1 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES - FLOOR VERSION STATE OF OKLAHOMA 2 3 2nd Session of the 58th Legislature (2022) ENGROSSED SENATE 4 BILL NO. 1637 By: Haste of the Senate 5 and 6 Lepak of the House 7 8 9 An Act relating to election fraud; amending 26 O.S. 2021, Sections 14-108.1, 16-105, and 16-123, which relate to notaries public, fraud, and voter 10 registration or voting crimes; requiring notification of certain potential fraud to Attorney General; 11 authorizing Attorney General to conduct certain investigation; requiring Attorney General to submit 12 certain notification to district attorney; requiring investigation by district attorney under certain 13 circumstances; modifying contents of required letter to complainant; requiring Attorney General to make 14 determination upon certain notification; requiring Attorney General to submit certain notification to 15 district attorney under certain circumstances; requiring certain investigation by Attorney General 16 or district attorney; modifying certain reporting requirements; amending 74 O.S. 2021, Section 18b, 17 which relates to duties of Attorney General; authorizing Attorney General to investigate and 18 prosecute certain violations; updating statutory reference; and providing an effective date. 19 20 21 BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA: 22 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 26 O.S. 2021, Section 14-108.1, is 23 24 amended to read as follows:

Section 14-108.1. A. Neither a notary public nor an agent working on behalf of a notary public shall be authorized to:

- Request absentee ballots on behalf of a voter other than himself or herself;
- 2. Assist a voter in requesting absentee ballots, other than for himself or herself or a member of his or her household;
- 3. Receive by mail an absentee ballot on behalf of a voter, other than for himself or herself or a member of his or her household; or
- 4. Submit a completed absentee ballot on behalf of a voter other than for himself or herself.
- B. A notary public shall maintain a log of all absentee ballot affidavits that he or she notarizes for a period of at least two (2) years after the date of the election.
- C. 1. A notary public shall be authorized to notarize a maximum of twenty absentee ballot affidavits for a single election, except as provided in paragraphs 2 and 3 of this subsection.
- 2. A notary public may be authorized to notarize more than twenty absentee ballot affidavits at a single election with the written approval of the secretary of the county election board.

 Such approval shall apply for affidavits notarized within the county served by the county election board secretary.
- 3. The limitation required by this subsection shall not apply to the notarizing of absentee ballot affidavits at the place of

- business of a notary public that is open to the general public during the normal business hours of the notary public.
- D. 1. If more than ten absentee ballots for a single election are requested to be mailed to a single mailing address, the secretary of the county election board shall immediately notify the district attorney for that county Attorney General and the Secretary of the State Election Board.
- Attorney General, or a member of law enforcement designated by the district attorney Attorney General, shall may investigate any possible criminal violation of the law related to the absentee ballot requests. If the Attorney General declines to investigate, the Attorney General shall submit the notification from the county election board to the district attorney for that county. The district attorney, or a member of law enforcement designated by the district attorney, shall then investigate any possible criminal violation of the law related to the absentee ballot requests.
- 3. Provided, this notification requirement shall not apply to requests for absentee ballots to be sent to the addresses of nursing homes, veterans centers, medical facilities, multiunit housing, installations of the Armed Forces of the United States where uniformed or overseas voters, as defined by the <u>federal</u> Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986, are stationed or

- 1 other locations authorized in writing by the Secretary of the State 2 Election Board.
 - E. The provisions of this section shall only apply to an election conducted by a county election board, the State Election Board or a political subdivision of this state.
- 6 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 26 O.S. 2021, Section 16-105, is 7 amended to read as follows:
 - Section 16-105. A. Any person who knowingly conspires to commit fraud or perpetrates fraud, or who steals supplies used to conduct an election, in order to change a voter's vote, or to change the composition of the official ballot or ballots, or to change the counting of the ballots, or to change the certification of the results of an election, shall be deemed guilty of a felony.
 - B. At every precinct there shall be posted information, provided by the State Election Board, which states the penalties for voter fraud and states that, if voter fraud is suspected, complaints should be reported to the State Election Board.
 - C. The State Election Board shall, upon receiving the complaint:
 - 1. Document such complaint and request the name and mailing address of the person making the complaint;
 - 2. Send a letter to the person making the complaint, stating the penalties for voter fraud and the option of contacting the

district attorney in the county where such fraud is suspected

2 Attorney General; and

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- 3. Provide the district attorney's Attorney General's name and office phone number.
- D. All information relating to voter complaints shall remain confidential until after the complaint has resulted in a conviction or a plea of guilty or nolo contendere.
- 8 SECTION 3. AMENDATORY 26 O.S. 2021, Section 16-123, is 9 amended to read as follows:
 - Section 16-123. A. The Secretary of the State Election Board or any county election board who has documents that appear to be evidence of voter registration or voting crimes shall notify the Attorney General, who shall determine whether to investigate or to submit the documentation to the district attorney for the county or counties involved. If the Attorney General declines to investigate, the Attorney General shall submit the notification and documentation within thirty (30) days of receipt to the district attorney for the county or counties involved.
- B. When presented with documentation of possible voter
 registration or voting crimes by the Secretary of the State Election
 Board or any county election board, the Attorney General or a
 district attorney who received notification and documentation
 pursuant to subsection A of this section shall investigate and,
 within thirty (30) days and each thirty (30) days thereafter

following receipt of such documentation, report in writing to the

Secretary of the State Election Board or county election board the

status of the investigation until charges are filed or the district

attorney declines the determination is made not to file charges.

SECTION 4. AMENDATORY 74 O.S. 2021, Section 18b, is amended to read as follows:

Section 18b. A. The duties of the Attorney General as the chief law officer of the state shall be:

- 1. To appear for the state and prosecute and defend all actions and proceedings, civil or criminal, in the Supreme Court and Court of Criminal Appeals in which the state is interested as a party;
- 2. To appear for the state and prosecute and defend all actions and proceedings in any of the federal courts in which the state is interested as a party;
- 3. To initiate or appear in any action in which the interests of the state or the people of the state are at issue, or to appear at the request of the Governor, the Legislature, or either branch thereof, and prosecute and defend in any court or before any commission, board or officers any cause or proceeding, civil or criminal, in which the state may be a party or interested; and when so appearing in any such cause or proceeding, the Attorney General may, if the Attorney General deems it advisable and to the best interest of the state, take and assume control of the prosecution or defense of the state's interest therein;

- 4. To consult with and advise district attorneys, when
 requested by them, in all matters pertaining to the duties of their
 offices, when the district attorneys shall furnish the Attorney
 General with a written opinion supported by citation of authorities
 upon the matter submitted;
 - 5. To give an opinion in writing upon all questions of law submitted to the Attorney General by the Legislature or either branch thereof, or by any state officer, board, commission or department, provided, that the Attorney General shall not furnish opinions to any but district attorneys, the Legislature or either branch thereof, or any other state official, board, commission or department, and to them only upon matters in which they are officially interested;
 - 6. At the request of the Governor, State Auditor and Inspector, State Treasurer, or either branch of the Legislature, to prosecute any official bond or any contract in which the state is interested, upon a breach thereof, and to prosecute or defend for the state all actions, civil or criminal, relating to any matter connected with either of their Departments;
 - 7. Whenever requested by any state officer, board or commission, to prepare proper drafts for contracts, forms and other writing which may be wanted for the use of the state;

- 8. To prepare drafts of bills and resolutions for individual members of the Legislature upon their written request stating the gist of the bill or resolution desired;
- 9. To enforce the proper application of monies appropriated by the Legislature and to prosecute breaches of trust in the administration of such funds;
- 10. To institute actions to recover state monies illegally expended, to recover state property and to prevent the illegal use of any state property, upon the request of the Governor or the Legislature;
- 11. To pay into the State Treasury, immediately upon its receipt, all monies received by the Attorney General belonging to the state;
- 12. To settle, compromise and dispose of an action in which the Attorney General represents the interests of the state, so long as the consideration negotiated for such settlement, compromise or disposition is payable to the state or one of its agencies which is a named party of the action and any monies, any property or other item of value is paid first to the State Treasury;
- 13. To keep and file copies of all opinions, contracts, forms and letters of the office, and to keep an index of all opinions, contracts and forms according to subject and section of the law construed or applied;

- 14. To keep a register or docket of all actions, demands and investigations prosecuted, defended or conducted by the Attorney General in behalf of the state. The register or docket shall give the style of the case or investigation, where pending, court number, office number, the gist of the matter, result and the names of the assistants who handled the matter;
 - 15. To keep a complete office file of all cases and investigations handled by the Attorney General on behalf of the state;
 - 16. To report to the Legislature or either branch thereof whenever requested upon any business relating to the duties of the Attorney General's office;
 - 17. To institute civil actions against members of any state board or commission for failure of such members to perform their duties as prescribed by the statutes and the Constitution and to prosecute members of any state board or commission for violation of the criminal laws of this state where such violations have occurred in connection with the performance of such members' official duties;
 - 18. To respond to any request for an opinion of the Attorney General's office, submitted by a member of the Legislature, regardless of subject matter, by written opinion determinative of the law regarding such subject matter;
 - 19. To convene multicounty grand juries in such manner and for such purposes as provided by law; provided, such grand juries are

- 1 | composed of citizens from each of the counties on a pro rata basis 2 | by county;
 - 20. To investigate any report by the State Auditor and Inspector filed with the Attorney General pursuant to Section 223 of this title and prosecute all actions, civil or criminal, relating to such reports or any irregularities or derelictions in the management of public funds or property which are violations of the laws of this state;
 - 21. To represent and protect the collective interests of all utility consumers of this state in rate-related proceedings before the Corporation Commission or in any other state or federal judicial or administrative proceeding;
 - 22. To represent and protect the collective interests of insurance consumers of this state in rate-related proceedings before the Insurance Commissioner or in any other state or federal judicial or administrative proceeding;
 - 23. To investigate and prosecute any criminal action relating to insurance fraud, if in the opinion of the Attorney General a criminal prosecution is warranted, or to refer such matters to the appropriate district attorney; and
- 24. To monitor and evaluate any action by the federal

 government including, but not limited to, executive orders by the

 President of the United States, rules or regulations promulgated by

 an agency of the federal government or acts of Congress to determine

1 if such actions are in violation of the Tenth Amendment to the 2 Constitution of the United States; and

- 25. To investigate and prosecute any criminal action relating
 to a violation of the provisions of Title 26 of the Oklahoma

 Statutes, if in the opinion of the Attorney General a criminal prosecution is warranted.
- B. Nothing in this section shall be construed as requiring the Attorney General to appear and defend or prosecute in any court any cause or proceeding for or on behalf of the Oklahoma Tax Commission, the Board of Managers of the State Insurance Fund, or the Commissioners of the Land Office.
- C. In all appeals from the Corporation Commission to the Supreme Court of Oklahoma in which the state is a party, the Attorney General shall have the right to designate counsel of the Corporation Commission as the Attorney General's legally appointed representative in such appeals, and it shall be the duty of the Corporation Commission counsel to act when so designated and to consult and advise with the Attorney General regarding such appeals prior to taking action therein.
- SECTION 5. This act shall become effective January 1, 2023.

22 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND ETHICS, dated 04/07/2022 - DO PASS.