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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations

Gina M. Raimondo
Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

20-27

April 17, 2020

TWENTY-FOURTH SUPPLEMENTAL EMERGENCY DECLARATION – FURTHER PREPARATIONS FOR A PREDOMINANTLY MAIL BALLOT ELECTION

WHEREAS, on March 23, 2020, I issued Executive Order 20-11 which postponed the April 28, 2020 date set for the election of delegates to the national conventions and the presidential preference primary (collectively, the "Primary") until June 2, 2020;

WHEREAS, the postponement of the Primary was at the request of the Rhode Island Board of Elections ("Board") so that the State can implement procedures to conduct a predominantly mail ballot election for the Primary;

WHEREAS, the Secretary of State joined in the Board's request that the Primary be conducted as a predominantly mail ballot election;

WHEREAS, the residents of Rhode Island continue to be exposed to a pandemic caused by COVID-19;

WHEREAS, I directed the Board, working in conjunction with the Secretary of State, to determine a plan to conduct a predominantly mail ballot Primary;

WHEREAS, the Board convened meetings on March 26 and April 14, 2020 to discuss and vote upon procedures to effectuate a predominantly mail ballot Primary; and

WHEREAS, the Board voted to recommend modification and/or suspension of various sections of Chapters 12.1 and 20 of Title 17 of the General Laws in order to effectuate Executive Order 20-11 and to also address the public health concerns presented by the Rhode Island Department of Health during the Board's March 17, 2020 meeting.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, GINA M. RAIMONDO, by virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations, pursuant to Article IX of the Rhode Island Constitution and the Rhode Island General Laws, including but not limited to Title 30, Chapter 15 and Title 23, Chapter 8, do hereby order and direct the following:

1. The statutory time frames for the declaration and certification of candidates for delegates to the national conventions for each political party set forth under R. I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-12.1-3 and 17-12.1-7 are hereby suspended.

2. The two witness and/or notary requirements for certifying regular and emergency ballots set forth under R. I. Gen. Laws §§ 17-20-2.1 and 17-20-2.2 are hereby suspended. The Board shall take all measures necessary to compare and authenticate the signatures set forth on the application and certification envelopes and may request mail ballot applicants to voluntarily provide the last four digits of the voter's Social Security number or a valid driver's license number.

3. The statutory timeframe set forth under R. I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-26 for the opening and certification of mail ballots are hereby suspended. The period for the opening and certification of mail ballots shall be extended from 14 days to 20 days in accordance with the vote taken by the Board during its March 26, 2020 meeting and with its April 14, 2020 Decision and Order. The extended period of time will provide the Board with the additional time necessary to process the anticipated increase in mail ballots resulting from a predominantly mail ballot election.

4. The timeframe for requesting an emergency mail ballot under R. I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-2.2 is hereby suspended. That timeframe shall be reduced by 7 days, and a commensurate 7 days will be added to the deadline for seeking a regular mail ballot application in accordance with the vote taken by the Board during its March 26, 2020, meeting and with its April 14, 2020 Decision and Order.

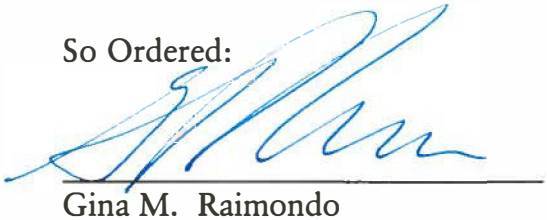
5. The deadline for the local boards of canvassers to certify the mail ballot applications to the Secretary of State set forth in R.I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-10 (c) is hereby suspended. The deadline shall be modified from 18 to 11 days prior to the day of the election, in accordance with the vote taken by the Board during its April 14, 2020 meeting and with its April 14 Supplemental Decision.

6. The statutory reference set forth in R. I. Gen. Laws § 17-20-19 to the Board address of 50 Branch Avenue in Providence, Rhode Island 02904, to be included on the return envelopes for mail ballots and certifications is hereby suspended. The Board's new address is P.O. Box 6128, Providence, Rhode Island, 02904.

7. Executive Order 20-11 (Ninth Supplemental Emergency Declaration – Delaying the Primary Elections and Preparing for a Predominantly Mail Ballot Election) is hereby extended an additional 30 days.

This Order shall take effect immediately and remain in full force and effect until May 16, 2020 to be renewed or modified as necessary and appropriate to carry out the purpose of this Order.

So Ordered:



Gina M. Raimondo
Governor