

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2753

As Reported by House Committee On:
State Government Operations & Accountability

Title: An act relating to electronic voter registration.

Brief Description: Allowing electronic voter registration.

Sponsors: Representatives Haigh, Nixon, Hunt and Tom; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government Operations & Accountability: 1/20/06, 1/27/06 [DPS].

<p>Brief Summary of Substitute Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Permits and outlines the process for registering to vote by electronic means.
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HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ACCOUNTABILITY

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 8 members: Representatives Haigh, Chair; Green, Vice Chair; Nixon, Ranking Minority Member; Clements, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Hunt, McDermott, Miloscia and Sump.

Minority Report: Do not pass. Signed by 1 member: Representative Schindler.

Staff: Marsha Reilly (786-7135).

Background:

To register to vote, an application must be submitted to the appropriate county auditor. The application must include the applicant's name, residential address, date of birth, and a signature attesting that the information provided is true and confirmation that the applicant is a United States citizen. An applicant also must provide a Washington driver's license number or a Washington state identification card number. If the applicant does not have a driver's licence or identification card, the last four digits of the applicant's social security number must be provided. If the registrant does not have a driver's license, identification card, or social security number, a unique voter registration number will be issued.

The Secretary of State (Secretary) must verify that either the driver's license number, identification card number, or the last four digits of the social security number match

information maintained by the Washington Department of Licensing (DOL) or the Social Security Administration.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

A person may register to vote by completing an electronic voter registration application provided on the Secretary's web site. In order to register electronically, the applicant must have a Washington driver's license or a Washington identification card, and must agree to use the driver's license or state identification card signature for voter registration purposes. The applicant is also required to include on the electronic registration the last four digits of his or her social security number. The applicant must give affirmative acceptance of the information as true and the required signature attesting to the truth of the information provided must be obtained from the DOL. The Secretary must verify the driver's license number, or identification card number, and the last four digits of the social security number with the DOL. The applicant is considered registered to vote as of the date of submission of the electronic application.

A section of statute is repealed pertaining to storage of signature cards in the Secretary's office for purposes of checking signatures on initiative and referendum petitions.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

The substitute bill added a provision requiring inclusion of an applicant's last four digits of his or her social security number on an electronic registration.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date of Substitute Bill: The bill takes effect January 1, 2007.

Testimony For: On-line voter registration in Arizona has resulted in a voter registration increase of 32 percent. This is offered as an option. A person registering electronically must affirm that the information provided is true and the information will be verified. The DOL will digitally transfer the signature to the voter registration database. This will have the same security measures that is used for on-line banking, and enforcement would be the same as for a paper based registration. The student lobby supports the bill. Students move more than any other segment of the population. Every time they move, they need to re-register. Students also use computers and registering on-line will increase registrations. Registering on-line actually increases security because of the information required to obtain a driver's license.

Testimony Against: Security is a concern. The registration should match the driver's license information.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Haigh, prime sponsor; Shane Hamlin and Katie Blinn, Office of the Secretary of State; and Garrett Havens, Washington Student Lobby.

(Opposed) Bob Edelman.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.