

Approved 3-7-91  
Date

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Elections

The meeting was called to order by Representative Tom Sawyer at  
Chairperson

9:13 a.m./p.m. on Tuesday, March 5, 1991 in room 123-S of the Capitol.

All members were present except:

Committee staff present:

Pat Mah, Research  
Arden Ensley, Revisor  
Ellie Luthye, Committee Secretary

Conferees appearing before the committee:

Representative Anthony Hensley  
Representative Carol Sader  
Michael Woolf, Executive Director, Common Cause  
Connie Stewart, Kansas AFL-CIO  
Craig Grant, KNEA  
Ron Thornburgh, Office of the Secretary of State  
John Smith, Department of Revenue

The House Elections Committee was called to order at 9:13 a.m. on Tuesday, March 5th, 1991 by Chairman Tom Sawyer.

The bills before the committee for hearings were: HB 2022, HB 2174, HB 2291, HB 2292 and HB 2326. The Chair informed all conferees they would have permission to speak on all bills they were interested in at one time to facilitate the hearings.

Representative Anthony Hensley was the first to appear before the committee, both as a conferee and the sponsor of HB 2022, concerning voter registration as part of application for motor vehicle driver's licenses. He stated the right and act of voting is very important to the future of a democratic form of government and he felt HB 2022 would do this by promoting peoples' participation in the electoral process by making it easier for them to register to vote. (Attachment 1)

Representative Carol Sader appeared as both a sponsor and supporter of HB 2291, registration on election day, and HB 2292, which would permit the Governor to authorize any agency of the executive branch of state government to register persons to vote. She urged the committee to give favorable consideration to these two bills, keeping in mind that a Democracy whose citizens do not vote is an endangered Democracy. (Attachment 2)

Michael Woolf, Executive Director of Common Cause, appeared in support of HB 2022 and HB 2291. In supporting these two bills he stated his organization, Common Cause, works not only for reform of ethics and campaign finance laws, but also for proposals that will make it easier for more people to exercise the most basic right in a democracy - the right to vote. (Attachment 3)

Connie Stewart, Kansas AFL-CIO, presented written testimony in support of four bills, HB 2022, HB 2291, HB 2292, and HB 2326. She was in agreement with previous testimony which had been presented in support of these bills stating voting is a precious Constitutional right and if we are committed to maintaining the integrity of our democracy, we must remove the registration barriers that now prevent many eligible citizens from voting. (Attachment 4)

Craig Grant, KNEA, was the next conferee to stand before the committee. He stated each year in their organization they have 4,000 changes of addresses, making it very difficult to get them all re-registered. He feels HB 2022 would eliminate this problem.

CONTINUATION SHEET

MINUTES OF THE House COMMITTEE ON Elections,  
room 123-S, Statehouse, at 9:13 a.m./p.m. on Tuesday, March 5, 1991

Ron Thornburgh, from the office of the Secretary of State, presented testimony on several bills. He referred to each bill and will stand for questions following each presentation.

He spoke first on HB 2022, stating the Secretary of State supports the concept of this bill but would add 3 amendments; filling out registration card versus checking box, provide rule and regs authority to the Secretary of State's office to administer the program and to enact the law in 1991 but implement it in 1993. (Attachment 5) It was requested by Representative Shallenburger that the Secretary of State have these amendments prepared and present to the committee before final determination is made.

He next presented testimony on HB 2291 stating the Office of the Secretary of State opposes this bill feeling it would only cause confusion and delays at the polling place on election day. (Attachment 6)

The Secretary of State is in favor of HB 2292 asking only that it be implemented on a trial basis to make sure that it would work before vast implementation. (Attachment 7)

He also rose in support of HB 2326, with an amendment that would allow the voter to complete an affidavit of name change rather than re-registering. (Attachment 8) This amendment will also be prepared and given to the committee.

John Smith, from the Department of Revenue, presented testimony stating that enactment of HB 2022 would significantly impact the Department of Revenue. (Attachment 9)

The Chair directed the committee to read testimony from Martha K. Gabehart, Acting Executive Director for the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns, in support of HB 2022. (Attachment 10)

The hour of adjournment was near and the Chair announced that hearings would continue on these bills at the House Elections Committee meeting on Wednesday, March 6th. The committee will be meeting in their regular room, 521-S, at 9:00 a.m.

The House Elections Committee was adjourned at 10:30 a.m. by Chairman Sawyer.



STATE OF KANSAS

ANTHONY HENSLEY  
REPRESENTATIVE, FIFTY EIGHTH DISTRICT  
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2226 VIRGINIA AVENUE  
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232-1944 HOME  
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TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
CHAIRMAN LABOR AND INDUSTRY  
MEMBER APPROPRIATIONS  
EDUCATION

March 5, 1991

TO: House Committee on Elections  
FROM: Anthony Hensley *AH*  
RE: House Bill No. 2022

I appear before you today to speak in favor of 1991 House Bill No. 2022. This legislation intends to address two real problems in our form of government: the increasing lack of voter participation in elections and whether burdensome voter registration procedures contribute to this lack of participation.

We all know in a representative democracy such as ours the primary voice the people have is the right and opportunity to vote. However, the 1988 election for President barely brought out 50% of the U.S. electorate to vote. This was the lowest turnout in 64 years.

When the United States is compared to 20 other democratic countries, it ranks almost dead last in voter participation. As elected officials, we should ask questions: What is wrong? Why are we so far behind other countries? How can we increase voter participation?

In my opinion, one of the answers to these questions lies in our current voter registration procedures. One basic reason why other democratic countries have higher voter turnout is because they have made registering to vote easier.

According to a 1988 New York Times/CBS News poll, the common reason people do not vote is because they are not registered. This poll also showed that once people are registered, they will most likely vote. The problem a lot of people have is remembering to re-register to vote after they have moved.

The purpose of House Bill No. 2022 is to make voter registration easier in the state of Kansas by allowing people to register at the same time they apply for, renew, or change their driver's license. Estimates show that nearly 90% of all eligible voters visit driver's license offices on a regular basis. When people move, very often the first place they go to is the driver's license office to change the address on their driver's license. Also, in Kansas when a person moves he or she is required to re-register to vote. Why not make it easier on every Kansan and combine the two procedures? Our constituents already have enough bureaucratic red tape to endure as it is.

House Elections Committee  
Attachment 1  
2-4-91

Making voter registration easier will increase voter turnout at election time. There have been some very positive results in states that already have "motor voter" laws. For example, in Colorado over 51,000 people were registered to vote through motor vehicle license offices in the first four months of implementation of the new law. Since "motor voter" was enacted, voter turnout in Colorado has dramatically increased.

In Arizona, 66,000 new "motor voter" registrations were taken in the first six months of the new law. Arizona also experienced a reversal in declining voter registration. Since 1972, the percentage of registered voters in Arizona was declining at a rapid rate. After the "motor voter" law took effect in 1983, Arizona's voter registration and turnout have increased significantly.

Michigan, the birthplace of "motor voter" legislation, is a prime example of positive trends in voter registration and turnout which resulted from passage of a law such as proposed in House Bill No. 2022. In the 16 years that "motor voter" has been used in Michigan, voter registration in that state has greatly increased. In 1974, the percentage of registered voters compared to the total eligible was 79.3%, which is high for any state. The registration rate after "motor voter" was implemented is over 90%. The 1974 turnout rate in Michigan was a very low 44%. Today, the turnout rate is over 60%.

Those who may oppose House Bill No. 2022 will argue that "motor voter" is too expensive. This is not true. In those states that have already implemented "motor voter" laws, the costs are relatively low. In Michigan, for example, the Secretary of State's office found the costs there are about 17-cents per voter registered at the driver's license offices. In addition, they did not need extra staff to process the applications.

Opponents will also argue that this bill will increase voter fraud. This is not true. People who register in motor vehicle license offices will have to meet identification requirements at least as stringent as requirements under the current voter registration system.

Opponents will argue that "motor voter" will increase the amount of "deadwood" (deceased or moved voters) on the registration books. This is not true. As a matter of fact, the "motor voter" system will reduce the amount of "deadwood" by catching up with the people who have moved and need to re-register as they change their address on their driver's license.

Opponents of "motor voter" will argue that this system will cause longer lines at driver's license offices and make license examiners' jobs more complicated and time consuming. In states with "motor voter" laws, it is true that longer lines resulted in the initial implementation period. Once in effect, however, it has been proven that the "motor voter" system saves time for people and for election officials. Other states' experience also shows that any extra work for license examiners is minimal and can be handled with no additional staff.

The right and act of voting is very important to the future of our democratic form of government. We should do everything we can to not only protect that right, but promote it as well. We can promote peoples' participation in the electoral process by making it easier for them to register to vote. There is no doubt in my mind that the passage of House Bill No. 2022 will make it much easier for people to register. I strongly urge you to vote for this bill.

A sampling of statistics from democratic countries shows most have higher electoral participation than the U.S.

<b>UNITED STATES</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>53.1%</b>
<b>AUSTRALIA *</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>94.2%</b>
<b>AUSTRIA</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>92.6%</b>
<b>BELGIUM*</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>93.6%</b>
<b>CANADA</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>75.7%</b>
<b>DENMARK</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>88.4%</b>
<b>FINLAND</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>75.7%</b>
<b>FRANCE</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>85.8%</b>
<b>GREAT BRITAIN</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>72.8%</b>
<b>GREECE</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>80.2%</b>
<b>ISRAEL</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>78.8%</b>
<b>ITALY*</b>	<b>1984</b>	<b>89.0%</b>
<b>JAPAN</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>71.4%</b>
<b>NETHERLANDS</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>85.7%</b>
<b>NEW ZEALAND</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
<b>NORWAY</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>81.2%</b>
<b>PORTUGAL</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>78.2%</b>
<b>SPAIN</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>70.7%</b>
<b>SWEDEN</b>	<b>1986</b>	<b>89.8%</b>
<b>SWITZERLAND</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>48.9%</b>
<b>WEST GERMANY</b>	<b>1983</b>	<b>89.1%</b>

\* Voting is compulsory  
 Source: Congressional Research Service

## Colorado Driver's License/Voter Registration Form

<b>APPLICATION FOR:</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> IDENTIFICATION CARD								
		<input type="checkbox"/> DRIVER LICENSE <input type="checkbox"/> VOTER REGISTRATION								
<b>MOTOR VEHICLE USE ONLY</b>				<b>COUNTY CLERK USE ONLY</b>						
AGE GROUP	FIRST NAME      MIDDLE NAME      LAST NAME      JR. SR. ETC.			VOTER I D NUMBER						
CLASS	RESIDENCE ADDRESS (Street and Number, Apartment No., Space No., etc.)			PRECINCT NUMBER						
PHOTO      NO PHOTO	CITY/TOWN      ZIP CODE      COUNTY			CITY CODE						
FEE	DATE OF BIRTH	CHANGE DOB FROM	SEX	WEIGHT	HEIGHT	HAIR COLOR	EYE COLOR	ORGAN DONOR	MUNICIPAL WARD	
<input type="checkbox"/> DRIVER LICENSE	OLD LICENSE NUMBER	RESTRICTIONS	SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER *	ARE YOU A U.S. CITIZEN?		ALIEN REG. # or NIA STATUS			MUNICIPAL PRECINCT	
<input type="checkbox"/> T.I.P.	I CERTIFY BY MY SIGNATURE UNDER PENALTY OF PERJURY THAT THE ABOVE INFORMATION IS TRUE AND CORRECT.									
<input type="checkbox"/> ENDORSEMENT	DRIVER LICENSE / ID CARD APPLICANT SIGNATURE			DATE	EXAMINER / CLERK SIGNATURE					SCHOOL PRECINCT
<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLICATE LICENSE	<b>FOR VOTER REGISTRATION, MUST BE 18, U.S. CITIZEN AND RESIDENT OF COLORADO FOR 32 DAYS BEFORE NEXT ELECTION.</b>									
Type _____	POST OFFICE ADDRESS			CITY/TOWN	ZIP CODE	TELEPHONE				REMARKS
License # _____	U.S. CITIZEN By:		PARTY AFFILIATION			--- COLORADO ONLY ---				
Expires _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Birth	<input type="checkbox"/> Naturalization	<input type="checkbox"/> Republican	<input type="checkbox"/> Democrat	<input type="checkbox"/> Political Organization _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaffiliated	TRANSFER AFFILIATION			
<input type="checkbox"/> IDENTIFICATION CARD	FORMER NAME -- FIRST			MIDDLE NAME	LAST NAME      JR., SR., ETC.					
<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLICATE I D CARD	FORMER RESIDENCE ADDRESS			CITY/TOWN	STATE	ZIP CODE	<input type="checkbox"/> REGISTRAR ADVISED			
I D # _____	<b>WARNING:</b> It is a crime to swear falsely as to your qualifications to register to vote. I CERTIFY THE ABOVE FACTS ARE TRUE.									
Expires _____	I, _____, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that I am a citizen of the United States and that on the date of the next ensuing election I shall have attained the age of eighteen years and shall have resided in the state of Colorado at least thirty-two days and in my precinct at least thirty-two days before the election. I further swear (or affirm) that the present address I listed herein is my sole legal place of residence and that I claim no other place as my legal residence.									
<input type="checkbox"/> CORRECTION: CHANGE	VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION SIGNATURE			DATE	OATH ADMINISTERED BY			DATE		
<input type="checkbox"/> Address										
<input type="checkbox"/> Name										
<input type="checkbox"/> Date of Birth										
<input type="checkbox"/> Other _____										
<input type="checkbox"/> Party Affiliation										
DRIVE      NO DRIVE										
T.I.P.	OFFICE NUMBER									

\* Optional

**CAROL H. SADER**  
REPRESENTATIVE, TWENTY-SECOND DISTRICT  
JOHNSON COUNTY  
8612 LINDEN DR  
SHAWNEE MISSION, KANSAS 66207  
HOME: (913) 341-9440  
CAPITOL OFFICE: (913) 296-7675



TOPEKA

HOUSE OF  
REPRESENTATIVES

TESTIMONY ON HB2291 AND HB2292  
HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
March 5, 1991

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS  
CHAIRPERSON: PUBLIC HEALTH AND WELFARE  
VICE-CHAIRPERSON: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
VICE-CHAIRPERSON: JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH  
CARE DECISIONS FOR THE  
1990'S  
RANKING DEMOCRATIC MEMBER: SRS TASK FORCE  
MEMBER: PENSIONS, INVESTMENTS AND BENEFITS  
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appear as a sponsor and supporter of House Bills 2291 and 2292, both of which are intended to eliminate voter registration barriers and encourage greater voter participation in our state.

HB2291 provides for voter registration at the polls on election day and HB 2292 permits the Governor to authorize any agency of the executive branch of state government to assist the Secretary of State in registering persons to vote.

The right to vote is what defines democracy and yet voter participation in the United States is the lowest of the world's leading democracies. Since 1960, the percentage of Americans who vote has declined steadily. In fact, ours is the only democracy in which registration is entirely the responsibility of the citizen and not an obligation of the government. In Great Britain, for example, the government conducts an annual canvass of each household and attaches penalties to those who fail to return a registration card. In Canada, where 93% of eligible adults are registered, the provincial governments subsidize a door-to-door enumeration of voters before each national election. In my city of Prairie Village, this door-to-door enumeration is done to take a dog census each year - but for some reason, it has been argued that it cannot be done to register people to vote.

According to national election studies, more than 85% of those who register, do vote. Nevertheless, 70 million U.S. citizens are not registered to vote. Studies also indicate that changes in registration laws could have a significant impact on voter turnout. With 1/3 of the adult population moving every 2 years, restrictive registration requirements are real barriers to citizen participation in elections. Maine, Wisconsin and Minnesota allow election day registration. Minnesota, which also has a motor-voter law in place, saw a 25% boost in voter turnout in 1990.

In a study by the Commission for the Study of the American Electorate, it was found that if every state enacted election day registration, turnout might increase by as much as 6 to 7 million citizens. An Iowa study found that as many as 8 million Americans would participate were election day registration the national norm.



Election Commissioners and workers in Election Offices will argue that to do what these bills require would be administratively prohibitive. In this age of sophisticated computer technology, I submit that every voter in this state has the right to a simple and straightforward system of voter registration that accommodates citizen needs rather than bureaucratic convenience.

Therefore, I urge you to give favorable consideration to these two bills to provide election-day registration and to allow people to register to vote in all state government agencies whenever they sign up for other services. I ask you to please keep in mind that a Democracy whose citizens do not vote is an endangered Democracy!

Thank you.

*Carol F. Adams*



## COMMON CAUSE / KANSAS

701 Jackson, Room B-6 • Topeka, Kansas 66603 • (913) 235-3022

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILLS 2022 AND 2291  
BY MICHAEL WOOLF, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Thank you Mr. Chairman, members of the Committee for allowing me to testify today in strong support of House Bills 2022 and 2291. Our organization works, not only for reform of our ethics and campaign finance laws, but also for proposals that will make it easier for more people to exercise the most basic right in a democracy--the right to vote.

House Bill 2022 allows citizens to register to vote when they apply for their drivers' license or nondriver identification card. House Bill 2291 allows what is commonly known as same-day registration.

Three states currently have same-day registration: Minnesota, Maine and Wisconsin; and North Dakota does not require voter registration in any form. In 1988 these states respectfully ranked first, third, fourth and fifth in voter turnout. Maine and Wisconsin also boast the highest registration rates in the country with over 90% of the voting age population in each state. One study, quoted in the Congressional Quarterly in April of 1988, estimated that voter turnout would increase by about six million nationally if same-day registration were allowed in every state.

Critics claim that some people might be encouraged to register and vote in more than one location. But Joan Anderson Grove, Minnesota Secretary of State, stated in 1986 that, "In Minnesota, we have found this claim to be without foundation. I know of only two indictments in nine years. Secretaries of state in the two other states that use same-day registration give the unanimous opinion that voter fraud has not been a problem with election-day registrants." To update this information I called her office yesterday and I was informed that there have been no indictments since 1986.

Motor-voter programs are currently in effect in offices statewide, throughout the year in Arizona, Colorado, District of Columbia, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Vermont, and Washington. In other states, motor-voter programs are offered in only some offices and only during certain periods of the year. In addition, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine and New York have recently passed laws or issued executive orders to establish motor-voter programs. In 1989, Rhode Island passed a law to establish a pilot motor-voter system for the 1992 elections.

The success of such programs have been clearly demonstrated in recent years. In Colorado, 175,000 citizens were registered during the program's first year, 84% of which were new voters. In 1988, Nevada implemented a staff-active motor-voter system. Subsequently, Nevada was one of only five states to see an increase in voter turn-out between 1984 and 1988--and Nevada's was the largest increase in the country.

Motor-voter programs have proven to be cost-effective. Minnesota's program, which registered about 200,000 people in 1988, its first year, spent only 33 cents per voter. Michigan, which has had motor-voter laws since 1976 and which registers about 750,000 voters each year, spends only 13 cents per registration. And the District of Columbia estimated the cost to register 2,400 voters in its first month, May 1989, to be only 3 cents per registration.



## Testimony On HB's 2022, 2291, 2292 & 2326 Presented to the House Elections Committee By

**Connie Stewart**  
**Kansas AFL-CIO**  
**March 5, 1991**

President  
**Dale Moore**

Executive Secretary  
Treasurer  
**Jim DeHoff**

Executive Vice  
President  
**Wayne Maichel**

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Wayne Wiancki*

Mr. Chairperson and Members of the Committee:

My name is Connie Stewart and I am representing the Kansas AFL-CIO. I am here today to testify in support of HB 2022, HB 2291, HB 2292 and HB 2326. On behalf of the Kansas AFL-CIO and our thousands of members across the state, I urge you to recommend these bills favorable for passage.

Our organization has always considered the participation of our members and all eligible citizens in the electoral process to be a very important responsibility. It is not a responsibility we take lightly. Every year we devote thousands of hours and thousands of dollars to our efforts to assist our members in registering to vote.

America's democratic promise is to include all our citizens in the nation's decisions. That promise has not been kept. Too many of our citizens still stand outside the process. We are the only western democracy which places the burden of registration on the individual. In all other western democracies, it is the responsibility of government to maintain the voter rolls.

In time, all states will have to address the growing concern over registration barriers. Indeed, the focus on these concerns on a national level indicate that, in time, if states do not take steps to simplify the registration process themselves, the U. S. Congress will mandate reforms.

I would like to briefly address each of these bills beginning with HB 2022 which provides that an application for voter registration be included as part of the application for driver's licenses and non-driver identification cards, or motor-voter as it is



commonly called.

The net effect of registration barriers is to quietly disenfranchise the powerless. Motor-voter is one of the most effective and efficient ways to make voter registration accessible to citizens. It is estimated that 90% of people old enough to vote, visit driver's license stations to apply for or renew their licenses or obtain non-driver identification cards. Each of these agency visits can provide an additional convenient, quick and cost-effective service to the public by affording a chance to register to vote or to update a registration.

Approximately 10 states have some form of motor-voter registration. Many of these states have seen a significant increase in the percentage of registered voters. In Arizona, 66,609 people used the program to register during the first six months. During the first month of Colorado's new program 10,000 voters registered. During the first four months, Colorado gained 46,227 new registrations. In Michigan, where motor-voter registration was born, over 80% of eligible voters are registered to vote, a figure much higher than the national average. In the first ten years of its motor-voter program, registration in Michigan increased over 15 percent while the voting population increased by only 11 percent.

HB 2291 would allow for qualified voters to register at the polling place on election day. Our organization strongly supports the provisions of HB 2291. Three states - Maine, Minnesota and Wisconsin - register voters on election day. The effect of same-day registration on citizen participation has been dramatic. Between 1972-before election-day registration was implemented in any state-and 1984, voter turnout increased by as much as 7.9 percent in the states that opted for election-day registration. Rates of participation are also much higher than in states without same-day registration. Political analysts estimate that election day registration would increase turnout in a presidential election by 6.1 percent nationwide.

One argument that you are going to hear today against same-day registration is the potential for fraud. This familiar bogey is simply without foundation. I have included with my written testimony letters from the Secretaries of State in Maine and Minnesota which I requested in 1987 when this same bill was introduced in the Senate. You will note that both offices indicate there have been no significant problems with voter fraud.

Indeed, the Secretaries of State in states that have same-day registration give the unanimous opinion that voter fraud has not been a problem. One of the concerns voiced to the committee in 1987 was that droves of college students would be encouraged to register and vote twice - once in their home communities and once in their college community. With all due respect, I would sincerely like to meet these unique college students. It has been my experience, and the statistics bear this out, that it is extremely difficult to get this age-group to register and vote once-let alone twice.

The truth is, very few people are willing to risk the penalties for voter fraud just to cast their vote more than once. I would also point out to the committee that the state-wide voter file, which will be implemented in time for the 1992 elections, according to the Secretary of State, will provide a vehicle for further detection of duplicate registrations which would further eliminate any potential for fraud.

The United States, where we close registration in the weeks before an election, ranks twentieth in voter participation of 21 industrial democracies. All other Anglo-European countries automatically enroll their citizens on a permanent nationwide election register. In other democracies, about 90-95% are registered--and 75-90% then vote. The low voting turnout in the U.S.--only about 53% of the eligible population-- is directly related to the fact that our registration system includes only about 60% of the population. In the words of Minnesota's Secretary of State, "In Minnesota, we have always believed it is better to encourage people to exercise their right to vote rather than to place unnecessary barriers in their paths. One of the major barriers to voter participation is early deadlines. By opening registration on election day, Minnesota encourages maximum participation in all elections. The result, we believe, is good government." Do we want less for Kansas?

We also support HB 2292, which provides for voter registration in state agencies. Agency-based registration is another effective and efficient way to make voter registration accessible to citizens. Almost everybody has some business with government agencies. Each of these agency visits can provide an additional convenient, quick and cost-effective service to the public by affording a chance to register to vote or to update a registration.

Voting is a precious Constitutional right. If we are committed to maintaining the integrity of our democracy, we must remove the registration barriers that now prevent many eligible citizens from voting. This package of bills, each of which has merit on its own, would move our state into a position of leadership in the area of voting rights.

With my written testimony, I have included copies of sections of a manual on voter registration published by the National Center for Policy Alternatives, which will support the statistics I have referred to and perhaps provide you with some additional information. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I respectfully request your favorable consideration of HB's 2022, 2291, 2292 and 2326.

opeiu #320, afl-cio

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# ER REGISTRATION THE STATES:

VE POLICY APPROACHES TO INCREASING PARTICIPATION

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# Some-Day Registration

Three states--Maine, Minnesota, and Wisconsin--register voters on election day. As many as 20 percent of all registrants in those states register on election day.

These states are confronting a fact of social behavior: many citizens don't get interested in an impending election until just before it happens.

The effect of same-day registration on citizen participation has been dramatic. Between 1972--before election-day registration was implemented in any state--and 1984, voter turnout increased by as much as 7.9 percent in the states that opted for election-day registration.

Rates of participation are also much higher than in states without same-day registration. In the 1984 election, the Federal Election Commission found that Minnesota ranked first among the states in participation, Maine second, and Wisconsin fourth. Political analysts estimate that election day registration would increase turnout in a presidential election by 6.1 percent nationwide.

Analyses show that increased participation has no effect on the partisanship of the electorate. Nor has fraud--the other bogey feared in same-day registration--troubled those three states. Many safeguards have been designed to prevent multiple voting. Affidavits and identification are usually required at registration. When voters' legitimacy is challenged at the polls, their ballots are counted only after their qualification is investigated. Verification may also be made on election day by comparison with other public lists. Afterward, postcards confirming registration may be mailed to new registrants at the residence claimed. They may not be forwarded, and return of a registration confirmation card is cause for inquiry into possible irregularities. States' penalties for fraud range from a \$250 fine and six months imprisonment to a \$10,000 fine and five years imprisonment.

Joan Anderson Growe, who as Secretary of State of Minnesota was responsible for implementing same-day registration, has been a national spokesperson for reform to allow greater participation in elections. Since Minnesota ranks first in the nation in the percent participation in elections, her experience--reported in the following pages--is particularly significant.



## SAME-DAY REGISTRATION: MINNESOTA

by Joan Anderson Growe, Secretary of State

More than 90 percent of all eligible voters are registered in Minnesota, where election day--as well as most days of the year--is also voter registration day.

Minnesota has historically had among the highest rates of voter registration in the United States. We believe this is because Minnesota's registration system makes voting as easy as possible while maintaining security. Essentially, Minnesota voters register themselves.

Generally, between 80 and 85 percent of all eligible voters have registered before they come to vote. An additional 5 to 10 percent register and vote on election day.

### 5 to 10 Percent Register When They Vote

Same-day registrants go to the polling place in the precinct where their permanent residence is maintained. There they simply fill out a registration card and show proof of residence within the precinct. The accepted forms of identification are a Minnesota driver's license; a Minnesota identification card; a current student registration card, identification card, or fee statement containing the student's current address; or a notice of ineffective registration.

If the voter has none of these forms of identification, another registered voter from the same precinct may vouch for the unregistered voter. No voter who has been vouched for may in turn vouch for the residence of another voter. The registration of a voter on election day is verified by the county auditor or municipal clerk by means of a nonforwardable mailed notice, including a random sample conducted immediately after the election. If a notice is returned as undeliverable, and no determination of the voter's residence can be made, the county attorney is notified and must immediately inquire to determine if there is a possible violation. Any violation of the voter registration law is a felony. In Minnesota, voter fraud is punishable by a \$5,000 fine and up to five years imprisonment.

### Election-Day Registration Does Not Invite Fraud

Critics have worried that same-day registration is tantamount to an invitation to fraud. Some people might be encouraged to register and vote in more than one location, critics claim. In Minnesota, we have found this claim to be without foundation. I know of only two indictments in nine years. Secretaries of state in the two other states that use same-day

registration give the unanimous opinion that voter fraud has not been a problem with election-day registrants. Maine has had only two convictions in 10 years.

### Voters Register All Year

For 49 weeks of the year, Minnesotans may register to vote. Only during the 20 days before an election is registration closed. Citizens wishing to become voters simply submit a correctly completed voter registration card to either the county auditor or municipal clerk. Registration cards are available at numerous locations including county courthouses, city halls, driver's license facilities and other public agencies. During state election years, registration cards are available at post offices and from some retail businesses. In addition, registration cards are normally made available to political parties, labor unions, businesses and community groups which conduct voter registration drives. Registration cards may be returned to the county auditor or municipal clerk in person or by mail.

Each county's auditor is responsible for administering the voter registration system in that county. The auditor may choose to delegate that responsibility to a full-time municipal clerk, a common practice in the more populous municipalities. Lists of registered voters are maintained and a voting history is kept for each voter. A voter must cast a ballot at least once during any four year period to remain registered.

Upon receipt of a registration card, the auditor or clerk examines the card to determine if all required information has been included. If the card is incomplete, a notice of ineffective registration is sent to the person submitting the card. This notice states the reasons that the attempt to register was not accepted. The voter may then submit a corrected registration card. If this registration is complete, the county auditor or municipal clerk mails the voter a nonforwardable notice of registration, which identifies the voter's polling place. If for any reason this notice is returned to the auditor's or clerk's office, the word "challenged" is placed on the voter's registration card. Should the challenged voter appear at the polling place on election day, the election judges are instructed to ascertain that person's place of residence and eligibility to vote.

### Accessibility Means High Voter Registration

The United States, where we close registration in the weeks before an election, ranks twentieth in voter participation of 21 industrial democracies. All other Anglo-European countries automatically enroll their citizens on a permanent, nationwide election register.

In Minnesota, we have always believed it is better to encourage people to exercise their right to vote rather than to place unnecessary barriers in their paths. One of the major barriers to voter participation is early deadlines. By opening registration on election day, Minnesota encourages maximum participation in all elections. The result, we believe, is good government. That is the guiding principal behind Minnesota's effective voter registration system.

Prepared by New Jersey Human SERVE

Information on States with Same Day Registration  
(Note: North Dakota actually requires no registration whatsoever)

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State	Year Implemented
Maine -----	1974
Wisconsin -----	1976
Minnesota -----	1975
North Dakota -----	1951
*Oregon -----	1975

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Cases of Fraud (not official data)

Maine - 2 convictions during 10 years  
Wisconsin - in '80, 5 duplicate registrations referred to D.A.  
Minnesota - 2 known indictments during 9 years  
North Dakota - no known cases during 23 years  
\*Oregon - "a handful or so" of cases during 9 years

---

Identification Required

Maine - decided by locality--usually affidavit and driver license  
Wisconsin - decided by locality--witness, or name and address ID  
Minnesota - Witness, or either driver license, state ID card, or  
student ID  
North Dakota - Recognized by poll worker or affidavit  
\*Oregon - Affidavit only

---

Locations for Same Day Registration

Maine - Polling place, or in some urban areas--city hall only  
Wisconsin - all polling places  
Minnesota - all polling places  
North Dakota - all polling places  
\*Oregon - County clerk's office only

---

Verification

Maine - None  
Wisconsin - Card mailed to all same day registrants  
Minnesota - Card mailed to all same day registrants  
North Dakota - Randomly selected 10% of voters checked by either  
property tax rolls or mailing  
\*Oregon - Card mailed to all same day registrants

---

Percentage Registering to Vote on Election Day

Maine - depending on locality, 2 to 9% of all registrants  
Wisconsin - in Milwaukee, 20% of all registrants  
                  remainder of state, 10% of all registrants  
Minnesota - 16.3% of all voters

---

Percentage of Adult Population Voting

Maine - 62% (Year unknown)  
Minnesota - 69.5% in 1984  
North Dakota - 68.9% in 1984  
\* Oregon - 78.7% in 1984.

---

Increase in Percentage of Adult Population Voting  
(1972-1980 Presidential Elections)

Maine - 5.6%  
Wisconsin - 11.0  
Minnesota - 4.0  
\* Oregon - 2.4

---

Percentage of Eligible Population Registered  
(Census Data--self-reporting)

Maine - 83.5%  
Wisconsin - 82.9  
Minnesota - 85.8  
North Dakota - 92.6  
\* Oregon - 74.3  
  
New Jersey - 67.9  
National Average - 68.3

---

\* Oregon no longer allows election-day registration

MAR 2 1987



# State of Maine Department of State

JAMES S. HENDERSON  
Deputy  
Secretary of State  
(207) 289-4189

STATE HOUSE STATION 101  
AUGUSTA, MAINE 04333

## DIVISION OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

February 27, 1987

APA Rules  
289-4184

Campaign Reporting  
289-4175

Connie Stewart  
Kansas AFL/CIO  
P.O. Box 1455  
Topeka, Kansas 66601

Ron Thornburgh  
Kansas Sec. of State Office  
2nd Floor State Capitol  
Topeka, Kansas 66612

Notaries  
Commissions  
289-4181

This is in response to your telephone request of today.

Registration  
New Entry Changes  
289-4185  
Corporation Information  
Annual Biennial Reports  
289-4190

Maine has had election day voter registration since 1974 and has had virtually no cases of fraud associated with it. There have been one or two isolated cases which were prosecuted.

The City Clerk of Lewiston, Maine, twice in the last ten years, has checked to see if former Lewiston residents who registered in other towns on election day also voted in Lewiston. He found none.

Elections  
289-4189  
Ballot Room  
289-4186

The major problem with election day registration is the volume of registrants on that day. Registrars may appoint deputies to assist them in this rush period. In addition, Maine allows Notaries Public to witness voter registration applications outside the registrar's office for delivery to that office. This "absentee registration" takes some of the pressure off the election day process.

Lobbyist  
Registration  
289-4178

Local registrars may request identification and documentation to insure that only residents apply for registration.

Pardons  
289-4181

Maine had the second highest participation as a percent of the voting age population in 1984, edged out by Minnesota. Since roughly 5% of voters register on election day, and since registration requirements have historically been the greatest barrier to voter participation, I believe our system contributes greatly to the high turnout.

Uniform  
Commercial  
Code  
289-4177

I hope this info will be helpful to you.

Sincerely,

James S. Henderson  
Deputy Secretary of State

JSH/ms

General  
Information  
289-4180

MAR 4 1987



JOAN ANDERSON GROWE  
Secretary of State

ELAINE VOSS  
Deputy Secretary of State

State of Minnesota  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE  
St. Paul 55155

February 27, 1987

180 STATE OFFICE BUILDING  
Corporation Division: 612/296-2803  
UCC Division: 612/296-2434  
Election Division: 612/296-2805  
Office of the Secretary: 612/296-3266  
Office of Deputy Secy.: 612/296-2309

Connie Stewart  
Kansas AFL-CIO  
P.O. Box 1455  
Topeka, KS 66601

Dear Ms. Stewart,

As I discussed with you earlier this week, Minnesota has implemented election day voter registration since 1973. It has been our experience that election day registration has been effectively administered in Minnesota by local officials to the benefit of the voters.

Any eligible voter may register at the polling place on election day if the voter presents to the election judges one of the authorized proofs of residence and completes a registration card with the oath of eligibility. After registering, the election day registrant votes in the same manner as any other voter.

All new registrations, both pre-registrations and election day registrations, are verified by a nonforwardable mailed notice. In addition, notices are mailed to a three percent random sample of election day registrants immediately following the election. Any notices returned by the postal service as undeliverable are investigated by election officials and, if unresolved, are turned over to the county attorney for possible prosecution. The incidence of fraud connected with election day registration in Minnesota has been minimal and there is no evidence that there is any difference between pre-registration and election day registration in this regard.

Election day registration works in Minnesota. It helps ensure that administrative barriers or lack of information about the state voter registration laws does not prevent any eligible voter from exercising the right to vote. During a presidential election, as many as 20% of the total number of persons voting actually register on election day. Many of these voters would undoubtedly have been disenfranchised if election day registration had not been a possibility. We believe that the voter registration system should promote participation in the electoral process, not deter it. We believe election day registration in Minnesota is successful and beneficial to the voters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Grace Louise Haukoos".  
Grace Haukoos  
Director of Elections

C8702.36

"AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYER"

4-12

# Agency-Based Registration

The broader the spectrum of public agencies participating in voter registration, the fuller the access of citizens to voting. In the course of the year, almost all of us visit public offices or facilities--public libraries, driver's license bureaus, tax offices, unemployment offices, or public health centers. One advantage of public agency registration is that low-income citizens and members of minority groups--who are currently underrepresented in the electorate--are likely to have contact with a number of these agencies. Thus agency-based registration provides an institutional solution that begins to address the problems of an electorate which is not representative of the citizenry as a whole.

Precedents for public-agency registration commonly include registration opportunities at high schools, libraries, and motor vehicle offices. A survey of first-time registrants in 1984 showed that 25 percent registered in one of those locations.

Built on these precedents and the philosophy of government's obligation to make registration widely and easily available to the citizenry, a comprehensive agency-based strategy emerged in the spring of 1983.

Since then, response has been strong. Executive orders mandating voter registration services in state agencies have been issued in five states: Idaho, Montana, New York, Ohio, and Texas. In addition, the governor of Minnesota wrote to the director of each public agency asking that voters be registered there and the governors of New Mexico and West Virginia authorized their Departments of Human Services to start voter registration in branch offices. Twenty-one county executives or mayors have also directed or permitted the agencies under their authority to offer to register voters. The states of Maryland, Washington, and Illinois have passed legislation authorizing various versions of agency registration.

The agency-based registration system is a flexible and cost-effective method of registration. The more active systems allow state employees to register voters on the spot; the more passive schemes display information or distribute forms in public waiting areas. Early figures reinforce the expectation that agency-based registration would make significant increases in the proportion of voters. In New York, for example, 10,000 people were registered through public agencies in just two weeks, and in Ohio 70,000 people were registered in six weeks.

Ohio's success is due in large part to Secretary of State Sherrod Brown, whose efforts are reviewed by Margaret Rosenfield in the following pages.



## AGENCY-BASED REGISTRATION: OHIO

by Margaret Rosenfield, Director of Elections Programs

Agency-based registration is one of the most effective and efficient ways to make voter registration accessible to citizens. Almost everybody has some business with government agencies. Ohioans renew their driver's licenses or auto tags at the Bureau of Motor Vehicles; attend school programs at public high schools; pay property taxes in county buildings; pay water bills at city buildings; camp in state parks managed by the Department of Natural Resources; apply for unemployment benefits at the Bureau of Employment Services; or participate in senior citizens programs sponsored by the Department of Aging.

Each of these agency visits can provide an additional convenient, quick, and cost-effective service to the public by affording a chance to register to vote or to update a registration.

Agency-based registration is cost effective, but it is not cost free. We've found no way to increase registration without increased cost. There must be a registration form for every new voter. Processing those forms takes time and staff, regardless of whether the registration is accomplished in person at a registration office, by mail, by a volunteer registrar, or at a state agency. But agency-based registration can pay for itself by doubling service without doubling cost.

The primary cost of agency-based registration is printing. A state must have enough copies of its voter registration forms to make them available in sufficient quantities to all agencies. In 1984, Secretary of State Sherrod Brown introduced a uniform statewide voter registration form that costs about three and one-half cents each to print. Before year's end, 500,000 copies had been printed and distributed to voter registration drives and government agencies. Thousands of additional forms were reproduced by registration organizations. Counties copied and distributed many more forms.

So printing costs are not negligible. But the results are impressive. With a voting age population of 7,836,000 (census estimate), Ohio increased its registered voters by 800,000 to a record 6,358,558 by October 1984. Over 70,000 of those were registered through state agencies.

### How Agency-Based Registration Came to Ohio

Agency-based registration can be authorized by legislative action or by executive order or by a combination of the two. Since 1977, Ohio law has made voter registration avail-

able to anyone renewing a driver's license. (We have also allowed registration by mail since that date.) In 1983, every public high school was required by law to offer voter registration. But it was not until 1984 that agency-based registration was mandated on a broad scale.

Agency-based voter registration was instituted in Ohio on July 3, 1984, by an executive order issued by Gov. Richard F. Celeste instructing all state agencies "to offer nonpartisan voter registration at all times to their employees, clients, and the general public, and to provide this service at no cost to the people of Ohio."

Secretary of State Sherrod Brown then met with the Governor's cabinet to outline the materials and support services available to help them in carrying out this mandate. Each department was asked to submit a one-page plan and to identify a liaison with the secretary of state. Secretary of State staff sent out posters and registration forms, conducted workshops, provided legal advice on proper procedures, and answered the questions that arise with the introduction of a new program.

After registration closed on October 8, 1984, reports were received from 31 state agencies and departments. Some others reported that they had no efficient way of collecting figures for how many registrations they had assisted.

Registration continued in state agencies in 1985, but at a less fevered pace. The high level of participation in a presidential election year is always followed by a lesser degree of excitement about registration in the following year. However, a reminder memo was sent to all state agencies in May 1985, and they have settled into providing ongoing, institutionalized registration to their employees and to the public.

The legality of Ohio's agency-based registration was challenged in September 1984, but that challenge has been withdrawn. Suspicions that the program was partisan have subsided as both political parties, as well as organizations representing the full spectrum of interests, have seen that agency-based registration is in fact nonpartisan, cost-effective, and a real service to all Ohio citizens.

In 1984 and again in 1985, letters were sent to cities and counties inviting them to issue executive orders to make voter registration available in all their municipal or county agencies. About a dozen mostly large cities and three counties have responded, making it possible for their citizens to register at any office of any level of government in those communities.

## Ohio's Advice: Keep It Simple

Out of our experience, we have gleaned some helpful hints for other states and governmental jurisdictions that are introducing agency-based voter registration. They can be summarized as 1) keep it simple, and 2) provide materials and support services.

When telling government agencies to provide registration services, it must be kept in mind that the agency has its own mission and registration must be structured so as not to interfere with that primary mission.

A uniform, statewide mail registration form simplifies agency registration--and every other kind of registration effort, for that matter. If your state does not have one, lobby for it. With a verification procedure (which you should have anyway), fraud is not increased.

If an agency has little contact with the public, its voter registration responsibility will be primarily to its own employees. The personnel office may keep registration forms available; notices on bulletin boards or enclosed with paychecks can remind employees to update their registration when they move. Registration tables in large office buildings the week before registration deadlines are effective.

Agencies that deal with the public in moderate to heavy numbers can and must offer voter registration in ways that are not time consuming. It takes only a moment to ask someone if they would like to register to vote. If they say yes, they are given a form and offered answers to their questions. Extra forms are offered for family members or friends. One person in an office can collect the completed forms every week and drop them in a big envelope to be sent to the local and state election officials. Many local registration officials will even be willing to arrange for periodic pick-ups, especially just before registration deadlines.

Times of peak registration activity, when agencies might be overburdened by members of the public registering to vote in large numbers, are also the times when registration drives are most active. Busy agencies should welcome volunteers from nonpartisan registration organizations.

## Support the Agencies that Help

In addition to a simple system, government agencies also need plenty of materials and support services available to them. Registration forms and posters should be on hand and ready for quick distribution. Brief, simple instruction sheets should be available. A photocopied order form is a simple way for agencies to request registration forms or posters. A list of local registration officials (with addresses and phone

numbers) helps regional offices to get answers to their questions. Names and phone numbers where agencies can get procedural and legal questions answered and can get speakers to do workshops for them also help agencies to take on responsibilities that are unfamiliar. It may be necessary in some states to deputize agency employees so they are authorized to receive or assist with registration.

Workshops are very useful. Workshops for agencies that deal with senior citizens or the disabled can explain the special provisions in state and federal law that ensure voting accessibility. A workshop with corrections officials can clarify the voting rights of misdemeanants or recently released prisoners. Workshops for school staff can alert them to special provisions affecting 17-year-olds.

Follow-through with support services completes a good support program. Agencies need to be aware of registration deadlines for upcoming elections, for example, so they do not inadvertently disenfranchise applicants.

### Seize the Initiative

If you lack the time or resources to institute a thoroughly planned agency-based voter registration program, start anyway. Solve problems as they arise. Work with election officials to get them to believe in voter outreach. They will certainly want to assure that the registration forms they receive are completed correctly and received on time. Agency registration is really taking some of the burden off those officials, although they may not see it that way initially. The effectiveness of the program will demonstrate its importance, and you will be able to argue for the resources you need to provide materials and support services.

Voting is a precious Constitutional right. Agency-based registration can encourage the exercise of that right among our citizens.

# Motor-Voter Registration

When citizens can register to vote at the same time--and with the same ease--as they get a driver's license, registration increases.

The advantages are clear. First, the registration "net" is spread wider. Ninety percent of people old enough to vote in Michigan, where motor-voter registration was born, visit driver's license stations. Second, registration is easier. As Michigan Secretary of State Richard H. Austin noted, "much had been done over the years to make licensing more convenient for Michigan drivers, but nothing had ever been done to make it easier for electors to register to vote." Third, in approaching the responsibility of voter registration actively and aggressively, states also save themselves trouble. When registration is open and well publicized throughout the year, elections authorities are no longer confronted with bursts of activity as registration deadlines approach.

Other states have opened driver's license offices for registration. In Arizona and Colorado, where motor voter came to the ballot by citizen initiative, registration efforts at driver's license offices are most active. Every person who visits those offices is solicited to register. Maine, Ohio, and Oregon have also adopted motor-voter programs. A number of other states permit or authorize registration at public agencies including driver's license offices.

In Arizona, 66,609 people used the program to register during the first six months. In Navajo County--where most of the population is Indian and where voter registration levels were among the worst in the state--nearly a quarter of all license applicants registered. During the first month of Colorado's new program 10,000 voters registered. Gains remain high over time. In the ten years of its motor-voter program, registration in Michigan has increased over 15 percent and the voting population has increased by 11 percent.

Motor-voter registration opens the door to other advantageous combinations. For one, voter records can be cross-checked with driver's license records to improve the integrity of voting lists. Arizona now compares voter and driver's license lists before purging its registration rolls.

Combining voter registration with such high-priority activities as getting a driver's licence is a step toward automatic registration. Already states--Colorado, most recently--are experimenting with combining both "registrations" on a single form. Universal registration activists look forward to a day when every state form that establishes state citizenship and residency also features a universal state registration checkoff.

In the following pages, Secretary of State Richard H. Austin describes Michigan's pioneering motor-voter program.

## "MOTOR-VOTER" REGISTRATION: MICHIGAN

by Richard Austin, Secretary of State

Michigan electors may apply for and update their voter registrations at all driver's license stations, thanks to Michigan's Branch Office Voter Registration Program, commonly known as "motor-voter" registration.

In Michigan, driver's licenses are issued through 180 Secretary of State Branch Offices and the 14 Police and Sheriff Departments across the state that issue driver licenses where the population is sparse.

Legislation to establish the registration program was introduced with bipartisan support in both houses of the Michigan State Legislature, signed into law by the governor as Public Act 28 of 1975, and put into effect in October, 1975.

### Greater Convenience for Michigan Voters

In Michigan, voter registration is the responsibility of the 269 city and 1,242 township clerks in the state; registration rosters are not kept on a statewide--or even on a countywide--basis. Before the Branch Office Voter Registration Program, many qualified electors, confused by their state's 1,511 registration districts in the state, had difficulty knowing where they should register to vote. Further frustration was sometimes involved because of the irregular office hours kept by clerks in many of Michigan's smaller communities. Now, qualified electors can apply to register to vote in any Secretary of State Branch Office in the state, with the assurance that their registration application will be forwarded to the proper jurisdiction in a matter of days. What's more, most branch offices are open eight hours a day, five days a week; many of the offices are also open on Saturdays.

### Registration Base Increased

Since Michigan drivers are required to renew their driver's licenses every two to four years (renewal frequency depends on a driver's record) and 90 percent of the qualified electors in the state have driver's licenses, 90 percent of the qualified electors in the state are kept in regular contact with Branch Office Voter Registration Program through driver's license renewals alone. A large number of the remaining voters in the state also come in contact with the registration program as branch offices also issue identification cards to Michigan residents who do not have a driver's license.

As a result of the program's reach, there has been a significant increase in the number of registered voters in the state. Over 80 percent of Michigan's 6.5 million eligible electors are registered to vote. That figure is far above the national average.

#### Election Officials Benefit

In Michigan, voter registration is cut off 30 days before each election. Unregistered electors who fail to meet the 30-day registration deadline are ineligible to vote in the ensuing election. As a result of this provision, before the advent of the Branch Office Voter Registration Program, voter registration activity in the state traditionally peaked 30 days before the election as unregistered electors rushed to beat the deadline. To meet a registration rush, Michigan's city and township clerks had to work long hours, at times facing lines of electors that stretched beyond their office doors. Having to process a large batch of new registrations after a deadline elapsed took even more time out of the clerks' busy pre-election schedules.

Today, thanks to the Branch Office Voter Registration Program, the last-minute rush has disappeared. The reasons for its disappearance are simple. First, since the program maintains the state's voter registration base at a high level, fewer electors remain unregistered before each election. Second, since Michigan residents apply for driver's licenses, renew driver's licenses, file address changes, and complete other types of transactions at branch offices year round, voter registration here is staggered throughout the year.

#### Poll Workers' Jobs Simplified

Michigan voters who move to a different city or township within the state are required to complete a new registration. Voter registrations are not transferred between communities.

As soon as a voter who has moved to a new community completes a new registration, an authorization to cancel the voter's previous registration is forwarded to the clerk of the city or township where the elector previously resided.

Michigan voters who move within the same city or township in the state are required to update their registrations. A new registration is not required. Registered voters who move from one city or township within the state to another but fail to reregister in the new location, may vote one additional time in the old precinct, if the move was made 60 days prior to the election. Registered voters who move from one election precinct to another within the same city or township but who fail to update their registration, may also vote one last time at the old address regardless of when the move was made.

## Voters' Frustrations Relieved

As experience has shown, these regulations can lead to many inconveniences and frustrations. Voters arrive at the polls only to learn that they must travel to another polling place in order to vote, or worse, discover that they are ineligible to vote because they failed to reregister after moving. The extra processing steps delay other waiting voters. The special paperwork must be secured by poll workers and forwarded to the clerk for further processing. In short, it is to everyone's advantage if voters reregister as soon as they move. But that is a task easily overlooked.

Again, the Branch Office Voter Registration Program provided an answer. Because driver's licenses are frequently used for identification, drivers have a compelling reason to have their driver's licenses updated. Since voter reregistration can be conveniently completed when a driver/voter visits a branch office, more registrations are now handled there before elections. Of course, of even greater importance is the safeguard against disenfranchisement this net provides.

## All For Low Costs

Finally, the Branch Office Registration Program is acclaimed because its operational cost--approximately \$100,000 per year--is surprisingly low given the program's size and benefits.

The bulk of the program's yearly \$100,000 appropriation is used to cover postage and printing of the Branch Office Voter Registration Form. The annual appropriation does not include the salaries of the staff who administer the program, computer expenses, or the cost of maintaining the branch offices throughout the state. Factoring in these costs would result in an inaccurate picture of the program's actual add-on cost to the state, because the staff, facilities, and computer equipment needed to administer the program were already in place when the program was introduced.





Bill Graves  
Secretary of State

2nd Floor, State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612-1594  
(913) 296-2236

## STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON THORNBURGH  
HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 5, 1991

House Bill 2022

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Secretary of State Graves.

We are happy to support the concept of House Bill 2022. We firmly believe the State of Kansas has a responsibility to register voters in an efficient and safe manner. Providing the opportunity to register while obtaining a drivers license is an idea whose time has come.

However, we must take several steps to insure the reliability of the system. We propose the following amendments to HB 2022:

1 - No automatic registration with the drivers license. By deleting section (b) (2), a person applying for a drivers license, would be required to complete a voter registration application in order to become registered to vote. As the bill is currently drafted, a person could apply for license, fail to complete a voter registration card and fail to check the designated box. Is this person registered to vote? It is very important that the voter take some kind of action to register to vote. We are providing the opportunity to register with as little action on the voter's part as possible. In other words, we have lead the horse to water, but we may not be able to make him drink.

2 - Provide Rule and Regulation authority for our office to administer the motor voter program.

3 - Enact the law in July of 1991, but implement the requirements in January of 1993. A program of this size and scope demands considerable foresight and planning. With our office working to implement the statewide voter registration database, we do not have the personnel or the necessary time to implement this program any sooner.

With the above amendments, the citizens of our state would benefit greatly. Motor voter will provide voter registration at an outlet used by the vast majority of citizens in our state.

House Elections Committee  
Attachment 5  
3-5-91



Bill Graves  
Secretary of State

2nd Floor, State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612-1594  
(913) 296-2236

## STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON THORNBURGH  
HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 5, 1991

House Bill 2291

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Secretary of State Graves.

We are opposed to House Bill 2291. Voter registration on election day will only cause confusion and delays at the polling place. The purpose of a polling place is to determine the intent of those legally registered to vote; to use election day for any other purpose will only harm the system.

In addition, our system, by the nature of those who participate in it, demands immediate satisfaction. By allowing people to register and vote on election day will delay the results of the election while those registrations are verified. Verification of voter registration is at the heart of a clean system. The integrity of our electoral process should not be challenged because some people are too lazy to register 14 days prior to the election by mail, by phone, or (if House Bill 2022 passes) through the Department of Motor Vehicles.

Again, we emphasize that our system is working. Don't clog the process with unnecessary laws that will only serve to provide a greater potential for fraud.

We ask that you report House Bill 2291 unfavorably.

House Elections Committee  
Attachment 6  
3-5-91



Bill Graves  
Secretary of State

2nd Floor, State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612-1594  
(913) 296-2236

## STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON THORNBURG  
HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 5, 1991

House Bill 2292

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Secretary of State Graves.

We are in favor of agency based registration as proposed in House Bill 2292 even though it seems somewhat unnecessary in light of House Bill 2291. We ask that you allow the system of voter registration among state agencies to walk before it runs. Using the Department of Motor Vehicles as a testing agency for the program, we can work out the kinks with one agency rather than several.

We stand in favor of using the resources of state government to register voters. However, we would ask that the system be established on firm footing prior to vast implementation.

Thank you and I will be happy to stand for questions.

Bill Graves  
Secretary of State



2nd Floor, State Capitol  
Topeka, KS 66612-1594  
(913) 296-2236

## STATE OF KANSAS

TESTIMONY OF RON THORNBURGH  
HOUSE ELECTIONS COMMITTEE  
MARCH 5, 1991

House Bill 2326

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today on behalf of Secretary of State Graves.

We are in favor of House Bill 2326, but would ask that rather than making the voter re-register on election day, simply allow them to complete the affidavit of name change. The job of conducting an election is difficult enough. Providing an additional duty for board workers could cause longer lines thereby deterring registered voters because of the delay.

In addition, statutes would need to be changed to authorize the county election officer to change the name on the permanent voter registration record and send a new certificate of registration.

These simple amendments would make it much easier for the poll workers to do their job: conducting elections.

We ask that you pass House Bill 2326 favorably with our proposed amendments.

HOUSE BILL NO. 2022  
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS AND COMMENTS

Enactment of this legislation would significantly impact the Department of Revenue. One-time administrative costs of \$31,232 would be incurred in FY 1991 and annual administrative costs would be incurred of \$191,968 in FY 1992.

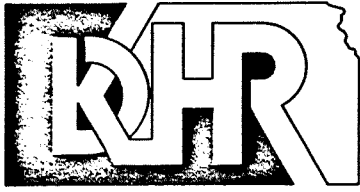
The Division of Vehicles would incur administrative costs for additional personnel necessary to handle the increased workload due to the voter registration requirement. The seven major examining stations (located in Topeka, Kansas City, and Wichita) are all currently operating at or above capacity level. The additional step of voter registration in the licensing procedure will slow applicant processing in these stations. Seven additional examiner positions (one in each station) will be needed to maintain current applicant processing time. Additional costs would also be incurred for examiner uniforms. An Office Assitant III position would be needed for the Driver Control Bureau central office to key enter the voter registration applications not processed at an on-line examining station.

The Department's Bureau of Information Systems would also incur administrative costs to make programming changes necessary to capture additional voter registration data and to forward that information to individual county election officials. Additional programming personnel would be required to complete the programming changes.

The Department is concerned with the implementation of this bill for the following reasons:

Effective date of the bill. The bill would require extensive computer programming changes and new computer generated application cards would need to be designed and ordered. This could not be completed by the effective date.

Compounding of applicant processing problems in the large metropolitan examining stations.

**Commission on Disability Concerns**

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Testimony on HB 2022 to the  
House Elections Committee  
by Martha K. Gabehart,  
Acting Executive Director  
Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns  
March 5, 1991

The opinions stated here are those of the Kansas Commission on Disability Concerns (KCDC) and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the administration.

KCDC supports HB 2022 which makes voter registration a part of applying for driver's licenses and non-driving identification cards. This change in the law would be especially beneficial to Kansas voters with disabilities who cannot drive. This makes registering to vote much easier and faster because it saves having to make a special trip to register to vote.

Currently, public offices are filled by individuals who receive the support of a smaller proportion of eligible voters than in any other industrialized democracy. Elsewhere 80 per cent turnout is common. In the Congressional election this past November, only about 36 per cent of the U.S. citizens bothered to cast their votes. In 1988, according to the Harris Poll, 39 per cent of all Americans with disabilities did not vote because they were not registered to vote. KCDC believes that making it easier to register to vote will increase the participation of all voters, especially the participation of voters

KCDC Testimony for HB 2022

March 5, 1991

Page 2

with disabilities, in the electoral process.

HB 2022 is similar to the National Voter Registration Act of 1991 which is before Congress at this time. Like HB 2022 it requires that the application for a driver's license also be a voter registration form. A similar bill passed the federal House of Representatives last year with bipartisan support.

KCDC urges your support of HB 2022. Voting is a right in this country. Making it as easy as possible to register keeps it a right and not a test of ability.

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