

## Press Releases

8/7/2015

### **Rep. Fogarty, Sen. Coyne join governor at ceremony to sign voting equipment bill**

STATE HOUSE — Governor Gina M. Raimondo yesterday hosted ceremony on the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act to sign legislation ([S 999](#) and [H 6312](#)) sponsored by Senator Cynthia A. Coyne (D-Dist. 32, Barrington) and Representative Kathleen Fogarty (D-Dist. 35, South Kingstown) authorizing the Secretary of State to purchase modern voting equipment and software.

"Fifty years ago today, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act, allowing everyone to exercise their right to vote in the United States without racial discrimination," said Raimondo. "This anniversary reminds us that voting is a fundamental right that should be protected. The content of this bill continues to move Rhode Island into the 21st century by allowing the Secretary of State to purchase new voting equipment that has not been replaced in decades."

"Our voting equipment is Democracy's infrastructure. Voters, election administrators and candidates alike depend on a modern and reliable voting equipment to deliver fair, fast and accurate elections," said Secretary Nellie Gorbea. "Our almost 20 year old voting equipment is becoming obsolete, but thanks to the leadership of the General Assembly and the Governor, we have an opportunity in front of us to modernize our democratic infrastructure."

"The signing of this legislation is crucial to not only ensuring our elections are fair and accurate, but also to bringing the state's voting machines into the 21st century," said Sen. Cynthia A. Coyne. "In addition, modern equipment will make the voting process easier for Rhode Islanders, which will hopefully result in more people becoming involved in the democratic process."

"To preserve the efficiency and integrity of our elections, it is imperative that the machines we use to record and tally those votes are functional and up-to-date," said Rep. Kathleen Fogarty. "Giving this mandate to the Secretary of State - to purchase new voting equipment - will ensure that elections are not only fair and efficient, but accurate as well."

The law allows the Secretary of State to purchase new voting equipment to replace models that have not been upgraded in decades. This new equipment will make voting more efficient, accurate and easier for Rhode Islanders to participate in the electoral process.

As part of the procurement process, Secretary of State Nellie M. Gorbea has convened a Voting Equipment Task Force to help inform the Department of State's process for researching and acquiring new voting equipment. Members of the task force were present at the signing ceremony.

For more information, contact:  
[Daniel Trafford](#), Publicist  
State House Room 20  
Providence, RI 02903  
(401)222-2457