

Fiscal: Fiscal impact issued

Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 02/04/15

Action: Do Pass. Refer To Ways And Means.

Meeting Dates: 02/02, 02/04

House

Yeas: 5 - Barnhart, Hoyle, Nosse, Rayfield, Smith Warner

Nays: 4 - Gilliam, Kennemer, Wilson, McLane

Prepared By: Erin Seiler, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Oregon Department of Transportation to provide Secretary of State (SOS) with electronic records containing legal name, age, residence and citizenship information and electronic signature of each person who may qualify as voter as prescribed by rule. Directs SOS to register as voter each nonregistered person who is qualified to vote and to notify persons on how to decline registration and how to select political party affiliation. Increases maximum number of voters in precinct from 5,000 to 10,000. Establishes July 1, 2015, as date for determination of total number of registered voters in Oregon for purpose of maintaining status as minor political party for 2016 general election. Prohibits public record disclosure of voter registration information for persons under 18 years of age who are registered to vote. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Security of protected voter information
- Removal of barriers to participation
- Proof of citizenship requirement for registration
- Implementation cost and cost-savings for county clerks
- Ability to participate in elections
- Access to general election ballot for minor parties
- Registration deadline
- Impact on status of minor political parties
- Ability to opt-out of voter registration
- Reasons for registering or not registering to vote
- Amendments
- Data security mechanisms

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) established procedures to increase voter registration of eligible people in elections for federal office; to protect the integrity of the political process; and to assure accurate and current voter registration rolls. To increase registration of eligible citizens, the NVRA required states to permit voter registration through the following means (in addition to any other method provided by state law): (a) by application simultaneous with an application for a motor

vehicle driver's license ("motor-voter" registration); (b) by use of a uniform mail application; and, (c) by application in person at a designated agency.

ORS 247.208 permits the Secretary of State (SOS) by rule, in accordance with the requirements of NVRA, to designate agencies as voter registration agencies. A NVRA agency could be a state, county, city or special district office; federal office; or nongovernmental office. House Bill 2177 requires the Oregon Department of Transportation, a NVRA agency, to provide the SOS the electronic records containing legal name, age, residence and citizenship information and electronic signature of each person who may qualify as voter. Individuals registered to vote through this process would be notified of registration status, how to cancel registration, and how to adopt a political party affiliation.

Additionally, under current statute (ORS 248.008) a minor party gains or maintains ballot access by maintaining a voter registration equal to 1/10 of 1 percent of all voters and by running a statewide candidate that polls at least 1 percent of all voters participating in the preceding general election or by maintaining a voter registration equal to 1/2 of 1 percent of the total number of registered electors in the state that are registered as members of the party. HB 2177 would allow minor parties to utilize the total number of registered electors on July 1, 2015, for purposes of maintaining status as a minor political party for the 2016 general election.