

Testimony for SB1051
GAE Committee
Public Hearing
Monday, March 9, 2015

We, Republican Deborah Jones and Democrat Barbara Braunstin the Winchester Registrars of Voters, would like to go on record as opposing SB1051.

Coming from a small town where controversy is ever present, we are proud to say that in the six years that we have served together, we have aspired to a good working relationship. We share a sense of respect for one another, and at no time do we feel that either one of us is above the other. All decisions are jointly made. We maintain a bi-partisan office and take pride in our ideals as Registrars. Are we unique, we do not think so. Granted, there are some towns that have issues, but when it comes down to performing our duties, all issues are put aside and the work gets done according to law.

It is very important that two people from opposing parties be a part of this office from the day-to-day business right down to the election-day process when we first test our memory cards and lock down the scanners for election day. It is by far the most democratic way of conducting business and we are required to be accountable for each step we take. We are each other's shadow. It is our check and balance.

Yes, we have been appointed by our individual parties and voted into office by the electors, but that's where the politics stops. We are now two individuals in the office with the common interest of doing the best job we can to assure accurate records keeping, and a positive voting experience and environment on election day.

The elimination of the two-registrar system that is currently being proposed in SB1051 and appointment of one Registrar by the Legislative Body and Town Clerk will eliminate any minority representation. Ultimately, that person could change every two years depending upon the majority party in office. It takes years of training and understanding the election process and the overall job of the Registrars.

The recommendation to remove a Registrar, and add duties to the Town Clerk does not make good sense. Please do not vote in favor of these changes and leave the Registrars and Town Clerks to do the jobs that they have been so elected to do.

Thank you for your time and we do hope that you will consider our concerns.

Respectfully submitted,

Deborah Jones
Republican Registrar

Barbara Braunstein
Democrat Registrar