
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 7245

AN ACT CONCERNING A DEADLINE FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AUTOMATIC VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESSES AT CERTAIN STATE AGENCIES.

SUMMARY

Beginning April 1, 2027, this bill subjects the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) and voter registration agencies (see BACKGROUND) to a penalty for each day they do not provide a statutorily required electronic system to automatically transmit voter registration information. (In practice, DMV has already implemented such a system, but voter registration agencies generally have not.) It also imposes a similar penalty on voter registration agencies and public higher education institutions that have not started using these systems by April 1, 2027.

The bill requires that for each day an entity is in noncompliance, \$5,000 of the funds appropriated to it for FY 27 must be transferred to the secretary of the state's office. (The bill is silent on who determines noncompliance or how the funds would be transferred. It is also unclear if a voter registration agency that is in noncompliance with both requirements is subject to one or two penalties.)

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 2025

BACKGROUND

Automatic Voter Registration

By law, the DMV, voter registration agencies, and public higher education institutions must use a secretary of the state-approved electronic system to automatically transmit voter information for qualified applicants to registrars of voters unless the applicants decline to apply for admission. The systems must also comply with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA; see below).

The DMV commissioner must include a voter registration application as part of each application for a driver's license, driver's license renewal, or identity card. Additionally, any change of address notice filed with the DMV must also serve as notice for voter registration purposes until specifically noted otherwise.

Similarly, voter registration agencies must generally provide, assist with, and transmit voter registration applications for those the agency serves or assists. Public higher education institutions are also required to distribute mail voter registration application forms and assist individuals using the electronic system.

National Voter Registration Act

The NVRA (P.L. 103-31) generally requires states to offer eligible citizens the opportunity to register to vote by:

1. applying as part of a driver's license application or renewal;
2. sending a mail-in application; or
3. applying in person at a designated voter registration agency, including offices providing public assistance or services to individuals with disabilities.

The requirements apply to federal elections; however, in practice, states such as Connecticut have extended the procedures to state and local elections.

Voter Registration Agencies

The NVRA requires covered states to designate as voter registration agencies (1) all offices that provide federal or state public assistance, (2) all offices that provide state-funded programs primarily engaged in providing services to individuals with disabilities, and (3) Armed Forces recruitment offices. States must also designate additional voter registration agencies, which may include (1) state or local offices such as public libraries or schools, fishing and hunting license bureaus, or unemployment compensation offices or (2) with their agreement, federal or nongovernmental offices (52 U.S.C. § 20506).

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable

Yea 13 Nay 6 (03/26/2025)