

Committee on Ethics and Elections

HB 541 — Addresses of Legal Residence

by Reps. Spano, Murphy, and others (CS/CS/SB 744 by Community Affairs Committee; Ethics and Elections Committee; and Senator Bean)

The bill (Chapter 2016-23, L.O.F.) defines “address of legal residence” to include distinguishing apartment numbers, suite numbers, lot numbers, room numbers, and dorm room numbers or other identifiers. The bill requires voter registration applications to contain the applicant’s address of legal residence, including an apartment, suite, lot, room, dormitory room number, or other appropriate identifier. The bill states that failure to provide a distinguishing apartment, suite, lot, room, or dormitory room number or other identifier on a voter registration application does not impact a voter’s eligibility to register to vote or to cast a ballot. The bill also provides that failure to provide a distinguishing apartment, suite, lot, room, or dormitory room number or other identifier on a voter registration application may not serve as the basis for a challenge to a voter’s eligibility or reason to not count a ballot.

Additionally, supervisors of elections are required to include within their list of valid residential street addresses all information necessary to distinguish residences including a distinguishing apartment, suite, lot, room, or dormitory room number, or other identifier. The bill also requires supervisors of elections to make all reasonable efforts to obtain differentiating information if a voter registration application does not include such information.

These provisions were approved by the Governor and take effect July 1, 2016.

Vote: Senate 34-0; House 119-0