

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 1528

As Passed House:
February 28, 2007

Title: An act relating to electronic voter registration.

Brief Description: Providing for electronic voter registration.

Sponsors: By Representatives Hunt, Chandler, Green, Kretz, Ormsby, Armstrong, Miloscia, Appleton, Kenney, Goodman and Moeller; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government & Tribal Affairs: 1/31/07, 2/2/07 [DP].

Floor Activity:

Passed House: 2/28/07, 91-6.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Provides for electronic voter registration through the Secretary of State's website for individuals who have a valid Washington driver's license or state identification card.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT & TRIBAL AFFAIRS

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Hunt, Chair; Appleton, Vice Chair; Chandler, Ranking Minority Member; Armstrong, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Green, Kretz, McDermott, Miloscia and Ormsby.

Staff: Colleen Kerr (786-7168).

Background:

In Washington, individuals may register to vote either by mail or in person at the county auditor's office. If the person has never registered to vote in the state before, or has moved to a new county, he or she must fill out a voter registration form. If a person has moved within a county, he or she can transfer the voter registration by filling out the voter registration form or by mailing, emailing, or calling the county auditor. Individuals who do not have a

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Washington driver's license or a state identification card must provide an alternate form of identification:

- valid photo ID;
- valid tribal ID of a federally recognized Indian tribe in Washington;
- copy of a current utility bill;
- current bank statement;
- copy of a current government check;
- copy of a current paycheck; or
- a government document that shows both your name and address.

Summary of Bill:

The Secretary of State will provide electronic voter registration via the internet for individuals who have a valid Washington driver's license or state identification card. For each electronic registration, the Secretary of State must obtain a digital copy of the applicant's driver's license or state identification card signature. Electronic voter registration applicants must affirmatively assent to use of his or her signature from the Department of Licensing for verification of identity purposes.

Electronic voter registration is considered registration by mail.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on January 1, 2008.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) It is an important part of this bill that people who register to vote over the internet must have a valid Washington driver's license or state ID card. This means that applicants will have gone before a Department of Licensing agent to obtain either a driver's license or state identification card. The actual online procedure is also safe. This is an efficiency measure. The registration system is still paper based and very antiquated. It takes a great deal of time. Electronic voting will also improve the accuracy of voter registrations. The Secretary of State's concern right now is that some people who go to download the registration form from the web page actually think that when they fill it out online they are registering to vote. Electronic voter registration will also make it easier for military families and citizens who are overseas to register to vote. Students support this bill. Many students do not vote because they move so frequently their voter registrations are not current with their addresses. Students today also do everything online from banking and shopping to school and socializing. Electronic voter registration would bring this state into the 21st century.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: Representative Hunt, prime sponsor; Katie Blinn and Shane Hamlin, Office of the Secretary of State; and Sasha Sleiman, Washington Student Lobby.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.