Bill No.: SB-1046
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING ELECTION DAY REGISTRATION IN POLLING PLACES.
Vote Date: 3/29/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 3/13/2019
File No.:

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
Government Administration and Elections Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
To allow for Election Day Registration (EDR) to occur at the polling location and give the town’s Registrar of Voters access to the state-wide centralized voter registration system also known as Central Voter Registration Database (CVRD) at the polling place to verify the registrant. The legislation would authorize registrars to appoint one or more election officials to serve in each polling place in order to complete and process EDR applications. The bill also clarified that students at institutions of higher education may use their picture student ID as a valid ID to register to vote.

Substitute Language LCO No. 6722- Line 34-35 adds the time as not later than 8PM. Section 2. 9-174 allows for election day registration applicants to be in line at 8PM when the polls close.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Cheri Quickmire, Executive Director of Common Cause in Connecticut: Quickmire offers her support for the bill and many other bills offered this session that would increase the access and availability of same day voting. The goals of her foundation are to increase government accountability and election reform and she sees this bill as aiding in that process.
Yvonne Senturia, Election Law Specialist - The League of Women Voters of Connecticut: Senturia is in support of the bill and states that it will help their vision of maximizing voter turnout. She also supports the concept of expanding the amount of EDR participating locations. She states that there might be logistical issues with uploading all the required information to the state run database on Election Day but offer a slight modification of potentially extending it through until the following morning to alleviate this issue.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

M. Randall Collins Jr., Connecticut Conference of Municipalities: CCM is in opposition to this bill and states that it will only be a costly unfunded mandate. CCM states that the previous system of assigning one location for EDR was efficient and effective. They continue by noting that the training and equipment purchases needed to execute EDR at every location would be difficult and very expensive. Finally, CCM states that this bill is an overreaction to an issue that is isolated and the bill is unnecessarily wide in its scope.

Timothy De Carlo, Registrar of Voters from the City of Waterbury: De Carlo is in strong opposition to the bill for the following reasons. First he states that the bill when applied to large cities has the potential for significantly increasing wait times and exacerbating the existing issues of long lines. He also claims that the bill increases the chance of a voter receiving the wrong ballot if they end up using EDR in a polling location that is not their own. De Carlo points out potential logistical issues with polling locations not having the necessary infrastructure, such as the broadband internet, to support the verification process with state wide voter registration software. Finally he mentions that under the current law people who aren’t voting are not normally allowed inside polling locations and the bill doesn’t address this issue. Therefore people would be in violation of the law when attempting to register under this bill directive.

Harold Douglas, Resident New Britain: Douglas feels there is plenty of time to register prior to the elections and opposes this bill as well as any other that would make changes to the current system.

Luther Weeks, Executive Director of CTVotersCount: While Weeks supports other efforts to expand access to voting, he cannot support HB 1046 as written because of the increased costs and logistical issues associated with EDR at every polling location. He states that using the cross referencing system with the state run verification software on Election Day will only extend wait times as well as voting lines. He offers his support for other bills offered this session that expand voting opportunities but sees many problems with this particular one.

Chas Catania, Resident: Catania is in opposition of the bill and states that it may open up avenues for increased dishonesty in the voting and election process.

Joined by:
Joseph W. Hriczo, Resident of Bolton
Michael Mancarella

Reported by: Ben Lovejoy
Committee Clerk

Date: 4/9/19