

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 283 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY WEBSTER, MADDEN, HANBIDGE, SIEGEL, PROBST,  
SANCHEZ, CERRATO, OTTEN AND O'MARA, MARCH 10, 2023

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, MARCH 10, 2023

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of June 3, 1937 (P.L.1333, No.320), entitled  
2 "An act concerning elections, including general, municipal,  
3 special and primary elections, the nomination of candidates,  
4 primary and election expenses and election contests; creating  
5 and defining membership of county boards of elections;  
6 imposing duties upon the Secretary of the Commonwealth,  
7 courts, county boards of elections, county commissioners;  
8 imposing penalties for violation of the act, and codifying,  
9 revising and consolidating the laws relating thereto; and  
10 repealing certain acts and parts of acts relating to  
11 elections," in the Secretary of the Commonwealth, further  
12 providing for explanation of ballot question.

13 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
14 hereby enacts as follows:

15 Section 1. Section 201.1 of the act of June 3, 1937  
16 (P.L.1333, No.320), known as the Pennsylvania Election Code, is  
17 amended to read:

18 Section 201.1. Explanation of Ballot Question.--(a)  
19 Whenever a proposed constitutional amendment or other State-wide  
20 ballot question shall be submitted to the electors of the  
21 Commonwealth in referendum, the Attorney General shall prepare a  
22 statement in plain English which indicates the purpose,  
23 limitations and effects of the ballot question on the people of

1 the Commonwealth. The Secretary of the Commonwealth shall  
2 include such statement in his publication of a proposed  
3 constitutional amendment as required by Article XI of the  
4 Constitution of Pennsylvania. The Secretary of the Commonwealth  
5 shall certify such statement to the county boards of elections  
6 who shall publish such statement as a part of the notice of  
7 elections required by section 1201 or any other provision of  
8 this act. The county board of elections shall also require that  
9 at least three copies of such statement be posted in or about  
10 the voting room outside the enclosed space with the specimen  
11 ballots and other instructions and notices of penalties. In  
12 election questions which affect only one county or portion  
13 thereof, the county board of elections shall fulfill these  
14 requirements in the place of the Attorney General and the  
15 Secretary of the Commonwealth.

16 (b) Each member of the General Assembly shall hold a public  
17 meeting within the member's respective legislative district for  
18 the purpose of receiving public comment on a proposed  
19 constitutional amendment or other State-wide ballot question.

20 The public meeting shall:

21 (1) be held after the preparation of the statement of plain  
22 English under subsection (a), but before the submission of the  
23 proposed constitutional amendment or other State-wide ballot  
24 question to the electors of the Commonwealth in referendum; and

25 (2) comply with 65 Pa.C.S. Ch. 7 (relating to open  
26 meetings).

27 Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.