

**S2608 AN ACT GRANTING AUTHORITY TO POSTPONE 2020 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS IN THE COMMONWEALTH AND INCREASE VOTING OPTIONS IN RESPONSE TO THE DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY TO RESPOND TO COVID19.**

- In response to the State of Emergency and concerns about COVID-19 and its implications on election administration, the bill authorizes **local legislative bodies** (e.g. select board, town council, or city council) to vote to **postpone** municipal caucuses and elections scheduled before May 30, 2020 and to **reschedule** them to a date before June 30, 2020.
- Municipalities will post **public notice** of the postponed election and rescheduled election date. They will broadly **publicize** the postponement and rescheduling.
- The bill provides for **a new voter registration deadline** of 8:00 p.m. on the 10<sup>th</sup> day before the rescheduled election.
- The bill provides for **reuse of original caucus and election materials** (e.g. official and absentee ballots).
- In light of widespread practice of **social distancing**, the bill provides for two alternatives to voting in person in elections rescheduled before June 30, 2020:
  - First, the bill allows any person taking precaution related to COVID-19 to vote by **absentee ballot**.
  - Second, the bill provides for **early voting by mail**.
  - Expanded absentee and early voting by mail applies only to postponed municipal elections rescheduled before June 30, 2020.

**POINT OF CLARIFICATION:** The bill does **NOT** make any other changes to elections or election process. It does **NOT**, for example, change the number of signatures or the submission deadline for candidates for office.

**H4582/4583 ORDERS RELATIVE TO THE ISSUANCE OF A PRECEPT BY THE SPEAKER FOR THE FILLING OF VACANCIES IN THE THIRTY-SEVENTH MIDDLESEX AND THE THIRD BRISTOL DISTRICT**

In a separate action, the House adopted two orders—**H4582 and H4583**—rescheduling the March 31, 2020 **House special elections** to fill the vacancies in the Thirty-Seventh Middlesex District and the Third Bristol District to June 2, 2020.