

# SB7 INTRODUCED



1 SB7  
2 RALFNYN-1  
3 By Senators Hatcher, Singleton, Coleman-Madison, Figures,  
4 Beasley, Stewart, Coleman, Smitherman  
5 RFD: Judiciary  
6 First Read: 04-Feb-25  
7 PFD: 13-Aug-24



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SYNOPSIS:

Under existing law, individuals convicted of a crime of moral turpitude lose their voting rights and must apply to have their rights restored upon meeting certain criteria once their sentence has ended.

This bill would provide for automatic restoration of voting rights in certain circumstances.

Under existing law, an elector may only vote by absentee ballot if he or she meets certain qualifications.

This bill would eliminate the qualifications that allow for absentee voting.

This bill would further specify the process for voting by absentee ballot.

This bill would establish the Alabama Voting Rights Act and the Alabama Voting Rights Commission and would provide for its membership.

This bill would require the Alabama Voting Rights Commission to review certain actions that occur within the state that could potentially discriminate against protected classes of voters.

This bill would require the commission to preclear certain official actions relating to elections.

This bill would also require the Secretary of



**SB7 INTRODUCED**

29 State to maintain a statewide database to assist in the  
30 administration of elections and to publicize certain  
31 information relating to voting.

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A BILL

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TO BE ENTITLED

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AN ACT

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38 Relating to elections; to amend Sections 15-22-36.1,  
39 17-3-31, 17-3-50, 17-11-3, 17-11-4, as last amended by Act  
40 2024-33 of the 2024 Regular Session, Section 17-11-5, 17-11-9,  
41 and 17-11-10, Code of Alabama 1975; to revise the process for  
42 reinstating voting rights of certain individuals; to revise  
43 the absentee elections process; to authorize any elector to  
44 vote absentee; to establish the Alabama Voting Rights Act and  
45 the Alabama Voting Rights Act Commission; to provide for the  
46 duties and membership of the commission; to require the  
47 Secretary of State to maintain a statewide database relating  
48 to election administration and to publicize certain election  
49 information.

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BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

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Section 1. Sections 15-22-36.1, 17-3-31, 17-3-50,

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17-11-3, 17-11-4, as last amended by Act 2024-33 of the 2024

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Regular Session, Sections 17-11-5, 17-11-9, and 17-11-10, are

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amended to read as follows:

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"§15-22-36.1

56

(a) (1) Any other provision of law notwithstanding, ~~any~~



## SB7 INTRODUCED

57 ~~person~~ an individual who has lost his or her right to vote by  
58 reason of conviction of a felony in a state, federal, or  
59 foreign court, except for an individual convicted of treason  
60 or impeachment, regardless of the date of his or her sentence,  
61 ~~may apply to the Board of Pardons and Paroles for a~~  
62 ~~Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote~~ shall have his  
63 or her right to vote restored if ~~all of the following~~  
64 ~~requirements are met:~~

65 ~~(1) The person has lost his or her right to vote by~~  
66 ~~reason of conviction in a state or federal court in any case~~  
67 ~~except those listed in subsection (g).~~

68 ~~(2) The person has no criminal felony charges pending~~  
69 ~~against him or her in any state or federal court.~~

70 ~~(3) The person has paid all fines, court costs, fees,~~  
71 ~~and victim restitution ordered by the sentencing court at the~~  
72 ~~time of sentencing on disqualifying cases.~~

73 ~~(4) Any of the following are true:~~

74 ~~a. The person~~ (i) the individual has been released upon  
75 completion of sentence ~~;~~ ;

76 ~~b. The person~~ (ii) the individual has been pardoned ~~;~~ ; or

77 ~~c. The person~~ (iii) the individual has successfully  
78 completed probation or parole and has been released from  
79 compliance by the ordering entity.

80 (2) Any individual who has met all conditions of his or  
81 her probation or parole except for the payment of court costs,  
82 fines, restitution, or fees, shall be deemed to have  
83 successfully completed probation or parole for the purpose of  
84 having his or her right to vote restored.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

85           (b) The ~~Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote~~  
86 ~~shall be granted~~ board shall restore an individual's right to  
87 vote upon a determination that ~~all of the requirements~~  
88 individual has met one of the criteria in subsection (a) ~~are~~  
89 ~~fulfilled.~~

90           ~~(c) Upon receipt of an application under this section,~~  
91 ~~investigation of the request shall be assigned forthwith to an~~  
92 ~~officer of the state Board of Pardons and Paroles. The~~  
93 ~~assigned officer shall verify, through court records, records~~  
94 ~~of the board, and records of the Department of Corrections,~~  
95 ~~that the applicant has met the qualifications set out in~~  
96 ~~subsection (a). Within 30 days of the initial application for~~  
97 ~~a Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote, the officer~~  
98 ~~shall draft a report of his or her findings including a~~  
99 ~~statement as to whether the applicant has successfully~~  
100 ~~completed his or her sentence and has complied with all the~~  
101 ~~eligibility requirements provided in subsection (a).~~

102           ~~(d) After completing the investigation set out in~~  
103 ~~subsection (c), the officer shall submit his or her report of~~  
104 ~~investigation to the Executive Director of the Board of~~  
105 ~~Pardons and Paroles.~~

106           ~~(e) If the report created pursuant to subsection (c)~~  
107 ~~states that the applicant has met all of the eligibility~~  
108 ~~criteria set forth in subsection (a), and the executive~~  
109 ~~director or his or her designee attests that the report has~~  
110 ~~been submitted properly and accurately, the Board of Pardons~~  
111 ~~and Paroles shall issue a Certificate of Eligibility to~~  
112 ~~Register to Vote to the applicant within 14 days of receipt of~~



## SB7 INTRODUCED

113 ~~the report by the executive director.~~

114 ~~(f) If the report created pursuant to subsection (c)~~  
115 ~~states that the applicant has not met all of the eligibility~~  
116 ~~criteria set forth in subsection (a), and the executive~~  
117 ~~director or his or her designee attests that the report has~~  
118 ~~been submitted properly and accurately, the Board of Pardons~~  
119 ~~and Paroles shall not issue a Certificate of Eligibility to~~  
120 ~~Register to Vote and shall notify the applicant of the~~  
121 ~~decision and reason or reasons for the decision within 14 days~~  
122 ~~of receipt of the report by the executive director. The~~  
123 ~~applicant, upon completion of the eligibility requirement in~~  
124 ~~subsection (a) for restoration of his or her rights, may~~  
125 ~~submit a new application at any time if he or she has met the~~  
126 ~~certification criteria.~~

127 ~~(g) A person~~ (c) An individual who has lost his or her  
128 right to vote by reason of conviction in a state, ~~or federal,~~  
129 or foreign court for ~~any of the following will not be eligible~~  
130 ~~to apply for a Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote~~  
131 ~~under this section: Impeachment, murder, rape in any degree,~~  
132 ~~sodomy in any degree, sexual abuse in any degree, incest,~~  
133 ~~sexual torture, enticing a child to enter a vehicle for~~  
134 ~~immoral purposes, soliciting a child by computer, production~~  
135 ~~of obscene matter involving a minor, production of obscene~~  
136 ~~matter, parents or guardians permitting children to engage in~~  
137 ~~obscene matter, possession of obscene matter, possession with~~  
138 ~~intent to distribute child pornography, or treason~~ or  
139 impeachment shall not have his or her right to vote restored.

140 ~~(h) (d)~~ This section shall not affect the right of any



## SB7 INTRODUCED

141 person to apply to the board for a pardon with restoration of  
142 voting rights pursuant to Section 15-22-36.

143 ~~(i)~~ (e) Each state or county correctional facility,  
144 prison, or jail shall post materials to be prepared by the  
145 Secretary of State and the Board of Pardons and Paroles  
146 notifying incarcerated individuals of the ~~requirements and~~  
147 ~~procedures for having one's~~ right to have his or her voting  
148 rights restored."

149 "§17-3-31

150 (a) Any ~~person~~ individual who is disqualified by reason  
151 of conviction of any of the offenses mentioned in Section  
152 17-3-30.1 as a felony involving moral turpitude for the  
153 purposes of Section 177 ~~Article VIII~~ of the Constitution of  
154 Alabama of ~~1901~~ 2022, except treason ~~and or~~ impeachment,  
155 whether the conviction was had in a state, ~~or~~ federal, or  
156 foreign court, and who has been pardoned, may be restored to  
157 citizenship with the right to vote by the State Board of  
158 Pardons and Paroles when specifically expressed in the pardon.  
159 If otherwise qualified, ~~such person~~ the individual shall be  
160 permitted to register or reregister as an elector upon  
161 submission of a copy of the pardon document to the board of  
162 registrars of the county of his or her residence.

163 ~~In addition, any person~~ (b) Any individual who ~~has been~~  
164 ~~granted a Certificate of Eligibility to Register to Vote by~~  
165 ~~the Board of Pardons and Paroles pursuant to Section~~  
166 ~~15-22-36.1~~ was registered to vote at any time prior to losing  
167 his or her right to vote by reason of a conviction in a state,  
168 federal, or foreign court and has met one of the criteria set



## SB7 INTRODUCED

169 forth in Section 15-22-36.1(a), shall be ~~permitted to register~~  
170 ~~or reregister as an elector upon submission of a copy of the~~  
171 ~~certificate to the board of registrars of the county of his or~~  
172 ~~her residence~~ eligible to vote.

173 (c) Any individual who was not registered to vote prior  
174 to losing his or her right to vote by reason of conviction in  
175 a state, federal, or foreign court and has met the eligibility  
176 criteria set forth in Section 15-22-36.1(a) shall be permitted  
177 to register as an elector."

178 "§17-3-50

179 The boards of registrars in the several counties of the  
180 state shall ~~not~~ register any ~~person~~ individual as a qualified  
181 elector ~~within 14 days prior to any election; provided, that~~  
182 ~~the boards shall maintain open offices during business days in~~  
183 ~~such 14-day period and on election day during the hours of~~  
184 ~~voting~~ up to and including the day of an election."

185 "§17-11-3

186 (a) Any qualified elector of this state may apply for  
187 and vote an absentee ballot by mail, by hand delivery, or by  
188 commercial carrier, as determined by rule by the Secretary of  
189 State, as provided in Sections 17-11-5 and 17-11-9, in any  
190 primary, general, special, or municipal election, if he or she  
191 makes application in writing ~~and meets one or more of the~~  
192 ~~following requirements:~~

193 ~~(1) The person expects to be out of the county or the~~  
194 ~~state, or the municipality for municipal elections, on~~  
195 ~~election day.~~

196 ~~(2) The person has any physical illness or infirmity~~





## SB7 INTRODUCED

197 ~~which prevents his or her attendance at the polls, whether he~~  
198 ~~or she is within or without the county on the day of the~~  
199 ~~election.~~

200 ~~(3) The person expects to work a shift which has at~~  
201 ~~least 10 hours which coincide with the hours the polls are~~  
202 ~~open at his or her regular polling place.~~

203 ~~(4) The person is enrolled as a student at an~~  
204 ~~educational institution located outside the county of his or~~  
205 ~~her personal residence, attendance at which prevents his or~~  
206 ~~her attendance at the polls.~~

207 ~~(5) The person is a member of, or spouse or dependent~~  
208 ~~of a member of, the Armed Forces of the United States or is~~  
209 ~~similarly qualified to vote absentee pursuant to the federal~~  
210 ~~Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, 52 U.S.C.~~  
211 ~~§§ 20301-20311.~~

212 ~~(6) The person has been appointed as an election~~  
213 ~~officer or named as a poll watcher at a polling place other~~  
214 ~~than his or her regular polling place.~~

215 ~~(7) The person is a caregiver for a family member to~~  
216 ~~the second degree of kinship by affinity or consanguinity and~~  
217 ~~the family member is confined to his or her home.~~

218 ~~(8) The person is incarcerated in prison or jail and~~  
219 ~~has not been convicted of a felony involving moral turpitude,~~  
220 ~~as provided in Section 17-3-30.1~~on a form prescribed by the  
221 Secretary of State.

222 (b) Applications returned by mail must be received not  
223 less than seven days prior to the election. Applications  
224 returned by hand must be received not less than five days



## SB7 INTRODUCED

225 prior to the election.

226 (c) An applicant for an absentee ballot who is a member  
227 of the Armed Forces of the United States, including the  
228 Alabama National Guard, the United States Naval Reserves, the  
229 United States Air Force Reserves, and the United States Army  
230 Reserve on active duty or active duty for training or an  
231 applicant who is the spouse of any member of the armed forces  
232 or any other applicant qualified to vote absentee pursuant to  
233 the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting  
234 Act, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20301-20311, may make application for an  
235 absentee ballot by filling out the federal postcard  
236 application form, authorized and provided for under the  
237 provisions of The Federal Voting Assistance Act of 1955,  
238 Public Law 296, Chapter 656, H.R. 4048, approved August 9,  
239 1955, 84th Congress 1st Session.

240 ~~(d) Any registered elector who requires emergency~~  
241 ~~treatment of a licensed physician within five days of an~~  
242 ~~election may apply for an emergency absentee ballot for the~~  
243 ~~election and may vote by returning the absentee ballot no~~  
244 ~~later than noon on the day the election is held. The attendant~~  
245 ~~physician shall describe and certify the circumstances as~~  
246 ~~constituting an emergency on a special form designed by the~~  
247 ~~Secretary of State and provided by his or her office to local~~  
248 ~~absentee election managers. The special form shall be attached~~  
249 ~~to the application.~~

250 ~~(e) (1) Any registered elector whose name appears on the~~  
251 ~~poll list of qualified voters may vote by an emergency~~  
252 ~~absentee ballot if any of the following situations arise:~~



## SB7 INTRODUCED

253 ~~a. The elector is required by his or her employer under~~  
254 ~~unforeseen circumstances within five days before an election~~  
255 ~~to be unavailable to vote at the polls on election day.~~

256 ~~b. The elector is a caregiver of a person who requires~~  
257 ~~emergency treatment by a licensed physician within five days~~  
258 ~~before an election.~~

259 ~~c. A family member to the second degree of kinship by~~  
260 ~~affinity or consanguinity of an elector dies within five days~~  
261 ~~before an election.~~

262 ~~(2) Under such circumstances, the elector shall apply~~  
263 ~~for an emergency absentee ballot at the office of the absentee~~  
264 ~~election manager no later than the close of the business day~~  
265 ~~one day prior to the election. The applicant shall complete~~  
266 ~~and file an application form designed by the Secretary of~~  
267 ~~State for emergency absentee voters. The form shall contain an~~  
268 ~~affidavit which the applicant shall sign or swear~~  
269 ~~acknowledging that he or she was not aware of the situation~~  
270 ~~constituting the emergency prior to five days before the~~  
271 ~~election. An applicant who meets the requirements of this~~  
272 ~~subsection may vote by an emergency absentee ballot. After~~  
273 ~~voting the ballot, the voter shall hand the ballot to the~~  
274 ~~absentee election manager.~~

275 ~~(f) If the occurrence of a state of emergency as~~  
276 ~~declared in this or any other state, or by the federal~~  
277 ~~government, renders substantial compliance with this article~~  
278 ~~impossible or unreasonable for a group of qualified voters who~~  
279 ~~respond to the emergency, the Secretary of State, pursuant to~~  
280 ~~Section 41-22-5, may adopt an emergency rule to allow those~~



## SB7 INTRODUCED

281 ~~qualified voters to vote by absentee ballot. Notwithstanding~~  
282 ~~any other laws to the contrary, all expenses and costs~~  
283 ~~incurred by the state or any county in carrying out the~~  
284 ~~responsibilities and duties included in an emergency rule~~  
285 ~~adopted pursuant to this subsection shall be paid by the State~~  
286 ~~of Alabama from any funds made available for election expenses~~  
287 ~~under state and federal law.~~

288       ~~(g)~~ (d) Notwithstanding any other provision of otherwise  
289 applicable law, in the event more than one absentee ballot is  
290 cast in the name of the single voter, whether any multiple  
291 ballot is cast by mail or otherwise, none of the affidavit  
292 envelopes containing the multiple ballots shall be opened, and  
293 none of the multiple ballots shall be counted, except in the  
294 event of an election contest, upon the order of the election  
295 contest tribunal. Upon the conclusion of an election contest  
296 or, in the event no contest is filed, upon the expiration of  
297 time for filing a contest, the multiple ballots shall be  
298 provided to the district attorney, with photocopies provided  
299 to the state Attorney General, for the investigation,  
300 prosecution, or other action as may be appropriate under  
301 applicable law."

302       "§17-11-4

303       (a) The application required in Section 17-11-3 shall  
304 be in a form prescribed and designed by the Secretary of State  
305 and shall be used throughout the state. The application form  
306 shall contain and require all of the following:

307       (1) That the applicant submit sufficient information to  
308 identify the applicant.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

309 (2) The applicant's name, residence address, and such  
310 other information as necessary to verify that the applicant is  
311 a registered voter.

312 (3) A list of all felonies of moral turpitude, as  
313 provided in Section 17-3-30.1, and a requirement that the  
314 applicant declare that he or she is not barred from voting  
315 because of a disqualifying felony conviction or, if the  
316 applicant was convicted of a disqualifying felony, that the  
317 applicant's right to vote has been restored.

318 (4) An explanation of penalties for violations of this  
319 section.

320 (b) ~~(1)~~ Any applicant may receive assistance in filling  
321 out the application as he or she desires, but each application  
322 shall be manually signed by the applicant, under penalty of  
323 perjury, and if he or she signs by mark, the application shall  
324 also include the name of the witness and the witness's  
325 signature.

326 ~~(2) It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly~~  
327 ~~distribute an absentee ballot application to a voter that is~~  
328 ~~prefilled with the voter's name or any other information~~  
329 ~~required on the application form.~~

330 (c) (1) Completed applications may be submitted to the  
331 absentee election manager in any of the following ways, as  
332 further provided by rule of the Secretary of State:

- 333 a. The applicant delivering the application in person.  
334 b. The applicant mailing the application by U.S. mail.  
335 c. The applicant sending the application by commercial  
336 carrier.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

337 d. The applicant's designee delivering the application  
338 in person.

339 e. The applicant's designee mailing the application by  
340 U.S. mail or commercial carrier.

341 (2) The Secretary of State shall provide applications  
342 for absentee voting to military and overseas voters in  
343 accordance with Section 17-4-35(14).~~Except in situations~~  
344 ~~governed by Section 17-11-3(f), it shall be unlawful for an~~  
345 ~~individual to submit a completed absentee ballot application~~  
346 ~~to the absentee election manager other than his or her own~~  
347 ~~application, except that an application for a voter who~~  
348 ~~requires emergency treatment by a licensed physician within~~  
349 ~~five days before an election pursuant to Section 17-11-3 may~~  
350 ~~be submitted to the absentee election manager by an individual~~  
351 ~~designated by the applicant.~~

352 ~~(d) (1) Except in situations governed by Section~~  
353 ~~17-11-3(f), it shall be unlawful for a third party to~~  
354 ~~knowingly receive a payment or gift for distributing,~~  
355 ~~ordering, requesting, collecting, completing, prefilling,~~  
356 ~~obtaining, or delivering a voter's absentee ballot~~  
357 ~~application. Any person who violates this subdivision shall be~~  
358 ~~guilty of a Class C felony.~~

359 ~~(2) Except in situations governed by Section~~  
360 ~~17-11-3(f), it shall be unlawful for a person to knowingly pay~~  
361 ~~or provide a gift to a third party to distribute, order,~~  
362 ~~request, collect, prefill, complete, obtain, or deliver a~~  
363 ~~voter's absentee ballot application. Any person who violates~~  
364 ~~this subdivision shall be guilty of a Class B felony.~~



## SB7 INTRODUCED

365 ~~(e) Any voter who requires assistance to vote by reason~~  
366 ~~of blindness, disability, or inability to read or write may be~~  
367 ~~given assistance by an individual of the voter's choice, other~~  
368 ~~than the voter's employer or agent of that employer or officer~~  
369 ~~or agent of the voter's union.~~

370 ~~(f) Voters voting by absentee ballot through the~~  
371 ~~Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act are not~~  
372 ~~subject to this section. The Secretary of State shall provide~~  
373 ~~applications for absentee voting to military and overseas~~  
374 ~~voters in accordance with Section 17-4-35."~~

375 "§17-11-5

376 (a) Upon receipt of an application for an absentee  
377 ballot as provided in Section 17-11-3, if the applicant's name  
378 appears on the list of qualified voters produced from the  
379 state voter registration list in the election to be held, ~~or~~  
380 ~~if the applicant qualifies for a provisional absentee ballot,~~  
381 the absentee election manager shall furnish the absentee  
382 ballot to the applicant by: ~~(1) Forwarding~~ (i) forwarding it by  
383 United States mail to the applicant's or voter's residence  
384 address or, upon written request of the voter, to the address  
385 where the voter regularly receives mail; or ~~(2)~~ (ii) by handing  
386 the absentee ballot to the applicant in person or, ~~in the case~~  
387 ~~of emergency voting when the applicant requires medical~~  
388 ~~treatment,~~ his or her designee in person. If the absentee  
389 election manager has reasonable cause to believe that the  
390 applicant has given a fraudulent address on the application  
391 for the absentee ballot, the absentee election manager shall  
392 turn over the ballot application to the district attorney for



## SB7 INTRODUCED

393 any action which may be necessary under this article. ~~The~~  
394 ~~absentee election manager may require additional proof of an~~  
395 ~~applicant's eligibility to vote absentee when there is~~  
396 ~~evidence of continuous absentee voting.~~ The absentee election  
397 manager shall mail any absentee ballot requested to be mailed  
398 as provided in Section 17-11-3 no later than the next business  
399 day after an application has been received unless the absentee  
400 ballots have not been delivered to the absentee election  
401 manager. If the absentee ballots have not been so delivered,  
402 the absentee election manager shall hold all requests until  
403 the ballots are delivered and shall then respond by placing  
404 ballots in the mail no later than the next business day.

405 (b) The official list of qualified voters shall be  
406 furnished to the absentee election manager by the judge of  
407 probate using a printout from the state voter registration  
408 list of registered voters for that county containing voter  
409 registration information useful in the identification of  
410 absentee voters. The information provided in this report shall  
411 be established by rules adopted by the Secretary of State with  
412 the advice of the Alabama Circuit Court Clerks Association or  
413 its members and shall indicate whether the individual is  
414 obligated to produce identification in accordance with  
415 Sections 17-9-30 and 17-10-1. The Secretary of State may  
416 further provide by administrative rule for electronic access  
417 to this list for optional use by the absentee election  
418 manager. This list shall be made available beginning at least  
419 55 days before the election. In municipal elections, the  
420 official list of qualified voters shall be furnished to the





## SB7 INTRODUCED

421 absentee election manager at least 35 days before the  
422 election. Any supplemental list of qualified electors shall  
423 also be provided to the absentee election manager as soon as  
424 the list becomes available. The absentee election manager  
425 shall underscore on the list the name of each voter who has  
426 applied for an absentee ballot and shall write immediately  
427 beside his or her name the word "absentee." The Secretary of  
428 State by rule may provide for electronic access to the  
429 absentee election manager's county list of registered voters  
430 in lieu of the printed list and for the method of identifying  
431 applicants for absentee ballots in conjunction with the state  
432 voter registration list.

433 (c) (1) The list of electors voting by absentee ballot  
434 shall remain confidential until the day following the  
435 election. The absentee election manager in all elections shall  
436 deliver to the board of registrars the day following the  
437 election, a copy of the list of all absentee voters, at which  
438 point the list is deemed a public record. The list shall be  
439 maintained in the office of the circuit clerk for 60 days  
440 after the election, at which time it shall be delivered to the  
441 judge of probate. Before the polls open at any election on  
442 election day, the absentee election manager shall effectuate  
443 the delivery to the election officers of each voting place a  
444 list showing the name and address of every ~~person~~individual  
445 whose name appears on the official list of qualified electors  
446 for the voting place who applied for an absentee ballot in the  
447 election. The name of the ~~person~~individual who applied for an  
448 absentee ballot shall be identified as an absentee voter on



## SB7 INTRODUCED

449 the list of qualified electors kept at the voting place, and  
450 the ~~person~~individual shall not vote again, except that in  
451 county, state, and federal elections the person may vote a  
452 provisional ballot. Applications for absentee ballots are  
453 required for elections that are more than 42 days apart,  
454 except as to individuals voting pursuant to the federal  
455 Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, ~~42 U.S.C.~~  
456 ~~1973ff~~52 U.S.C. §§ 20301-20311.

457 (2) The absentee election manager shall redact any  
458 information required to be redacted pursuant to Section  
459 17-4-33 from any copy of an absentee voter list. This  
460 subdivision shall not affect poll lists used at local  
461 precincts.

462 (d) For individuals voting pursuant to the federal  
463 Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, ~~42 U.S.C.~~  
464 ~~1973ff~~52 U.S.C. §§ 20301-20311, the Secretary of State, by  
465 rule, shall prescribe use of standardized military and  
466 overseas voter registration applications and applications for  
467 absentee ballots adopted by the United States government. The  
468 Secretary of State shall also prescribe by rule provisions  
469 within the standard state application form for absentee voting  
470 which permit the voter to identify himself or herself as a  
471 military or overseas voter. Unless otherwise indicated by the  
472 military or overseas voter, an application for an absentee  
473 ballot by such a voter shall remain valid for any election for  
474 a federal, state, or county office or for any proposed  
475 constitutional amendment or a state or county referendum held  
476 through the end of the calendar year in which the application



## SB7 INTRODUCED

477 is filed, provided that if an election cycle begins one year  
478 and continues into the subsequent year, the application shall  
479 be valid for the whole election cycle. The absentee election  
480 manager shall provide an absentee ballot to the military and  
481 overseas voters for each such subsequent election. The  
482 absentee election manager, within seven days after each  
483 regularly scheduled general election for federal office, shall  
484 report the number of military and overseas ballots mailed out  
485 and the number of ballots received to the Secretary of State,  
486 who shall report this information to the Federal Election  
487 Assistance Commission within 90 days of each regularly  
488 scheduled general election for federal office."

489 "§17-11-9

490 (a) (1) Each prospective absentee voter who meets the  
491 requirements of this article shall be furnished with the  
492 absentee ballot ~~herein provided for~~, together with ~~two~~three  
493 envelopes for returning his or her marked ballot, and  
494 instructions for completing and returning the absentee ballot  
495 as well as instructions for correcting mistakes in completing  
496 ballots or obtaining a replacement ballot.

497 ~~One~~ (2) The first envelope shall be a ~~plain~~secrecy  
498 envelope in which the ballot shall be sealed by the voter  
499 after he or she has marked it.

500 (3) The second envelope shall be an affidavit envelope.  
501 The affidavit envelope shall have the voter's affidavit  
502 printed on the back ~~and shall be large enough to seal the~~  
503 ~~plain ballot envelope inside.~~

504 (4) The ~~second~~third envelope shall ~~also~~ be a return



## SB7 INTRODUCED

505 mail envelope. The return mail envelope shall be addressed on  
506 the front to the absentee election manager and shall be  
507 endorsed on the left-hand upper corner ~~thereof~~ as follows:

508 "Absent Voter's Ballot. State, County, Municipal,  
509 General, Primary, or Special Election (as the case may be) to  
510 be held on the \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_, 2\_\_ From \_\_\_\_\_ (name of  
511 voter), precinct or districts \_\_\_\_\_, County of \_\_\_\_\_,  
512 Alabama."

513 (b) (1) After marking the ballot and subscribing the  
514 oath ~~herein~~ required, the voter shall: (i) seal his or her  
515 ballot in the ~~plain~~ secrecy envelope; (ii) place ~~that~~  
516 ~~plain~~ the secrecy envelope inside the affidavit envelope; (iii)  
517 complete the affidavit, and have a notary public (or  
518 other officer authorized to acknowledge oaths), or two  
519 ~~witnesses~~ individuals witness his or her signature to the  
520 affidavit; ~~and forward it~~ (iv) place the affidavit envelope  
521 inside the return mail envelope; and (v) hand deliver the  
522 return mail envelope to the absentee election manager or send  
523 the return mail envelope by United States mail or by  
524 commercial carrier to the absentee election manager ~~or hand it~~  
525 ~~to him or her in person.~~

526 (2) A voter who is disabled, blind, or unable to read  
527 or write, or his or her designee, may hand deliver the return  
528 mail envelope to the absentee election manager or send the  
529 return mail envelope by United States mail or by commercial  
530 carrier. For purposes of this subdivision, a disabled voter  
531 means an individual who is temporarily or permanently  
532 physically incapacitated and unable to vote by absentee ballot



## SB7 INTRODUCED

533 without assistance.

534 (c) (1) Notwithstanding ~~the other provisions of~~ this  
535 section, the absentee election manager shall determine whether  
536 an applicant for an absentee ballot is obligated to produce  
537 identification in accordance with Sections 17-9-30 and 17-10-1  
538 or reidentify in accordance with Chapter 4. For absentee  
539 applicants required to produce identification, ~~a third~~ an  
540 additional envelope of different color and sufficient size to  
541 enclose the ~~first and second~~ secrecy and affidavit envelopes  
542 shall be provided to the applicant along with instructions for  
543 including a proper form of identification in accordance with  
544 Sections 17-9-30 and 17-10-1.

545 (2) For absentee applicants required to reidentify  
546 because they do not appear in the voting place for which they  
547 seek to vote but do appear in another voting place within the  
548 state voter registration list, the absentee election manager  
549 shall provide to the voter ~~a third~~ an additional envelope of  
550 different color and sufficient size to enclose the ~~first and~~  
551 ~~second~~ secrecy and affidavit envelopes along with a voter  
552 reidentification form, a provisional voter affirmation, and  
553 instructions in accordance with Section 17-10-2. ~~Such~~ The  
554 ballot shall be treated as a provisional ballot and the term  
555 "Provisional" shall be marked on the ~~second or~~ affidavit  
556 envelope prior to transmitting the ballot to the voter.

557 (3) Applicants for an absentee ballot who do not appear  
558 on the state voter registration list shall not be entitled to  
559 an absentee ballot."

560 "§17-11-10



## SB7 INTRODUCED

561 (a) (1) Upon receipt of the absentee ballot, the  
562 absentee election manager shall record ~~it~~the receipt on the  
563 absentee list as provided in Section 17-11-5, shall examine  
564 the affidavit envelope and determine if it contains a defect  
565 that would prohibit a poll worker or other election official  
566 from removing or counting the ballot under subdivision (b) (2),  
567 and shall safely keep the ballot without breaking the seal of  
568 the affidavit envelope.

569 (2) For any absentee ballot received three or more  
570 business days preceding an election, the absentee election  
571 manager, within two business days of receipt of the absentee  
572 ballot, shall notify the elector of each defect with his or  
573 her absentee ballot, provide instructions on how to cure the  
574 defect, and notify the elector that he or she has until the  
575 last business day before the election to cure the defect.

576 (3) The absentee election manager shall allow an  
577 elector to cure any of the following defects:

578 a. The elector did not sign the affidavit.

579 b. The address provided on the affidavit does not match  
580 the address on the absentee ballot application.

581 c. The order of envelopes is incorrect.

582 d. The affidavit is not properly witnessed or  
583 notarized.

584 (b) (1) The absentee election manager, beginning at 7:00  
585 a.m. on the day of the election, shall deliver the sealed  
586 affidavit envelopes containing absentee ballots to the  
587 election officials provided for in Section 17-11-11. The  
588 election officials shall then call the name of each voter



## SB7 INTRODUCED

589 casting an absentee ballot with poll watchers present as may  
590 be provided under the laws of Alabama and shall examine each  
591 affidavit envelope to determine if the signature of the voter  
592 has been appropriately witnessed. If the witnessing of the  
593 signature and the information in the affidavit establish that  
594 the voter is entitled to vote by absentee ballot, then the  
595 election officials shall certify the findings, open each  
596 affidavit envelope, and deposit the plain envelope containing  
597 the absentee ballot into a sealed ballot box.

598 (2) No poll worker or other election official shall  
599 open an affidavit envelope if the envelope indicates the  
600 ballot is an unverified provisional ballot or the affidavit is  
601 unsigned by the voter or unmarked, and no ballot envelope or  
602 ballot may be removed or counted. No poll worker or other  
603 election official shall open an affidavit envelope if the  
604 voter's affidavit signature or mark is not witnessed by the  
605 signatures of two witnesses or a notary public, or other  
606 officer, including a military commissioned officer, authorized  
607 to acknowledge oaths, and no ballot envelope or ballot may be  
608 removed or counted. The provision for witnessing of the  
609 voter's affidavit signature or mark in Section 17-11-7 goes to  
610 the integrity and sanctity of the ballot and election. No  
611 court or other election tribunal shall allow the counting of  
612 an absentee ballot with respect to which the voter's affidavit  
613 signature or mark is not witnessed by the signatures of two  
614 witnesses 18 years of age or older or a notary public, or  
615 other officer, including a military commissioned officer,  
616 authorized to acknowledge oaths, prior to being delivered or



## SB7 INTRODUCED

617 mailed to the absentee election manager.

618 (3) Upon closing of the polls, the absentee ballots  
619 shall be counted and otherwise handled in all respects as if  
620 the absentee voter were present and voting in person. Precinct  
621 ballot counters may be used to count absentee ballots.  
622 Absentee election officials are to be appointed and trained in  
623 the same manner as prescribed for regular election officials.  
624 The number of absentee election officials shall be determined  
625 by the number of precinct counters provided. The county  
626 commission may provide more than one precinct ballot counter  
627 based upon the recommendation of the absentee election  
628 manager. Beginning not earlier than 7:00 a.m. on election day,  
629 the absentee election officials shall perform the duties  
630 prescribed in Section 17-11-11.

631 (4) ~~As regards~~ Regarding municipalities with  
632 populations of less than 10,000, in the case of municipal  
633 elections held at a time different from a primary or general  
634 election, the return mail envelopes containing the ballots  
635 shall be delivered to the election official of the precinct of  
636 the respective voters, unless the city or town having a  
637 population of less than 10,000 inhabitants has established, by  
638 permanent ordinance adopted six months prior to the municipal  
639 election, a procedure for the appointment of absentee election  
640 officials pursuant to subsection (c) of Section 11-46-27.

641 (c) (1) Absentee ballots cast in a second primary  
642 election for federal, state, or county office by individuals  
643 voting pursuant to the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens  
644 Absentee Voting Act, 52 U.S.C. §§ 20301-20311, and received





## SB7 INTRODUCED

645 after noon on the day of the second primary election, shall be  
646 opened and counted at the same time as the verified  
647 provisional ballots. At noon seven days after the second  
648 primary election, the absentee election manager shall deliver  
649 the sealed affidavit envelopes containing absentee ballots to  
650 the officials provided for in subsection (f) of Section  
651 17-10-2. The officials shall call the name of each voter  
652 casting an absentee ballot in the presence of watchers  
653 designated by any interested candidates and shall examine each  
654 affidavit envelope to determine if the signature of the voter  
655 has been appropriately witnessed. If the witnessing of the  
656 signature and the information in the affidavit establish that  
657 the voter is entitled to vote by absentee ballot, then the  
658 election officials shall certify the findings, open each  
659 affidavit envelope, and deposit the plain envelope containing  
660 the absentee ballot into a sealed ballot box.

661 (2) No election official shall open an affidavit  
662 envelope if the affidavit printed thereon is unsigned by the  
663 voter or unmarked, and no ballot envelope or ballot therein  
664 may be removed or counted. No election official shall open an  
665 affidavit envelope if the voter's affidavit signature or mark  
666 is not witnessed by the signatures of two witnesses or a  
667 notary public, or other officer, including a military  
668 commissioned officer, authorized to acknowledge oaths, and no  
669 ballot envelope or ballot therein may be removed or counted.  
670 The provision for witnessing of the voter's affidavit  
671 signature or mark in Section 17-11-7 goes to the integrity and  
672 sanctity of the ballot and election. No court or other



## SB7 INTRODUCED

673 election tribunal shall allow the counting of an absentee  
674 ballot with respect to which the voter's affidavit signature  
675 or mark is not witnessed by the signatures of two witnesses 18  
676 years of age or older or a notary public, or other officer,  
677 including a military commissioned officer, authorized to  
678 acknowledge oaths, prior to being delivered or mailed to the  
679 absentee election manager.

680 (3) The absentee ballots described in this subsection  
681 shall be opened, counted, and tabulated. The results of the  
682 absentee ballots counted and tabulated on election day shall  
683 be amended to include the results of the absentee ballots  
684 described in this subsection.

685 (4) In all other respects, unless otherwise  
686 specifically provided by law, the absentee ballots described  
687 in this subsection shall be treated as other absentee ballots.

688 (d) The Secretary of State shall adopt rules to  
689 implement subsection (a)."

690 Section 2. (a) This section and Sections 3 through 7  
691 shall be known and may be cited as the Alabama Voting Rights  
692 Act.

693 (b) For purposes of Sections 3 through 7, the following  
694 words have the following meanings:

695 (1) ALTERNATIVE METHOD OF ELECTION. A method of  
696 electing candidates to the legislative body of a municipality  
697 other than an at-large method of election or a district-based  
698 method of election, and includes, but is not limited to,  
699 proportional ranked-choice voting and cumulative voting.

700 (2) AT-LARGE METHOD OF ELECTION. A method of electing



## SB7 INTRODUCED

701 candidates to the legislative body of a municipality in which  
702 candidates are voted upon by all electors of the municipality.  
703 This does not include any alternative method of election.

704 (3) COMMISSION. The Alabama Voting Rights Act  
705 Commission established under Section 4.

706 (4) DISTRICT-BASED METHOD OF ELECTION. A method of  
707 electing candidates to the legislative body of a municipality  
708 in which, for municipalities divided into districts, a  
709 candidate for a district is required to reside in the district  
710 and candidates representing or seeking to represent the  
711 district are voted upon by the electors residing in the  
712 district.

713 (5) GOVERNMENT ENFORCEMENT ACTION. Any denial of  
714 administrative or judicial preclearance by the state or  
715 federal government, pending litigation filed by a state or  
716 federal entity, final judgment or adjudication, consent decree  
717 or other similar formal action.

718 (6) LEGISLATIVE BODY. The city council, board of  
719 education, county commission, district committee, association  
720 committee, or other similar body of a municipality.

721 (7) LOCAL GOVERNMENT. Any political subdivision within  
722 the State of Alabama that administers elections or in which  
723 elections are conducted and includes a county, municipality,  
724 or school district.

725 (8) ORGANIZATION. Any entity or group of persons with a  
726 commonly aligned purpose other than an individual.

727 (9) PROTECTED CLASS. A class of citizens who are  
728 members of a race, color, or language minority group as



## SB7 INTRODUCED

729 referenced in the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

730 (10) RACIALLY POLARIZED VOTING. Voting in which the  
731 candidate or electoral choice preferred by members of a  
732 protected class diverges from the candidate or electoral  
733 choice preferred by voters who are not members of a protected  
734 class.

735 (11) VOTING. Any action necessary to cast a ballot and  
736 make the ballot effective in any general or primary election,  
737 including, but not limited to, admission as an elector,  
738 application for an absentee ballot, and any other action  
739 required by law as a prerequisite to casting a ballot and  
740 having such ballot counted, canvassed, or certified properly  
741 and included in the appropriate totals of votes cast with  
742 respect to candidates for election or nomination and to  
743 amendment questions.

744 (12) VOTING RIGHTS ACT. The Voting Rights Act of 1965,  
745 52 U.S.C. §10101 et seq., as amended.

746 Section 3. (a) No local government, state agency, or  
747 state official may implement a regulation, standard, practice,  
748 procedure, or policy regarding the administration of elections  
749 or take or fail to take any action that results or is intended  
750 to result in a disparity among members of a protected class in  
751 electoral participation, access to voting participation,  
752 access to voting opportunities, or ability to participate in  
753 the political process, or an impairment of the opportunity or  
754 ability of members of a protected class within a local  
755 government to participate in the political process and elect  
756 candidates of their choice or otherwise influence the outcome



## SB7 INTRODUCED

757 of elections.

758 (b) There is a rebuttable presumption that a local  
759 government violates subdivision (a) if it does any of the  
760 following:

761 (1) Closes, moves, consolidates, or fails to provide  
762 polling places or reassigns voters to precincts or precincts  
763 to polling places in a manner that impairs the right to vote  
764 of members of a protected class or results in a disparity in  
765 geographic access between members of a protected class and  
766 other members of the electorate.

767 (2) Changes dates or hours of an election in a manner  
768 that impairs the right to vote of members of a protected  
769 class, including, but not limited to, making the change  
770 without proper notice as required by law.

771 (3) Fails to provide voting or election materials in  
772 languages other than English as required by law.

773 (4) Calls a special election to fill a vacancy on a  
774 date that would reasonably result in a disparity in levels of  
775 participation between protected class voters and other voters,  
776 and there exists an alternate date in a reasonable timeframe  
777 in which the disparity would be materially less significant.

778 (c) (1) No local government may employ a method of  
779 election for any office that has the effect of, or is  
780 motivated in part by, the intent to impair the opportunity or  
781 ability of members of a protected class to participate in the  
782 political process and elect candidates of their choice or  
783 otherwise influence the outcome of elections as a result of  
784 diluting the vote of members of a protected class.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

785 (2) A local government violates this subsection if it  
786 employs a method of election that results in racially  
787 polarized voting which impairs the equal opportunity or  
788 ability of members of a protected class to nominate or elect  
789 candidates of their choice.

790 (d) Any individual aggrieved by a violation of this  
791 section, any organization whose membership includes  
792 individuals aggrieved by a violation of this section, any  
793 organization whose mission would be frustrated by a violation  
794 of this section, any entity that would expend resources in  
795 order to fulfill its mission as a result of a violation of  
796 this section, the commission, or the Attorney General may file  
797 an action alleging a violation of this section to enforce  
798 compliance with this section in a court of competent  
799 jurisdiction. Such a claim may be filed pursuant to the  
800 Alabama Rules of Civil Procedure. Members of two or more  
801 protected classes that are politically cohesive in a local  
802 government may jointly file an action.

803 (e) (1) Prior to filing suit under subsection (d), the  
804 aggrieved party shall send a notice letter to the local  
805 government alleged to be in violation to allow the local  
806 government the opportunity to correct the violation.

807 (2) The local government shall have seven calendar days  
808 in which to respond detailing what actions it will take to  
809 address the violations or to deny the allegations in whole or  
810 in part.

811 (3) If the perceived violation occurs within 14 days of  
812 the voter registration deadline for the relevant election, the



## SB7 INTRODUCED

813 aggrieved party is granted leave from the notice requirement.

814 Section 4. (a) There is established the Alabama Voting  
815 Rights Act Commission.

816 (b) The commission shall be responsible for  
817 administering the Alabama Voting Rights Act.

818 (c) The commission shall consist of five commissioners,  
819 each of whom shall serve staggered five year terms.

820 Commissioners shall be compensated for their time spent on  
821 commission business at an hourly rate based on the rate  
822 equivalent to an assistant attorney general.

823 (1) A nominating committee shall be formed to identify  
824 qualified candidates to serve as members of the commission.

825 The nominating committee shall be comprised of nominating  
826 organizations. Organizations may apply with the Secretary of  
827 State to be certified as a nominating organization for five  
828 year terms, at which point organizations may be recertified.

829 The Secretary of State must certify any organization that  
830 applies to be a nominating organization if the organization:

831 a. Demonstrates commitment to the purpose of the  
832 commission by securing the voting rights of members of a  
833 protected class as defined by the commission, including, but  
834 not limited to, reference to members of a protected class in  
835 its mission statement, involvement in numerous voting rights  
836 cases brought within the state on behalf of members of  
837 protected classes, or involvement in advocacy in support of  
838 members of protected classes or the commission;

839 b. Has registered as a nonprofit corporation with the  
840 Secretary of State; and



## SB7 INTRODUCED

841 c. Demonstrates continuous operation as a nonprofit  
842 organization under 26 U.S.C. § 501(c)(3) or as a nonprofit  
843 corporation registered with the Secretary of State for at  
844 least 10 years.

845 (2) If the Secretary of State fails to timely certify  
846 an organization that satisfies these qualifications following  
847 the organization's application to be certified as a nominating  
848 organization, the organization may file an action against the  
849 Secretary of State for a declaratory judgment certifying the  
850 organization as a nominating organization.

851 (3) A nominating organization may be removed for cause  
852 by a majority vote of all of the nominating organizations.

853 (4) If there are fewer than 16 nominating organizations  
854 certified by the Secretary of State, the nominating committee  
855 shall consist of all of the nominating organizations. If there  
856 are 16 or more nominating organizations certified by the  
857 Secretary of State, the nominating committee shall consist of  
858 16 nominating organizations to be randomly selected from all  
859 nominating organizations on an annual basis.

860 (5) The nominating committee shall select its own chair  
861 to preside over meetings and voting.

862 (6) Commissioners shall be selected as follows:

863 a. The nominating committee shall solicit applications  
864 to serve as a commissioner from across the state. A  
865 commissioner must meet all of the following criteria:

866 1. Be an Alabama resident.

867 2. Be a member of The Alabama State Bar with at least  
868 five years of legal experience.





## SB7 INTRODUCED

869           3. Has demonstrated experience representing or  
870 advocating on behalf of members of protected classes.

871           4. Has not served in elected office within the previous  
872 five years.

873           5. Is not currently serving in any government office or  
874 holding any political party office.

875           b. The nominating committee shall maintain a qualified  
876 candidate pool consisting of 30 qualified candidates to serve  
877 on the commission. Individuals shall only be added to the  
878 qualified candidate pool upon a three-fifths vote of the  
879 nominating committee. The size of the qualified candidate pool  
880 may be increased or decreased from 30 qualified individuals by  
881 a three-fifths vote of the nominating committee.

882           c. All commissioners shall be randomly selected from  
883 the qualified candidate pool. Upon the initial formation of  
884 the commission, five commissioners shall be randomly selected  
885 from the qualified candidate pool and randomly assigned to  
886 term lengths of five years, four years, three years, two  
887 years, and one year. At least 60 days before the conclusion of  
888 each commissioner's term, a new commissioner shall be randomly  
889 selected from the qualified candidate pool to serve a  
890 five-year term upon the conclusion of the current  
891 commissioner's term. Within 30 days after a vacancy occurs on  
892 the commission, a new commissioner shall be randomly selected  
893 from the qualified candidate pool to complete the vacant term.

894           (d) In any action or investigation to enforce the  
895 Alabama Voting Rights Act, the commission may subpoena  
896 witnesses, administer oaths, examine individuals under oath,



## SB7 INTRODUCED

897 determine material facts, and compel production of records,  
898 books, papers, contracts, and other documents in accordance  
899 with the ordinary rules of civil procedure.

900 (e) The commission may hire staff and make expenditures  
901 as necessary to carry out its responsibilities.

902 (f) The commission may adopt rules to administer  
903 Sections 2 through 7.

904 Section 5. (a) The Secretary of State shall establish  
905 in the Office of the Secretary of the State a statewide  
906 database of information necessary to assist the state and any  
907 municipality in: (i) evaluating whether and to what extent  
908 current laws and practices related to election administration  
909 are consistent with the Alabama Voting Rights Act; (ii)  
910 implementing best practices in election administration to  
911 further the purposes of Sections 2 through 7; and (3)  
912 investigating any potential infringement upon the right to  
913 vote.

914 (b) Not later than January 1, 2026, the Secretary of  
915 the State shall designate an employee of the Office of the  
916 Secretary of the State to serve as manager of the statewide  
917 database. The designated employee shall possess an advanced  
918 degree from an accredited college or university, or equivalent  
919 experience, and have expertise in demography, statistical  
920 analysis, and electoral systems. The designated employee shall  
921 be responsible for the operation of the statewide database and  
922 shall manage staff as is necessary to implement and maintain  
923 the statewide database.

924 (c) The statewide database shall maintain in electronic



## SB7 INTRODUCED

925 format, for a period covering at least the 12 previous years,  
926 all of the following data and records:

927 (1) Estimates of total population, voting age  
928 population, and citizen voting age population by race, color,  
929 and language minority group, broken down annually to the  
930 voting district level for each municipality, based on  
931 information from the United States Census Bureau, including  
932 from the American Community Survey or information of  
933 comparable quality collected by a similar governmental agency,  
934 and accounting for population adjustments, as applicable.

935 (2) Election results at the district level for each  
936 statewide election and each election in each municipality.

937 (3) Regularly updated registry lists, geocoded  
938 locations for each elector, and elector history files for each  
939 election in each municipality.

940 (4) Contemporaneous maps and descriptions of boundaries  
941 and other similar items which shall be provided as shapefiles  
942 or in a comparable electronic format if an electronic format  
943 is available.

944 (5) Geocoded locations of polling places and absentee  
945 ballot drop boxes for each election in each municipality and a  
946 list or description of the voting districts or geographic  
947 areas served by each such location.

948 (6) Any other information the Secretary of the State  
949 deems advisable to maintain the database in furtherance of the  
950 purposes of Sections 2 through 7.

951 (d) Except for any data, information, or estimates that  
952 identify individual electors, the data, information, or



## SB7 INTRODUCED

953 estimates maintained in the statewide database shall be  
954 published on the website of the Office of the Secretary of the  
955 State and made publicly available in electronic format at no  
956 cost.

957 (e) Any estimates prepared pursuant to this section,  
958 including estimates of eligible electors, shall be prepared  
959 using the most advanced, peer-reviewed, and validated  
960 methodologies available to the state.

961 (f) Upon the certification of election results and the  
962 completion of the elector history file after each election,  
963 the officials responsible for administering elections in each  
964 municipality shall transmit to the Secretary of the State, in  
965 electronic format, copies of all of the following:

966 (1) Election results at the voting district level.

967 (2) Updated registry lists.

968 (3) Elector history files.

969 (4) Maps, descriptions of boundaries, and similar  
970 items.

971 (5) Lists of polling place and absentee ballot drop box  
972 locations and lists or descriptions of the voting districts or  
973 geographic areas served by the locations.

974 (g) At least annually or upon the request by the  
975 Secretary of State, the Alabama Criminal Justice Information  
976 Center, or any other state entity identified by the Secretary  
977 of State as possessing data, statistics, or other information  
978 that the Office of the Secretary of the State requires to  
979 carry out its duties and responsibilities under Title 17, Code  
980 of Alabama 1975, shall provide to the Secretary of State such



## SB7 INTRODUCED

981 data, statistics, or information.

982 (h) The Office of the Secretary of the State may  
983 provide nonpartisan technical assistance to municipalities,  
984 researchers, and members of the public seeking to use the  
985 resources of the statewide database.

986 (i) In each action filed pursuant to Section 3 of this  
987 act, there shall be a rebuttable presumption that the data,  
988 estimates, or other information maintained in the statewide  
989 database is valid.

990 Section 6. (a) The enactment or implementation of a  
991 covered policy by a covered jurisdiction shall be subject to  
992 preclearance by the commission or the Fifteenth Judicial  
993 Circuit.

994 (b) A covered policy, as determined by the commission,  
995 includes any new or modified qualification for admission as an  
996 elector, prerequisite to voting, or ordinance, regulation,  
997 standard, practice, procedure, or policy concerning any of the  
998 following:

- 999 (1) Districting or redistricting.
- 1000 (2) Method of election.
- 1001 (3) Form of government.
- 1002 (4) Annexation, incorporation, dissolution,  
1003 consolidation, or division of a municipality.
- 1004 (5) An elector's voter registration status.
- 1005 (6) Hours of operation for any polling location.
- 1006 (7) Assignment of voting districts to polling location  
1007 or absentee ballot drop box locations.
- 1008 (8) Assistance offered to members of a protected class.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1009           (9) Any additional subject matter the commission may  
1010 identify for inclusion in this subsection, pursuant to a rule  
1011 adopted by the Secretary of State in accordance with the  
1012 Alabama Administrative Procedure Act, if the Secretary of  
1013 State determines that any qualification for admission as an  
1014 elector, prerequisite to voting or ordinance, regulation,  
1015 standard, practice, procedure, or policy concerning the  
1016 subject matter may have the effect of diminishing the right to  
1017 vote of any member of a protected class or have the effect of  
1018 violating the Alabama Voting Rights Act. A decision by the  
1019 commission to identify or to not identify any additional  
1020 subject matter for inclusion in this section shall be final  
1021 and shall not be subject to review in any court or forum,  
1022 except as provided in the Constitution of Alabama of 2022.

1023           (c) A covered jurisdiction includes a local government  
1024 that meets any of the following criteria:

1025           (1) Within the 25 preceding years, has been subject to  
1026 any court order, court-approved consent decree, government  
1027 enforcement action, or settlement in which the local  
1028 government conceded liability for violating the Alabama Voting  
1029 Rights Act, the Voting Rights Act of 1965, any state or  
1030 federal civil rights law, the Fourteenth or Fifteenth  
1031 Amendment to the United States Constitution concerning a  
1032 violation of the right to vote, or a pattern, practice, or  
1033 policy of discrimination against any member of a protected  
1034 class.

1035           (2) Within the three preceding years, has failed to  
1036 comply with obligations to provide data or information to the



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1037 statewide database pursuant to Section 5.

1038 (3) Within the 25 preceding years, was found to have  
1039 enacted or implemented a covered policy without obtaining  
1040 preclearance for the covered policy pursuant to this section.

1041 (4) Within the preceding 10 years has at least 1,000  
1042 eligible electors of any protected class, or a population of  
1043 members of a protected class that is at least 10 percent of  
1044 the eligible elector population of the local government and  
1045 either: (i) the percentage of electors of any protected class  
1046 in a local government that participated in any general  
1047 election for any local government office is at least 10  
1048 percentage points lower than the percentage of all electors in  
1049 the local government that participated in the election; (ii)  
1050 the percentage of eligible electors of the protected class who  
1051 were registered to vote was at least 10 percentage points  
1052 lower than the percentage of all eligible electors in the  
1053 local government who were registered to vote; (iii) the  
1054 dissimilarity index of the protected class based upon the  
1055 United States Census data, calculated using census tracts, is  
1056 in excess of 50 with respect to the race, color, or language  
1057 minority group that comprises a plurality within the local  
1058 government; (iv) the poverty rate among members of the  
1059 protected class exceeds the poverty rate among the population  
1060 of the local government as a whole by at least 10 percentage  
1061 points; (v) the arrest rate among members of the protected  
1062 class exceeds the arrest rate of the population of the local  
1063 government by at least 10 percentage points; or (vi) the  
1064 graduation rate of the protected class is lower than the



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1065 graduation rate of the school district student population by  
1066 at least 10 percentage points.

1067 (d) (1) At least annually, the commission shall  
1068 determine which governmental entities are covered  
1069 jurisdictions pursuant to subsection (c) and provide a list of  
1070 the local governments to the Secretary of the State who shall  
1071 publish the list on the Secretary of State's website.

1072 (2) A determination of the commission as to coverage  
1073 under subdivision (1) shall be effective upon the publication  
1074 and may be appealed in accordance with Chapter 22 of Title 41,  
1075 Code of Alabama 1975.

1076 (e) (1) If a covered jurisdiction seeks preclearance  
1077 from the commission for the adoption or implementation of any  
1078 covered policy, the covered jurisdiction shall submit the  
1079 covered policy in writing to the commission.

1080 (2) If the commission receives a request for  
1081 preclearance of a covered policy from a covered jurisdiction,  
1082 not later than 10 calendar days after receipt of the request  
1083 for preclearance of a covered policy, the commission shall  
1084 publish the covered policy on the commission's website.

1085 (3) Members of the public shall have an opportunity to  
1086 comment on any covered policy published on the commission's  
1087 website within the time period set forth in subdivision (9).  
1088 The Secretary of State shall allow members of the public to  
1089 sign up to receive notifications of submitted covered policies  
1090 for preclearance and deadlines for submission of public  
1091 comments.

1092 (4) The commission shall review the submission for





## SB7 INTRODUCED

1093 preclearance and any public comments and provide a report and  
1094 determination as to whether preclearance of the covered policy  
1095 should be granted or denied within the time period set forth  
1096 in subdivision (10). The time period for public comment shall  
1097 run concurrently with the time period for review of the  
1098 submission for preclearance.

1099 (5) The covered jurisdiction shall bear the burden of  
1100 proof in any determination as to preclearance of a covered  
1101 policy. The commission may request from additional information  
1102 from a covered jurisdiction at any time during the  
1103 commission's review for the purpose of developing the  
1104 Secretary of State's report and determination. Failure of the  
1105 covered jurisdiction to timely comply with reasonable requests  
1106 for additional information may constitute grounds for the  
1107 denial of preclearance. The commission shall publish on the  
1108 website of the office of the commission each report and  
1109 determination upon completion of the report.

1110 (6) In its determination, the commission shall state in  
1111 writing whether the Secretary of State is approving or  
1112 rejecting the covered policy, provided the commission may  
1113 designate preclearance as preliminary and subsequently approve  
1114 or deny final preclearance not later than 90 days after  
1115 receipt of submission of the covered policy.

1116 (7) The commission shall deny preclearance to a  
1117 submitted covered policy only if the covered policy is more  
1118 likely than not to violate the provisions of the Alabama  
1119 Voting Rights Act or diminish the opportunity or ability of  
1120 members of a protected class to participate in the political



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1121 process and elect candidates of their choice or otherwise  
1122 influence the outcome of elections. If the commission denies  
1123 preclearance to a covered policy under this subdivision, the  
1124 commission shall interpose objections explaining the  
1125 commission's basis for the denial, and the covered policy  
1126 shall not be enacted or implemented.

1127 (8) If the commission grants preclearance to a  
1128 submitted covered policy, the covered jurisdiction may  
1129 immediately enact or implement the covered policy. A  
1130 determination by the commission to grant preclearance shall  
1131 not be considered by a court in any subsequent action  
1132 challenging the covered policy.

1133 (9) The commission shall allow 10 business days for  
1134 public comment on any submitted covered policy, except that  
1135 the commission shall allow 20 business days for public comment  
1136 on any submitted covered policy concerning the implementation  
1137 of a district-based or alternative method of election, a  
1138 districting or redistricting plan, or a change to a  
1139 municipality's form of government.

1140 (10) The commission shall review and determine to grant  
1141 or deny preclearance to a submitted covered policy not later  
1142 than 30 calendar days after receipt of the submitted covered  
1143 policy, except that the commission shall review and determine  
1144 to grant or deny preclearance to a submitted covered policy  
1145 concerning the implementation of a district-based or  
1146 alternative method of election, a districting or redistricting  
1147 plan, or a change to a municipality's form of government not  
1148 later than 90 days after receipt of the submitted covered



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1149 policy.

1150 (11) If the commission fails to grant or deny  
1151 preclearance to a submitted covered policy within the time  
1152 period specified in subdivision (10), the covered policy shall  
1153 be deemed precleared and the covered jurisdiction may enact or  
1154 implement the covered policy.

1155 (f) The commission may adopt rules in accordance with  
1156 the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act to establish an  
1157 expedited emergency preclearance process under which the  
1158 commission may address covered policies that are submitted  
1159 during or immediately preceding an election as a result of any  
1160 attack, disaster, emergency, or other exigent circumstance.  
1161 Any preclearance granted pursuant to the rules adopted under  
1162 this subsection shall be designated "preliminary" and the  
1163 commission may subsequently approve or deny final preclearance  
1164 not later than 90 days after receipt of submission of the  
1165 covered policy.

1166 (g) Any denial of preclearance by the commission may be  
1167 appealed in accordance with Chapter 22 of Title 41, Code of  
1168 Alabama 1975.

1169 (h) (1) If a covered jurisdiction seeks preclearance  
1170 from the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit for the adoption or  
1171 implementation of any covered policy, in lieu of seeking  
1172 preclearance from the commission pursuant to subsection (e),  
1173 the covered jurisdiction shall submit the covered policy to  
1174 the court and may obtain preclearance in accordance with this  
1175 subsection, provided: (i) the covered jurisdiction shall also  
1176 contemporaneously transmit to the commission a copy of the



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1177 submission; and (ii) failure to provide a copy shall result in  
1178 automatic denial of the preclearance.

1179 (2) Notwithstanding the transmission of a copy of any  
1180 submission to the commission, the court shall exercise  
1181 exclusive jurisdiction over the submission. The covered  
1182 jurisdiction shall bear the burden of proof in the court's  
1183 determination as to preclearance.

1184 (3) The court shall grant or deny preclearance no later  
1185 than 90 days after the receipt of submission of a covered  
1186 policy.

1187 (4) The court shall deny preclearance to a submitted  
1188 covered policy only if the court determines that: (i) the  
1189 covered policy is more likely than not to diminish the  
1190 opportunity or ability of members of a protected class to  
1191 participate in the political process and elect candidates of  
1192 their choice or otherwise influence the outcome of elections;  
1193 or (ii) the covered policy is more likely than not to violate  
1194 the Alabama Voting Rights Act.

1195 (5) If the court grants preclearance to the covered  
1196 policy, the covered jurisdiction may immediately enact or  
1197 implement the covered policy. A determination by the court to  
1198 grant preclearance to a covered policy shall not be admissible  
1199 in, or otherwise considered by, a court in any subsequent  
1200 action challenging the covered policy.

1201 (6) If the court denies preclearance to a covered  
1202 policy, or fails to make a determination within 90 days of  
1203 receipt of submission of the covered policy, the covered  
1204 policy shall not be enacted or implemented.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1205 (7) Any denial of preclearance under this subsection  
1206 may be appealed in accordance with the Alabama Rules of  
1207 Appellate Procedure. Any action brought pursuant to this  
1208 subsection shall be expedited with respect to assignment for  
1209 trial or appeal, including expedited pretrial and other  
1210 proceedings.

1211 (i) If any covered jurisdiction enacts or implements  
1212 any covered policy without obtaining preclearance for the  
1213 covered policy in accordance with the provisions of this  
1214 section, the commission or any party described in Section 3(d)  
1215 may file an action in the Fifteenth Judicial Circuit to enjoin  
1216 the enactment or implementation and seek sanctions against the  
1217 covered jurisdiction for violations of this section.

1218 (j)(1) The commission may adopt rules, in accordance  
1219 with the Alabama Administrative Procedure Act to effectuate  
1220 the purposes of this section.

1221 (2) Any estimates prepared for the purpose of  
1222 identifying covered jurisdictions under this section,  
1223 including estimates of eligible electors, shall be prepared  
1224 using the most advanced, peer-reviewed, and validated  
1225 methodologies.

1226 Section 7. (a) The Secretary of State shall publicize  
1227 his or her work with local registrars, probate offices, and  
1228 election administrators to provide semi-annual voter outreach  
1229 efforts to educate Alabama residents on matters, including,  
1230 but not limited to, upcoming election dates, voter  
1231 registration requirements, available methods of voting, voting  
1232 locations, and proposed redistricting changes.



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1233 (b) There is established a Voter Education Fund to be  
1234 administered by the commission.

1235 (c) The commission may expend monies from the fund for  
1236 any of the following purposes:

1237 (1) Developing and distributing educational materials  
1238 on voting rights and the voting process, including information  
1239 on voter registration, absentee voting, and polling place  
1240 accessibility.

1241 (2) Conducting public education campaigns to inform  
1242 voters about changes to voting laws, procedures, or polling  
1243 locations, and to counteract false or misleading information  
1244 about voting.

1245 (3) Providing training and resources to local election  
1246 officials, poll workers, and volunteers on how to ensure fair  
1247 and equitable access to the ballot for all eligible voters.

1248 (4) Establishing and maintaining voter hotlines, online  
1249 portals, or other mechanisms for voters to report incidents of  
1250 voter intimidation, suppression, or discrimination, and for  
1251 election officials to respond to such reports.

1252 (5) Supporting voter outreach efforts targeted at  
1253 historically underrepresented communities, including, but not  
1254 limited to, members of protected classes, low-income  
1255 individuals, youth, and people with disabilities.

1256 (6) Providing grants to community-based organizations,  
1257 civic groups, and civil rights organizations to conduct voter  
1258 education and mobilization activities, such as voter  
1259 registration drives, candidate forums, and get-out-the-vote  
1260 campaigns, or to engage in nonpartisan advocacy, litigation,



## SB7 INTRODUCED

1261 or other legal actions to protect voting rights, challenge  
1262 discriminatory voting practices, or seek redress for victims  
1263 of voter suppression or intimidation.

1264 (7) Partnering with schools and universities to develop  
1265 and implement nonpartisan curricula on civic engagement,  
1266 voting, and the importance of participating in the democratic  
1267 process.

1268 (8) Funding research and evaluation projects to assess  
1269 the impact of voter education and outreach efforts on voter  
1270 participation and civic engagement and to identify best  
1271 practices for improving access to the ballot.

1272 Section 8. This act shall become effective on October  
1273 1, 2025.