



TOWN OF GREENWICH

REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
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REGISTRAR OF VOTERS
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Chairman Slossberg, Chairman Morin, and all members of the Government Administration and Elections Committee:

My name is Fred DeCaro III. I am the Republican Registrar of Voters for the Town of Greenwich. This testimony is submitted on behalf of myself and my Democratic colleague, Sharon Vecchiolla

Both the Republican and Democrat Registrars for the Town of Greenwich wish to state our agreement with the majority ROVAC position against Election Day Registration.

This bill is a further step in a series of changes which we believe erodes voter confidence in the election process.

The first such change was last year's elimination of observers at the polling place. We believe that the simple and open act of allowing observers into the polling place enhances voter confidence, even if the privilege is used infrequently. To remove them is to place clouds where there should be sunshine.

This bill adds to the workload of Registrars on what is already their busiest day of the year, and has insufficient protection to safeguard against fraud.

In 2008, more than 340 individuals used something very similar to "Election Day Registration" in our Town. They filled out Presidential Ballots which allowed them to vote for President of the United States, even though they had failed to meet any of the very reasonable voter registration deadlines in our state.

We followed up on these 340 ballots, and sent voter registration cards to the address provided on the applications, and received back dozens if not hundreds of pieces of mail from the Post Office indicating the material was undeliverable. Further, less than 25% of the people actually registered.

Based on the rate of undeliverable of our study, we have very serious concerns related to a process which accepts AND COUNTS a vote without any of the traditional verification process used by registrars.

Further, this bill allows a voter to bring a copy of a utility bill with them as proof of residency. Photocopies allow for easy manipulation, and we have previously sent to my state legislators sample copies of utility bills with doctored address which we have created using a standard computer and a photocopier. Individuals should need to bring original documents for inspection, not photocopies.

As Registrars, we understand and respect the concept of one person, one vote. Part of that concept is that no legitimate voter's rights should be diminished because of illegitimate acts on the part of others. This bill further increases the risk of such acts.

In addition, we would comment on the informational conference call provided to Registrars of Voters by the Secretary of State on this topic. At that call, we learned:

1. Only 9 states currently have Election Day Registration. There is no groundswell of support nationwide for this concept.
2. Election officials from Wisconsin were the featured speakers during the informational call. During this call, it was revealed that the State of Wisconsin has recently implemented a photo ID requirement. This is a very important counter-balance. If we are to increase accessibility to the polls (and it is hard to argue that the polls are currently inaccessible), this should be balanced with improvements to security. Our neighbor Rhode Island also recently implemented a photo id requirement.

Further, at testimony given at the Secretary of the State's Election Task Force, an elections expert from the Pew Center on the States said repeatedly that their research indicates no increase in voter turnout as a result of Election Day Registration. The Secretary of the State has repeatedly said at conferences and presentations that our state has very little data regarding elections. We agree, and believe it is premature to create this additional expense and risk to our process for something which can not be proven to improve turnout.

This bill has insufficient protections to safeguard the value of the votes cast by voters who have followed the process as it currently stands.

Thank you.

Fred DeCaro III
Republican Registrar of Voters

Sharon Vecchiolla
Democratic Registrar of Voters