

1896, ch. 22, sec. 57.

62. Each political party or other body of voters, having a candidate or candidates duly nominated shall have the right to designate and keep a challenger and watcher at each place of registration and election, who shall be assigned to such positions near the judges of election, inside the registration or polling-room as to enable them to see each person as he offers to register or vote, and they shall be protected in the discharge of their duty by the judges of election and the police. A certificate signed by the candidates or by the presiding officer of the chief managing committee of their party in the city or county shall be sufficient evidence of the right of such challenger and watcher to be present in the registration or polling-room. In case any challenger or watcher does not produce such certificate, the judges of election shall recognize a challenger or watcher vouched for by the persons present belonging to such political party or by the judge representing such party. Such challenger and watcher shall have the right to remain in the polling-room outside the rail hereinafter mentioned from the time the polls are opened until they are closed, and after that time he shall be permitted to remain within the rail until the returns are completed. The refusal to permit any such challenger so to remain shall be a misdemeanor, punishable by a fine not exceeding one thousand dollars, or by imprisonment not exceeding one year, or by both fine and imprisonment, but it shall be unlawful for any such challenger to inquire or ascertain for what candidate or candidates any voter may intend to vote or has voted, or to confer in the polling-room with any voter or to assist him in the preparation of his ballot, and any challenger offering or attempting to do so may lawfully be ejected by the judges and shall also be subject to the punishment hereinafter provided. A challenger or watcher may be removed at any time by the same person or committee or by the chairman of the committee which appointed him. Citizens other than accredited challengers or watchers who desire to challenge the vote of any person then inside the polling-room shall be permitted to enter said room for that purpose, but a majority of the judges may limit the number of persons to be allowed in the polling-room at any one time for such purpose, and all such persons shall leave the polling-room as soon as the right to vote of the person challenged by them shall have been decided.