requested a ballot pursuant to section 32-946, the ballot shall be accepted for counting if:

(i) The name on the identification envelope appears to be that of a registered voter to whom a ballot has been sent;

(ii) A valid registration application completed and signed by the voter, for whom the residence address is deemed to be the address of the office of the election commissioner or county clerk pursuant to section 32-946, has been received by the election commissioner or county clerk prior to the close of the polls on election day;

(iii) The oath required pursuant to section 32-946 has been completed and signed by the voter and received by the election commissioner or county clerk by the close of the polls on election day; and

(iv) The identification envelope has been signed by the voter;

(d) In the case of a ballot received from a registered voter required to present identification before voting pursuant to section 32-318.01, the ballot shall be accepted for counting if:

(i) The name on the identification envelope appears to be that of a registered voter to whom a ballot has been issued or sent;

(ii) The residence address provided on the identification envelope is the same address at which the voter is registered or is in the same precinct and subdivision of a precinct, if any;

(iii) A copy of an identification document authorized in section 32-318.01 has been received by the election commissioner or county clerk prior to the close of the polls on election day; and

(iv) The identification envelope has been signed by the voter; and

(e) In the case of a ballot received from a registered voter who filled out a reasonable impediment certification pursuant to section 32-912.02, the ballot shall be accepted for counting if:

(i) The signature on the certification matches the signature on file with the election commissioner or county clerk;

(ii) The election commissioner or county clerk verifies that the voter does not have a current, unexpired driver's license or state identification card issued by the State of Nebraska;

(iii) ~~(ii)~~ The name on the identification envelope appears to be that of a registered voter to whom a ballot has been issued or sent;

(iv) ~~(iii)~~ The residence address provided on the identification envelope is the same address at which the voter is registered or is in the same precinct and subdivision of a precinct, if any; and

(v) ~~(iv)~~ The identification envelope has been signed by the voter.

(5) In opening the identification envelope or the return envelope to determine if registration applications, oaths, or identification documents have been enclosed by the voters from whom they are required, the counting board shall make a good faith effort to ensure that the ballot remains folded and that the secrecy of the vote is preserved.

(6) The counting board may, on the second Friday before the election, open all identification envelopes which are approved, and if the signature of the election commissioner or county clerk or his or her employee is on the ballot, the ballot shall be unfolded, flattened for purposes of using the optical scanner, and placed in a sealed container for counting as directed by the election commissioner or county clerk. At the discretion of the election commissioner or county clerk, the counting board may begin counting early ballots no earlier than twenty-four hours prior to the opening of the polls on the day of the election.

(7) If an identification envelope is rejected, the counting board shall not open the identification envelope. The counting board shall write Rejected on the identification envelope and the reason for the rejection. If the ballot is rejected after opening the identification envelope because of the absence of the official signature on the ballot, the ballot shall be reinserted in the identification envelope which shall be resealed and marked Rejected, no official signature. The counting board shall place the rejected identification envelopes and ballots in a container labeled Rejected Ballots and seal it.

(8) As soon as all ballots have been placed in the sealed container and rejected identification envelopes or ballots have been sealed in the Rejected Ballots container, the counting board shall count the ballots the same as all other ballots and an unofficial count shall be reported to the election commissioner or county clerk. No results shall be released prior to the closing of the polls on election day.

Sec. 51. Section 32-1203, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1203 (1) Each city, village, township, school district, public power district, sanitary and improvement district, metropolitan utilities district, fire protection district, natural resources district, regional metropolitan transit authority, community college area, learning community coordinating council, educational service unit, hospital district, reclamation district, library board, and airport authority shall pay for the costs of nominating and electing its officers as provided in subsection (2), (3), or (4) of this

section. If a special issue is placed on the ballot at the time of the statewide primary or general election by any political subdivision, the political subdivision shall pay for the costs of the election as provided in subsection (2), (3), or (4) of this section. ~~The districts listed in this subsection shall furnish to the Secretary of State and election commissioner or county clerk any maps and additional information which the election commissioner or county clerk may require in the proper performance of their duties in the conduct of elections and certification of results.~~

(2) The charge for each primary and general election shall be determined by (a) ascertaining the total cost of all chargeable costs as described in section 32-1202, (b) dividing the total cost by the number of precincts participating in the election to fix the cost per precinct, (c) prorating the cost per precinct by the inked ballot inch in each precinct for each political subdivision, and (d) totaling the cost for each precinct for each political subdivision, except that the minimum charge for each primary and general election for each political subdivision shall be one hundred dollars.

(3) In lieu of the charge determined pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, the election commissioner or county clerk may charge public power districts the fee for election costs set by section 70-610.

(4) In lieu of the charge determined pursuant to subsection (2) of this section, the election commissioner or county clerk may bill school districts directly for the costs of an election held under section 10-703.01.

Sec. 52. Section 32-1205, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-1205 A political subdivision in which a recall petition is issued, a recall election is held, an official is recalled, or a vacancy needs to be filled as the result of a recall petition shall pay the costs of the recall procedure and any special election held as a result of a recall election. If a recall election is canceled pursuant to section 32-1306, the political subdivision shall be responsible for costs incurred related to the canceled election. The costs shall include all chargeable costs as provided in section 32-1202 associated with preparing for and conducting a recall or special election.

Sec. 53. Section 32-1301, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-1301 For purposes of sections 32-1301 to 32-1309, filing officer means ~~(1) clerk shall mean~~ the election commissioner or county clerk for recall of elected officers of cities, villages, counties, irrigation districts, school districts, and hospital districts and ~~(2) the Secretary of State for recall of elected officers of natural resources districts, public power districts, school districts,~~ community college areas, educational service units, ~~hospital districts,~~ and metropolitan utilities districts.

Sec. 54. Section 32-1303, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1303 (1) A petition demanding that the question of removing an elected official or member of a governing body listed in section 32-1302 be submitted to the registered voters shall be signed by registered voters equal in number to at least thirty-five percent of the total vote cast for that office in the last general election, except that (a) for an office for which more than one candidate is chosen, the petition shall be signed by registered voters equal in number to at least thirty-five percent of the number of votes cast for the person receiving the most votes for such office in the last general election and (b) for a member of a governing body of a village, the petition shall be signed by registered voters of the village equal in number to at least forty-five percent of the total vote cast for the person receiving the most votes for that office in the last general election. The signatures shall be affixed to petition papers and shall be considered part of the petition.

(2) Petition circulators shall conform to the requirements of sections 32-629 and 32-630.

(3) The petition papers shall be procured from the filing officer clerk. Prior to the issuance of such petition papers, a recall petition filing form shall be signed and filed with the filing officer clerk by at least one registered voter. Such voter or voters shall be deemed to be the principal circulator or circulators of the recall petition. The filing form shall state the name and office of the official sought to be removed, shall include in concise language of sixty words or less the reason or reasons for which recall is sought, and shall request that the filing officer clerk issue initial petition papers to the principal circulator for circulation.

(4) After receiving the filing form, the ~~The~~ filing officer clerk shall notify the official whose removal is sought to be removed by any method specified in section 25-505.01 or, if notification cannot be made with reasonable diligence by any of the methods specified in section 25-505.01, by leaving a copy of the filing form at the official's usual place of residence and mailing a copy by first-class mail to the official's last-known address. If the official chooses, he or she may submit a defense statement in concise language of sixty words or less for inclusion on the petition. Any such defense statement shall be submitted to the filing officer clerk within twenty days after the official receives the copy of the filing form. The filing officer clerk shall prepare the petition papers within five business days after receipt of the defense statement. The principal circulator or circulators shall gather the petition papers within twenty days after being notified by the filing officer clerk that the petition papers are available. The filing officer clerk shall notify the principal circulator or circulators that the necessary

signatures must be gathered within thirty days from the date of issuing the petitions.

(5) (4) The filing officer clerk, upon issuing the initial petition papers or any subsequent petition papers, shall enter in a record, to be kept in his or her office, the name of the principal circulator or circulators to whom the papers were issued, the date of issuance, and the number of papers issued. The filing officer clerk shall certify on the papers the name of the principal circulator or circulators to whom the papers were issued and the date they were issued. No petition paper shall be accepted as part of the petition unless it bears such certificate. The principal circulator or circulators who check out petitions from the filing officer clerk may distribute such petitions to persons who may act as circulators of such petitions.

(6) (5) Petition signers shall conform to the requirements of sections 32-629 and 32-630. Each signer of a recall petition shall be a registered voter and qualified by his or her place of residence to vote for the office in question.

Sec. 55. Section 32-1304, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-1304 (1) The Secretary of State shall design the uniform petition papers to be distributed by all filing officers clerks and shall keep a sufficient number of such blank petition papers on file for distribution to any filing officer clerk requesting recall petitions. The petition papers shall as nearly as possible conform to the requirements of section 32-628.

(2) In addition to the requirements specified in section 32-628, for the purpose of preventing fraud, deception, and misrepresentation, every sheet of each petition paper presented to a registered voter for his or her signature shall have upon it, above the lines for signatures, (a) a statement that the signatories must be registered voters qualified by residence to vote for the office in question and support the holding of a recall election and (b) in letters not smaller than sixteen-point type in red print (i) the name and office of the individual sought to be recalled, (ii) the reason or reasons for which recall is sought, (iii) the defense statement, if any, submitted by the official, and (iv) the name of the principal circulator or circulators of the recall petition. The decision of a county attorney to prosecute or not to prosecute any individual shall not be stated on a petition as a reason for recall.

(3) Every sheet of each petition paper presented to a registered voter for his or her signature shall have upon it, below the lines for signatures, an affidavit as required in subsection (3) of section 32-628 which also includes language substantially as follows: "and that the affiant stated to each signer, before the signer affixed his or her signature to the petition, the following: (a) The name and office of the individual sought to be recalled, (b) the reason or reasons for which recall is sought as printed on the petition, (c) the defense statement, if any, submitted by the official as printed on the petition, and (d) the name of the principal circulator or circulators of the recall petition".

(4) Each petition paper shall contain a statement entitled Instructions to Petition Circulators prepared by the Secretary of State to assist circulators in understanding the provisions governing the petition process established by sections 32-1301 to 32-1309. The instructions shall include the following statements:

(a) No one circulating this petition paper in an attempt to gather signatures shall sign the circulator's affidavit unless each person who signed the petition paper did so in the presence of the circulator.

(b) No one circulating this petition paper in an attempt to gather signatures shall allow a person to sign the petition until the circulator has stated to the person (i) the object of the petition as printed on the petition, (ii) the name and office of the individual sought to be recalled, (iii) the reason or reasons for which recall is sought as printed on the petition, (iv) the defense statement, if any, submitted by the official as printed on the petition, and (v) the name of the principal circulator or circulators of the recall petition.

Sec. 56. Section 32-1305, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1305 (1) The principal circulator or circulators shall file, as one instrument, all petition papers comprising a recall petition for signature verification with the filing officer clerk within thirty days after the filing officer clerk issues the initial petition papers to the principal circulator or circulators as provided in section 32-1303.

(2) If the filing officer clerk is the subject of a recall petition, the signature verification process shall be conducted by two election commissioners or county clerks appointed by the Secretary of State which shall not include the filing officer. Mileage and expenses incurred by officials appointed pursuant to this subsection shall be reimbursed by the political subdivision involved in the recall.

(3) Within fifteen business days after the filing of the petition, the filing officer clerk shall ascertain whether or not the petition is signed by the requisite number of registered voters. No new signatures may be added after the initial filing of the petition papers. Any person may remove his or her name from a petition as provided in section 32-632. No signatures may be removed unless the filing clerk receives an affidavit signed by the person requesting his or her signature be removed before the petitions are filed with the filing clerk for signature verification. If the petition is found to be

sufficient, the filing ~~officer~~ clerk shall attach to the petition a certificate showing the result of such examination. If the requisite number of signatures has not been gathered, the filing ~~officer~~ clerk shall file the petition in his or her office without prejudice to the filing of a new petition for the same purpose.

Sec. 57. Section 32-1306, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1306 (1) If the recall petition is found to be sufficient, the filing ~~officer~~ clerk shall notify the official whose removal is sought and the governing body of the affected political subdivision that sufficient signatures have been gathered. Notification of the official sought to be removed ~~shall~~ may be by any method specified in section 25-505.01 or, if notification cannot be made with reasonable diligence by any of the methods specified in section 25-505.01, by leaving such notice at the official's usual place of residence and mailing a copy by first-class mail to the official's last-known address.

(2) The governing body of the political subdivision shall, within twenty-one days after receipt of the notification from the filing ~~officer~~ clerk pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, order an election. The date of the election shall be the first available date that complies with section 32-405 and that can be certified to the election commissioner or county clerk at least fifty days prior to the election, except that if any other election is to be held in that political subdivision within ninety days after such notification, the governing body of the political subdivision shall provide for the holding of the recall election on the same day.

(3) All resignations shall be tendered as provided in section 32-562. If the official whose removal is sought resigns before the recall election is held, the governing body may cancel the recall election if the governing body notifies the election commissioner or county clerk of the cancellation on or before the fourth Thursday prior to the election, otherwise the recall election shall be held as scheduled.

(4) If a filing ~~officer~~ clerk is subject to a recall election, the Secretary of State shall conduct the recall election.

Sec. 58. Section 32-1308, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-1308 (1) If a majority of the votes cast at a recall election are against the removal of the official named on the ballot or the election results in a tie, the official shall continue in office for the remainder of his or her term but may be subject to further recall attempts as provided in section 32-1309.

(2) If a majority of the votes cast at a recall election are for the removal of the official named on the ballot, he or she shall, regardless of any technical defects in the recall petition, be deemed removed from office unless a recount is ordered. If the official is deemed removed, the removal shall result in a vacancy in the office which shall be filled as provided in this section and sections 32-567 to 32-570 and 32-574 and section 26 of this act.

(3) If the election results show a margin of votes equal to one percent or less between the removal or retention of the official in question, the Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk shall order a recount of the votes cast unless the official named on the ballot files a written statement with the filing ~~officer~~ clerk that he or she does not want a recount.

(4) If there are vacancies in the offices of one-half or more of the members of any governing body at one time due to the recall of such members, a special election to fill such vacancies shall be conducted as expeditiously as possible by the Secretary of State, election commissioner, or county clerk. Candidates for the special election shall file a candidate filing form pursuant to section 26 of this act.

(5) No official who is removed at a recall election or who resigns after the initiation of the recall process shall be appointed to fill the vacancy resulting from his or her removal or the removal of any other member of the same governing body during the remainder of his or her term of office.

Sec. 59. Section 32-1405, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1405 (1) Prior to obtaining any signatures on an initiative or referendum petition, a statement of the object of the petition and the text of the measure shall be filed with the Secretary of State together with a sworn statement containing the names and street addresses of every person, corporation, or association sponsoring the petition. Sponsors of the petition may be added or removed with the unanimous written consent of the original sponsor or sponsors at any time prior to or on the day the petition is filed for verification with the Secretary of State.

(2) Upon receipt of the filing, the Secretary of State shall transmit the text of the proposed measure to the Revisor of Statutes. The Revisor of Statutes shall review the proposed measure and suggest changes as to form and draftsmanship. The revisor shall complete the review within ten business days after receipt from the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall provide the results of the review and suggested changes to the sponsor but shall otherwise keep the proposed measure, the review, and the sworn statement confidential for five days after receipt of the review by the sponsor. The Secretary of State shall then maintain the proposed measure, the opinion, and the sworn statement as public information and as a part of the official record of the initiative. The sponsor may make any changes recommended by the Revisor of Statutes and shall submit final language to the Secretary of State. If the

final language is addressing a subject that is substantially different in form or substance from the initial filing or the changes recommended by the Revisor of Statutes, the Secretary of State shall reject it.

(3) The Secretary of State shall prepare the form of the petition from the final language filed by the sponsor and shall provide a copy of the form of the petition to the sponsor within five business days after receipt of the final language of the proposed measure. The sponsor shall print the petitions to be circulated from the forms provided. Prior to circulation, the sponsor shall file a sample copy of the petition to be circulated with the Secretary of State.

Sec. 60. Section 32-1407, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1407 (1) Initiative petitions shall be filed in the office of the Secretary of State at least four months prior to the general election at which the proposal would be submitted to the voters.

(2) When a copy of the form of any initiative petition is filed with the Secretary of State prior to obtaining signatures, the issue presented by such petition shall be placed before the voters at the next general election occurring at least four months after the date that such copy is filed if the signed petitions are found to be valid and sufficient. All signed initiative petitions shall become invalid on the date of the first general election occurring at least four months after the date on which the copy of the form is filed with the Secretary of State.

(3) Petitions invoking a referendum shall be filed in the office of the Secretary of State within ninety days after the Legislature at which the act sought to be referred was passed has adjourned sine die or has adjourned for more than ninety days.

(4) At the time of filing the signed petitions, at least one sponsor shall sign an affidavit certifying that the petitions contain a sufficient number and distribution of signatures pursuant to Article III, section 2, of the Constitution of Nebraska to place the issue on the ballot if such number and distribution of signatures were found to be valid.

Sec. 61. Section 32-1524, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

~~32-1524 (1) For purposes of this section:~~

~~(a) Electioneering means the deliberate, visible display or audible or physical dissemination of information for the purpose of advocating for or against:~~

~~(i) Any candidate on the ballot for the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring;~~

~~(ii) Any elected officeholder of a state constitutional office or federal office at the time of the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring;~~

~~(iii) Any political party on the ballot for the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring; or~~

~~(iv) Any measure on the ballot for the election at which such display or dissemination is occurring; and~~

~~(b) Information includes:~~

~~(i) Such a candidate's name, likeness, logo, or symbol;~~

~~(ii) Such a ballot measure's number, title, subject matter, logo, or symbol;~~

~~(iii) A button, hat, pencil, pen, shirt, sign, or sticker containing information prohibited by this section;~~

~~(iv) Audible information prohibited by this section; and~~

~~(v) Literature or any writing or drawing referring to a candidate, officeholder, or ballot measure described in subdivision (a) of this subsection.~~

~~(1) (2) No judge or clerk of election or precinct or district inspector shall do any electioneering or disseminate information or materials advertising or advocating for or against any ballot measure while acting as an election official.~~

~~(2) (3) No person shall do any electioneering, disseminate information or materials advertising or advocating for or against any ballot measure, or circulate petitions within any polling place or any building designated for voters to cast ballots by the election commissioner or county clerk pursuant to the Election Act while the polling place or building is set up for voters to cast ballots or within two hundred feet of the entrances to any such polling place or building except as otherwise provided in subsection (4) (5) of this section.~~

~~(3) (4) No person shall do any electioneering or disseminate information or materials advertising or advocating for or against any ballot measure within two hundred feet of any secure ballot drop-box.~~

~~(4) (5) Subject to any local ordinance, a person may display yard signs on private real property within two hundred feet of a polling place or building designated for voters to cast ballots or a secure ballot drop-box if the property is not under common ownership with the property on which the polling place, ~~or building, or secure ballot drop-box~~ is located.~~

~~(5) (6) Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a Class V misdemeanor.~~

Sec. 62. Section 32-1525, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

32-1525 (1) No person shall conduct an exit poll, a public opinion poll, or any other interview with voters on election day seeking to determine voter

preference within twenty feet of the entrance of any polling place or, if inside the polling place or building, within one hundred feet of any voting booth.

(2)(a) No poll watcher shall interfere with any voter in the preparation or casting of such voter's ballot or prevent any election worker from performing the worker's duties.

(b) A poll watcher shall not provide assistance to a voter as described in section 32-918 unless selected by the voter to provide assistance as provided in section 32-918.

(c) A poll watcher shall not do any engage in electioneering or disseminate any information or materials advertising or advocating for or against any ballot measure as defined in section 32-1524 while engaged in observing at a polling place.

(d) A poll watcher shall maintain a distance of at least eight feet from the sign-in table, the sign-in register, the polling booths, the ballot box, and any ballots which have not been cast, except that if the polling place is not large enough for a distance of eight feet, the judge of election shall post a notice of the minimum distance the poll watcher must maintain from the sign-in table, the sign-in register, the polling booths, the ballot box, and any ballots which have not been cast. The posted notice shall be clearly visible to the voters and shall be posted prior to the opening of the polls on election day. The minimum distance shall not be determined to exclude a poll watcher from being in the polling place.

(3) Any person violating this section shall be guilty of a Class V misdemeanor.

Sec. 63. Section 32-1546, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

32-1546 (1) Any person who is not, at the time of signing a petition, a registered voter and qualified to sign the petition except as provided for initiative and referendum petitions in section 32-1404 or who signs any name other than his or her own to any petition shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

(2) Any person who falsely swears to a circulator's affidavit on a petition, who accepts money or other things of value for signing a petition, or who offers money or other things of value in exchange for a signature upon any petition shall be guilty of a Class IV felony.

(3) Any person who falsifies a letter submitted pursuant to section 32-632 or subsection (3) of section 32-1305 or who signs any name other than his or her own to such letter shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

Sec. 64. Any person who knowingly and falsely swears to a sponsor's affidavit on a petition filed under section 32-1407 shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

Sec. 65. Section 49-1499.03, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

49-1499.03 (1)(a) An official of a political subdivision designated in section 49-1493 who would be required to take any action or make any decision in the discharge of his or her official duties that may cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business with which he or she is associated, which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall take the following actions as soon as he or she is aware of such potential conflict or should reasonably be aware of such potential conflict, whichever is sooner:

(i) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict; and

(ii) Deliver a copy of the statement to the commission and to the person in charge of keeping records for the political subdivision who shall enter the statement onto the public records of the political subdivision.

(b) The official shall take such action as the commission shall advise or prescribe to remove himself or herself from influence over the action or decision on the matter.

(c) This subsection does not prevent such a person from making or participating in the making of a governmental decision to the extent that the individual's participation is legally required for the action or decision to be made. A person acting pursuant to this subdivision shall report the occurrence to the commission.

(2)(a) Any public official person holding an elective office of any political subdivision a city or village not designated in section 49-1493 and any person holding an elective office of a school district who would be required to take any action or make any decision in the discharge of his or her official duties that may cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business with which he or she is associated, which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall take the following actions as soon as he or she is aware of such potential conflict or should reasonably be aware of such potential conflict, whichever is sooner:

(i) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict;

(ii) Deliver a copy of the statement to the person in charge of keeping records for the political subdivision city, village, or school district who shall enter the statement onto the public records of the political subdivision city, village, or school district; and

(iii) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this section,

abstain from participating or voting on the matter in which the public official person holding elective office has a conflict of interest.

(b) The public official person holding elective office may apply to the commission for an opinion as to whether the person has a conflict of interest.

(3)(a) This section does not prevent a public official person holding an elective office of any political subdivision city, village, or school district from making or participating in the making of a governmental decision:

(i) To the extent that the individual's participation is legally required for the action or decision to be made; or

(ii) If the potential conflict of interest is based on a business association and (A) such business association is an association of such political subdivisions cities and villages or school districts, (B) the political subdivision city, village, or school district is a member of such association, and (C) the business association exists only as the result of such public official person holding elective office.

(b) A public official person holding elective office of any city subject to subsection (1) of this section who is acting pursuant to this subsection shall report the occurrence as provided in subdivisions (1)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section.

(c) A person subject to subsection (2) of this section who is acting pursuant to this subsection shall report the occurrence as provided in subdivisions (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section.

(4)(a) Any employee of a political subdivision whose annual salary and benefits exceed one hundred fifty thousand dollars and who would be required to take any action or make any decision in the discharge of his or her official duties that may cause financial benefit or detriment to him or her, a member of his or her immediate family, or a business with which he or she is associated, which is distinguishable from the effects of such action on the public generally or a broad segment of the public, shall take the following actions as soon as he or she is aware of such potential conflict or should reasonably be aware of such potential conflict, whichever is sooner:

(i) Prepare a written statement describing the matter requiring action or decision and the nature of the potential conflict;

(ii) Deliver a copy of the statement to the person in charge of keeping records for the political subdivision who shall enter the statement onto the public records of the political subdivision; and

(iii) Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (4)(c) of this section, abstain from participating in the matter in which the employee has a conflict of interest.

(b) An employee described in subdivision (4)(a) of this section may apply to the commission for an opinion as to whether he or she has a conflict of interest.

(c) This subsection does not prevent an employee described in subdivision (4)(a) of this section from making or participating in the making of a governmental decision to the extent that the employee's participation is legally required for the action or decision to be made. An employee who is acting pursuant to this subdivision shall report the occurrence as provided in subdivisions (4)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section.

(5) ~~(4)~~ Matters involving an interest in a contract are governed either by sections 49-14,102 and 49-14,103 or by sections 49-14,103.01 to 49-14,103.06. Matters involving the hiring of an immediate family member are governed by section 49-1499.04. Matters involving nepotism or the supervision of a family member by an official or employee in the executive branch of state government are governed by section 49-1499.07.

(6) This section does not apply to a sanitary and improvement district.

Sec. 66. Section 58-230, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

58-230 Meetings of the members of the authority shall be held at least once every three months to attend to the business of the authority and may be held at the call of the chairperson or whenever any five members so request. Such meetings shall at all times be subject to the Open Meetings Act, and such meetings may be held by means of virtual conferencing in accordance with ~~subsection (2) of section 84-1411.~~

Sec. 67. Section 58-817, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

58-817 Four members of the authority shall constitute a quorum. The affirmative vote of a majority of all of the members of the authority shall be necessary for any action taken by the authority. A vacancy in the membership of the authority shall not impair the right of a quorum to exercise all the rights and perform all the duties of the authority. Any action taken by the authority under the Nebraska Educational, Health, Cultural, and Social Services Finance Authority Act may be authorized by resolution at any regular or special meeting, and each such resolution shall take effect immediately and need not be published or posted. Members of the authority may participate in a regular or special meeting of the authority by virtual conferencing as long as the chairperson or vice-chairperson conducts the meeting at a location where the public is able to participate by attendance at that location and the virtual conferencing otherwise conforms to the requirements of ~~subsection (2) of section 84-1411.~~

Sec. 68. Section 60-483, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

60-483 (1) The director shall assign a distinguishing number to each operator's license issued and shall keep a record of the same which shall be

open to public inspection by any person requesting inspection of such record who qualifies under section 60-2906 or 60-2907. Any person requesting such driver record information shall furnish to the Department of Motor Vehicles (a) verification of identity and purpose that the requester is entitled under section 60-2906 or 60-2907 to disclosure of the personal information in the record, (b) the name of the person whose record is being requested, and (c) when the name alone is insufficient to identify the correct record, the department may request additional identifying information. The department shall, upon request of any requester, furnish a certified abstract of the operating record of any person, in either hard copy or electronically, and shall charge the requester a fee of three dollars per abstract.

(2) The department shall remit any revenue generated under subsections (1) through (5) of this section to the State Treasurer, and the State Treasurer shall credit forty-one and two-thirds ~~eight and one-third~~ percent to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund, twenty-five ~~fifty-eight and one-third~~ percent to the General Fund, and thirty-three and one-third percent to the Records Management Cash Fund.

(3) The director shall, upon receiving a request and an agreement from the United States Selective Service System to comply with requirements of this section, furnish driver record information to the United States Selective Service System to include the name, post office address, date of birth, sex, and social security number of licensees. The United States Selective Service System shall pay all costs incurred by the department in providing the information but shall not be required to pay any other fee required by law for information. No driver record information shall be furnished to the United States Selective Service System regarding any female, nor regarding any male other than those between the ages of seventeen years and twenty-six years. The information shall only be used in the fulfillment of the required duties of the United States Selective Service System and shall not be furnished to any other person.

(4) The director shall keep a record of all applications for operators' licenses that are disapproved with a brief statement of the reason for disapproval of the application.

(5) The director may establish a monitoring service which provides information on operating records that have changed due to any adjudicated traffic citation or administrative action. The director shall charge a fee of six cents per operating record searched pursuant to this section and the fee provided in subsection (1) of this section for each abstract returned as a result of the search.

(6) Driver record header information, including name, license number, date of birth, address, and physical description, from every driver record maintained by the department may be made available so long as the Uniform Motor Vehicle Records Disclosure Act is not violated. Monthly updates, including all new records, may also be made available. There shall be a fee of eighteen dollars per thousand records. All fees collected pursuant to this subsection shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(7) The department may enter into a reciprocity agreement with a foreign country to provide for the mutual recognition and reciprocal exchange of a valid operator's license issued by this state or the foreign country if the department determines that the licensing standards of the foreign country are comparable to those of this state. Any such agreement entered into by the department shall not include the mutual recognition and reciprocal exchange of a commercial driver's license.

(8) Beginning July 1, 2021, for any record provided pursuant to subsection (1) of this section, the requester shall be required to pay, in addition to the fee prescribed in such subsection, a fee of four dollars and fifty cents per record. Fifty cents shall be credited to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund and four dollars shall be credited to the Operator's License Services System Replacement and Maintenance Fund.

Sec. 69. Section 60-484.02, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

60-484.02 (1) Each applicant for an operator's license or state identification card shall have his or her digital image captured. Digital images shall be preserved for use as prescribed in sections 60-4,119, 60-4,151, and 60-4,180. The images shall be used for issuing operators' licenses and state identification cards. The images may be retrieved only by the Department of Motor Vehicles for issuing renewal and replacement operators' licenses and state identification cards and may not be otherwise released except in accordance with subsection (3) of this section.

(2) Upon application for an operator's license or state identification card, each applicant shall provide his or her signature in a form prescribed by the department. Digital signatures shall be preserved for use on original, renewal, and replacement operators' licenses and state identification cards and may not be otherwise released except in accordance with subsection (4) of this section.

(3) No officer, employee, agent, or contractor of the department or law enforcement officer shall release a digital image except (a) to a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency, a certified law enforcement officer employed in an investigative position by a federal, state, or local agency, or a driver licensing agency of another state for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the agency or assisting another agency in carrying out its functions upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the

release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release or (b) to the office of the Secretary of State for the purpose of voter registration and voter identification as prescribed in the Election Act upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release. No employee or official in the office of the Secretary of State shall release a digital image except to a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency, a certified law enforcement officer employed in an investigative position by a federal, state, or local agency, or a driver licensing agency of another state for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the agency or assisting another agency in carrying out its functions upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release. Any officer, employee, agent, or contractor of the department, or law enforcement officer, or employee or official in the office of the Secretary of State that knowingly discloses or knowingly permits disclosure of a digital image or digital signature in violation of this section shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

(4) No officer, employee, agent, or contractor of the department or law enforcement officer shall release a digital signature except (a) to a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency, a certified law enforcement officer employed in an investigative position by a state or federal, state, or local agency, or a driver licensing agency of another state for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the agency or assisting another agency in carrying out its functions upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release or (b) to the office of the Secretary of State for the purpose of voter registration and voter identification as prescribed in the Election Act as described in section 32-304, 32-308, or 32-309 upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release. No employee or official in the office of the Secretary of State shall release a digital signature except to a federal, state, or local law enforcement agency, a certified law enforcement officer employed in an investigative position by a state or federal, state, or local agency, or a driver licensing agency of another state for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the agency or assisting another agency in carrying out its functions upon the verification of the identity of the person requesting the release of the information and the verification of the purpose of the requester in requesting the release. Any officer, employee, agent, or contractor of the department, law enforcement officer, or employee or official in the office of the Secretary of State that knowingly discloses or knowingly permits disclosure of a digital signature in violation of this section shall be guilty of a Class I misdemeanor.

(5) The department shall develop a process for the release of digital images to the Secretary of State for the purpose of voter identification as prescribed by the Election Act. The process shall include proper measures for access, security, storage, and retention of the digital image and verification of the release of the digital image to any officer, agent, or contractor of the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State and the department shall enter into an agreement for the release, use, protection, storage, and retention of digital images as prescribed under this section and the Uniform Motor Vehicle Records Disclosure Act. The department may adopt and promulgate rules and regulations to carry out this subsection.

Sec. 70. Section 60-4,115, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, is amended to read:

60-4,115 (1) Fees for operators' licenses and state identification cards shall be collected by department personnel or the county treasurer and distributed according to the table in subsection (2) of this section, except for the ignition interlock permit and associated fees as outlined in subsection (4) of this section and the 24/7 sobriety program permit and associated fees as outlined in subsection (5) of this section. County officials shall remit the county portion of the fees collected to the county treasurer for placement in the county general fund. All other fees collected shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the appropriate fund.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (7) of this section, the fees provided in this subsection in the following dollar amounts apply for operators' licenses and state identification cards.

Document	Total Fee	Department of Motor Vehicles	
		County General Fund	Cash Fund
State identification card:			
Valid for 1 year or less	5.00	2.75	2.25
Valid for more than 1 year			

but not more than 2 years	10.00	2.75	7.25
Valid for more than 2 years			
but not more than 3 years	14.00	2.75	11.25
Valid for more than 3 years			
but not more than 4 years	19.00	2.75	16.25
Valid for more than 4 years			
for a person under 21	24.00	2.75	21.25
Valid for 5 years	24.00	3.50	20.50
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Class 0 or M operator's license:			
Valid for 1 year or less	5.00	2.75	2.25
Valid for more than 1 year			
but not more than 2 years	10.00	2.75	7.25
Valid for more than 2 years			
but not more than 3 years	14.00	2.75	11.25
Valid for more than 3 years			
but not more than 4 years	19.00	2.75	16.25
Valid for 5 years	24.00	3.50	20.50
Bioptic or telescopic lens restriction:			
Valid for 1 year or less	5.00	0	5.00
Valid for more than 1 year			
but not more than 2 years	10.00	2.75	7.25
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
Provisional operator's permit:			
Original	15.00	2.75	12.25
Bioptic or telescopic lens restriction:			
Valid for 1 year or less	5.00	0	5.00
Valid for more than 1 year			
but not more than 2 years	15.00	2.75	12.25
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
LPD-learner's permit:			
Original	8.00	.25	7.75
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25

Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
LPE-learner's permit:			
Original	8.00	.25	7.75
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
School permit:			
Original	8.00	.25	7.75
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
Farm permit:			
Original or renewal	5.00	.25	4.75
Replacement	5.00	.25	4.75
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
Driving permits:			
Employment	45.00	0	45.00
Medical hardship	45.00	0	45.00
Replacement	10.00	.25	9.75
Add, change, or remove class, endorsement, or restriction	5.00	0	5.00
Commercial driver's license:			
Valid for 1 year or less	11.00	1.75	9.25
Valid for more than 1 year but not more than 2 years	22.00	1.75	20.25
Valid for more than 2 years but not more than 3 years	33.00	1.75	31.25
Valid for more than 3 years but not more than 4 years	44.00	1.75	42.25
Valid for 5 years	55.00	1.75	53.25
Bioptic or telescopic lens restriction:			
Valid for one year or less	11.00	1.75	9.25
Valid for more than 1 year but not more than 2 years	22.00	1.75	20.25
Replacement	11.00	2.75	8.25
Add, change, or remove class,			

endorsement, or restriction	10.00	1.75	8.25
CLP-commercial learner's permit:			
Original or renewal	10.00	.25	9.75
Replacement	10.00	.25	9.75
Add, change, or remove class,			
endorsement, or restriction	10.00	.25	9.75
Seasonal permit:			
Original or renewal	10.00	.25	9.75
Replacement	10.00	.25	9.75
Add, change, or remove class,			
endorsement, or restriction	10.00	.25	9.75

(3) If the department issues an operator's license or a state identification card and collects the fees, the department shall remit the county portion of the fees to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(4)(a) The fee for an ignition interlock permit shall be forty-five dollars. Five dollars of the fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund. Forty dollars of the fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Ignition Interlock Fund.

(b) The fee for a replacement ignition interlock permit shall be eleven dollars. Two dollars and seventy-five cents of the fee shall be remitted to the county treasurer for credit to the county general fund. Eight dollars and twenty-five cents of the fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(c) The fee for adding, changing, or removing a class, endorsement, or restriction on an ignition interlock permit shall be five dollars. The fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(5)(a) The fee for a 24/7 sobriety program permit shall be forty-five dollars. Forty dollars of the fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund. Five dollars of the fee shall be remitted to the county treasurer for credit to the county general fund.

(b) The fee for a replacement 24/7 sobriety program permit shall be eleven dollars. Two dollars and seventy-five cents of the fee shall be remitted to the county treasurer for credit to the county general fund. Eight dollars and twenty-five cents of the fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(c) The fee for adding, changing, or removing a class, endorsement, or restriction on a 24/7 sobriety program permit shall be five dollars. The fee shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(6) The department and its agents may collect an identity security surcharge to cover the cost of security and technology practices used to protect the identity of applicants for and holders of operators' licenses and state identification cards and to reduce identity theft, fraud, and forgery and counterfeiting of such licenses and cards to the maximum extent possible. The surcharge shall be in addition to all other required fees for operators' licenses and state identification cards. The amount of the surcharge shall be determined by the department. The surcharge shall not exceed eight dollars. The surcharge shall be remitted to the State Treasurer for credit to the Department of Motor Vehicles Cash Fund.

(7) No fee shall be charged for issuance of an original, renewal, or replacement ~~duplicate~~ state identification card to a resident of Nebraska who is also a United States citizen and who ~~(a) does not have a valid Nebraska driver's license, (b) is requesting issuance of such card for voting purposes, and (c) is at least eighteen years of age or is seventeen years of age and will attain the age of eighteen years on or before the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November of the then-current calendar year.~~

Sec. 71. Section 70-663, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

70-663 (1) ~~This subsection applies to charter amendments submitted after December 31, 2021.~~ Upon such authorization as provided in section 70-662 ~~occurring~~, the proposed amendment shall thereupon be submitted to the Nebraska Power Review Board, together with a petition setting forth the reasons for the adoption of such amendment, and requesting that the same be approved. The Nebraska Power Review Board shall then cause notice to be given by publication for three consecutive weeks in two legal newspapers of general circulation within such district. Such notice shall set forth in full the proposed amendment and set a date, not sooner than three weeks after the last date of

publication of the notice, for protests, complaints, or objections to be filed with the Nebraska Power Review Board in opposition to the adoption of such amendment. The cost of such publication shall be paid by such district. If any person residing in such district, or affected by the proposed amendment, shall, within the time provided, file a protest, complaint, or objection, the Nebraska Power Review Board shall schedule a hearing and give due notice thereof to the district, the district's representative, and the person who filed such protest, complaint, or objection. Any person filing a protest, complaint, or objection may appear at such hearing and contest the approval by the Nebraska Power Review Board of such proposed amendment. After all protests, complaints, or objections have been heard, the Nebraska Power Review Board shall act upon the petition and either approve or disapprove the amendment. If no protests, complaints, or objections are properly filed, the board shall either approve the amendment without a hearing or schedule a hearing to determine whether or not the amendment should be approved. If a hearing is scheduled, due notice shall be provided to the district and the district representative.

~~(2) This subsection applies to charter amendments submitted before December 31, 2021. Following the release of the 2020 Census of Population data by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as required by Public Law 94-171, any public power district seeking an amendment to its charter shall submit the proposed amendment to the Nebraska Power Review Board on or before December 17, 2021. If the proposed amendment is in proper form, the Nebraska Power Review Board shall give conditional approval of the amendment on or before December 30, 2021. The approval process provided in subsection (1) of this section shall occur concurrent with the conditional approval process. If a protest, complaint, or objection is filed and a hearing is set, any decision from the Nebraska Power Review Board rejecting the amendment shall be decided and notification provided to the Secretary of State by March 1, 2022. Immediately upon receiving such notification, the Secretary of State shall notify all election commissioners and county clerks responsible for such elections within the public power district that the conditionally approved boundaries were rejected and that the previous boundaries shall be used for the primary and general elections.~~

Sec. 72. Section 79-1218, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

79-1218 The board of each educational service unit shall meet and organize by naming one of its members as president, one as vice president, and one as secretary. The board shall employ a treasurer who shall be paid a salary to be fixed by the board.

The board of the educational service unit shall determine the participation of the educational service unit in providing supplementary educational services. If the board of the educational service unit does not provide supplementary educational services, it shall meet during each succeeding January to determine the participation in providing supplementary educational services for that calendar year. Meetings may be held by means of virtual conferencing in accordance with ~~subsection (2) of section 84-1411.~~

Sec. 73. Section 84-217, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

84-217 ~~Section 84-216 is Sections 84-215 to 84-217 shall be cumulative to any existing remedies which may exist.~~

Sec. 74. Section 84-1411, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, is amended to read:

84-1411 (1) Until January 1, 2025:

(a) ~~(1)(a)~~ Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (1)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committee, such notice shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village or such body's advisory committee or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be published by:

(A) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction and, if available, on such newspaper's website; or

(B) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, ~~or village, or district~~. Such notice shall be posted in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to timely publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, and (B) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(c) In addition to a method of notice required by subdivision (1)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice may also be provided by any other appropriate method designated by such public body or such advisory committee.

(d) Each public body shall record the methods and dates of such notice in its minutes.

(e) Such notice shall contain an agenda of subjects known at the time of the publicized notice or a statement that the agenda, which shall be kept continually current, shall be readily available for public inspection at the principal office of the public body during normal business hours. Agenda items shall be sufficiently descriptive to give the public reasonable notice of the matters to be considered at the meeting. Except for items of an emergency nature, the agenda shall not be altered later than (i) twenty-four hours before the scheduled commencement of the meeting or (ii) forty-eight hours before the scheduled commencement of a meeting of a city council or village board scheduled outside the corporate limits of the municipality. The public body shall have the right to modify the agenda to include items of an emergency nature only at such public meeting.

(2) Beginning January 1, 2025:

(a) Each public body shall give reasonable advance publicized notice of the time and place of each meeting as provided in this subsection. Such notice shall be transmitted to all members of the public body and to the public.

(b)(i) Except as provided in subdivision (2)(b)(ii) of this section, in the case of a public body described in subdivision (1)(a)(i) of section 84-1409 or such body's advisory committees, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting to a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper.

(ii) In the case of the governing body of a city of the second class or village, any advisory committee of such governing body, or the governing body of a rural or suburban fire protection district, such notice shall be given by:

(A)(I) Publication in a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction that is finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting, (II) posting on such newspaper's website, if available, and (III) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper;

(B)(I) Posting to the newspaper's website, if available, and (II) posting on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers if no edition of a newspaper of general circulation within the public body's jurisdiction is to be finalized for printing prior to the time and date of the meeting. Such notice shall be placed in the newspaper and on the websites by the newspaper; or

(C)(III) Posting written notice in three conspicuous public places in such city, village, or district. Such notice shall be posted by the public body in the same three places for each meeting.

(iii) In the case of a public body not described in subdivision (2)(b)(i) or (ii) of this section, such notice shall be given by a method designated by the public body.

(iv) In case of refusal, neglect, or inability of the newspaper to publish the notice, the public body shall (A) post such notice on its website, if available, (B) submit a post on a statewide website established and maintained as a repository for such notices by a majority of Nebraska newspapers, and (C) post such notice in a conspicuous public place in such public body's jurisdiction. The public body shall keep a written record of such posting. The record of such posting shall be evidence that such posting was done as required and shall be sufficient to fulfill the requirement of publication.

(3)(a) ~~(2)(a)~~ The following entities may hold a meeting by means of virtual conferencing if the requirements of subdivision (3)(b) ~~(2)(b)~~ of this section are met:

(i) A state agency, state board, state commission, state council, or state committee, or an advisory committee of any such state entity;

(ii) An organization, including the governing body, created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act, the Joint Public Agency Act, or the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act;

(iii) The governing body of a public power district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(iv) The governing body of a public power and irrigation district having a chartered territory of more than one county in this state;

(v) An educational service unit;

(vi) The Educational Service Unit Coordinating Council;

(vii) An organization, including the governing body, of a risk management pool or its advisory committees organized in accordance with the Intergovernmental Risk Management Act;

(viii) A community college board of governors;

(ix) The Nebraska Brand Committee;

(x) A local public health department;

(xi) A metropolitan utilities district;

- (xii) A regional metropolitan transit authority; and
- (xiii) A natural resources district.

(b) The requirements for holding a meeting by means of virtual conferencing are as follows:

(i) Reasonable advance publicized notice is given as provided in subsections (1) and (2) ~~subsection (1)~~ of this section, including providing access to a dial-in number or link to the virtual conference;

(ii) In addition to the public's right to participate by virtual conferencing, reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate the public's right to attend at a physical site and participate as provided in section 84-1412, including reasonable seating, in at least one designated site in a building open to the public and identified in the notice, with: At least one member of the entity holding such meeting, or his or her designee, present at each site; a recording of the hearing by audio or visual recording devices; and a reasonable opportunity for input, such as public comment or questions, is provided to at least the same extent as would be provided if virtual conferencing was not used;

(iii) At least one copy of all documents being considered at the meeting is available at any physical site open to the public where individuals may attend the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act; and

(iv) Except as otherwise provided in this subdivision or subsection (4) of section 79-2204, no more than one-half of the meetings of the state entities, advisory committees, boards, councils, organizations, or governing bodies are held by virtual conferencing in a calendar year. In the case of (A) an organization created under the Interlocal Cooperation Act that sells electricity or natural gas, (B) at wholesale on a multistate basis or an organization created under the Municipal Cooperative Financing Act, (C) a governing body of a risk management pool and any advisory committee of such governing body, or (D) any advisory committee of any state entity created in response to the Opioid Prevention and Treatment Act, such the organization, governing body, or committee may hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if such organization holds at least one meeting each calendar year that is not by virtual conferencing. ~~The governing body of a risk management pool that meets at least quarterly and the advisory committees of the governing body may each hold more than one-half of its meetings by virtual conferencing if the governing body's quarterly meetings are not held by virtual conferencing.~~

(4) (3) Virtual conferencing, emails, faxes, or other electronic communication shall not be used to circumvent any of the public government purposes established in the Open Meetings Act.

(5) (4) The secretary or other designee of each public body shall maintain a list of the news media requesting notification of meetings and shall make reasonable efforts to provide advance notification to them of the time and place of each meeting and the subjects to be discussed at that meeting.

(6) (5) When it is necessary to hold an emergency meeting without reasonable advance public notice, the nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes and any formal action taken in such meeting shall pertain only to the emergency. Such emergency meetings may be held by virtual conferencing. The provisions of subsection (5) (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting emergency meetings. Complete minutes of such emergency meetings specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available to the public by no later than the end of the next regular business day.

(7) (6) A public body may allow a member of the public or any other witness to appear before the public body by means of virtual conferencing.

(8)(a) (7)(a) Notwithstanding subsections (3) (2) and (6) (5) of this section, if an emergency is declared by the Governor pursuant to the Emergency Management Act as defined in section 81-829.39, a public body the territorial jurisdiction of which is included in the emergency declaration, in whole or in part, may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing during such emergency if the public body gives reasonable advance publicized notice as described in subsections subsection (1) and (2) of this section. The notice shall include information regarding access for the public and news media. In addition to any formal action taken pertaining to the emergency, the public body may hold such meeting for the purpose of briefing, discussion of public business, formation of tentative policy, or the taking of any action by the public body.

(b) The public body shall provide access by providing a dial-in number or a link to the virtual conference. The public body shall also provide links to an electronic copy of the agenda, all documents being considered at the meeting, and the current version of the Open Meetings Act. Reasonable arrangements shall be made to accommodate the public's right to hear and speak at the meeting and record the meeting. Subsection (5) (4) of this section shall be complied with in conducting such meetings.

(c) The nature of the emergency shall be stated in the minutes. Complete minutes of such meeting specifying the nature of the emergency and any formal action taken at the meeting shall be made available for inspection as provided in subsection (5) of section 84-1413.

(9) (8) In addition to any other statutory authorization for virtual conferencing, any public body not listed in subdivision (3)(a) (2)(a) of this section may hold a meeting by virtual conferencing if:

- (a) The purpose of the virtual meeting is to discuss items that are

scheduled to be discussed or acted upon at a subsequent non-virtual open meeting of the public body;

(b) No action is taken by the public body at the virtual meeting; and

(c) The public body complies with subdivisions (3)(b)(i) ~~(2)(b)(i)~~ and (ii) ~~(2)(b)(ii)~~ of this section.

Sec. 75. Section 85-1514, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, is amended to read:

85-1514 (1) In addition to the events listed in section 32-560, a vacancy on any board shall exist in the event of the removal of a board member from the community college area for board members elected at large or community college district for board members elected by district. After notice and hearing, a vacancy shall also exist when any board member is absent from more than three consecutive regular meetings of the board unless such absences are excused by a majority of the remaining board members. In the event of a vacancy from any of such causes or otherwise, such vacancy shall be filled by the remaining board members for the balance of the unexpired term. Any person so named to fill a vacancy shall have the same qualifications as his or her immediate predecessor. Such appointment shall be made in writing and certified to the office of the Secretary of State.

(2) If after a primary election there is a vacancy upon the ballot, such vacancy shall be filled by a petition candidate pursuant to section 32-625.

(3) An incumbent shall not be permitted to hold over the term, but such office shall automatically become vacant and an appointment shall be made within one calendar month to fill such vacancy for the ensuing term. If there are vacancies in the offices of a majority of the members of the board, the Secretary of State shall conduct a special election to fill such vacancies. Candidates for such special election shall file a candidate filing form pursuant to section 26 of this act.

Sec. 76. Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 15, 16, 18, 20, 21, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 47, 48, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 63, 65, 71, 73, 75, 77, and 81 of this act become operative three calendar months after the adjournment of this legislative session. Sections 34, 68, 70, and 78 of this act become operative on July 1, 2024. Sections 13, 14, 45, 69, and 79 of this act become operative on January 1, 2025. The other sections of this act become operative on their effective date.

Sec. 77. Original sections 2-3213, 2-3214, 16-202, 18-2518, 32-569, 32-632, 32-1205, 32-1301, 32-1304, 32-1308, 32-1546, 49-1499.03, 84-217, and 85-1514, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, sections 32-320.01, 32-404, 32-552, 32-553, 32-570, 32-606, 32-607, 32-608, 32-615, 32-716, 32-802, 32-808.01, 32-903, 32-947, 32-950.01, 32-1203, 32-1303, 32-1305, 32-1306, 32-1405, and 70-663, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, and sections 32-318.01 and 32-912.02, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, are repealed.

Sec. 78. Original sections 32-630 and 60-483, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, and section 60-4,115, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, are repealed.

Sec. 79. Original section 60-484.02, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, section 32-304, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, and sections 32-308 and 32-942, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, are repealed.

Sec. 80. Original sections 25-1274, 32-233, 32-564, 32-565, 32-613, 32-617, 32-713, 58-230, and 58-817, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska, sections 31-727.02, 32-330, 32-405, 32-1407, 32-1524, 32-1525, 79-1218, and 84-1411, Revised Statutes Cumulative Supplement, 2022, and sections 32-101, 32-103, 32-123, 32-202.01, 32-912.01, 32-915.03, 32-941, 32-1002.01, and 32-1027, Revised Statutes Supplement, 2023, are repealed.

Sec. 81. The following section is outright repealed: Section 84-215, Reissue Revised Statutes of Nebraska.

Sec. 82. Since an emergency exists, this act takes effect when passed and approved according to law.