

Usability Testing for Ballots



MODEL STATUTORY LANGUAGE

An Act Relating to the Creation of Usability Testing and Standardization of Ballots and Ballot Design in State and Local Elections

Section 1: SHORT TITLE

This Act shall be known as the “Usability Testing Standardization Act.”

Section 2: PURPOSE

This Act creates a process for creating a uniform ballot design in state and local elections that is intuitive for voters to use.

Section 3: COMMISSION ON USABILITY TESTING

The Secretary of State shall appoint a Commission on Ballot Usability Testing (hereinafter “the Usability Commission”). The commission shall be composed of five members to be appointed at the Secretary of State’s discretion, except that the chair must be a person with verifiable expertise in ballot design. Within one year of the enactment of this Act, the Usability Commission shall issue a report to the Secretary of State and to the public, which shall survey the field of ballot design, discuss best practices, compare ballot designs, and issue a set of guidelines for ballot designs that are simple, intuitive, and resistant to voter error.

Section 4: TESTING OF BALLOTS

The Secretary of State shall promulgate sample ballots according to the Usability Commission’s guidelines. The Usability Commission shall comprehensively test each sample ballot for ease of use and resistance to voter error and confusion. The testing protocols and results of such testing shall be included in the Usability Commission’s report.

Section 5: BALLOTS AND BALLOT DESIGN

Subsequent to the publication of the Usability Commission’s report, all ballots used in state and local elections shall substantially conform to the recommendations issued by the Usability Commission. The Secretary of State shall periodically review ballot designs used in the state to ensure substantial compliance with the issued guidelines.

(Continued on page 2)

Usability Testing for Ballots



MODEL STATUTORY LANGUAGE

(Continued from page 1)

Section 6: EFFECTIVE DATE

This Act shall go into effect the _____ day of _____ 20_____.