

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

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1

HOUSE BILL 1973

Short Title: Computer Voter Registration.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representative Michaux.

Referred to: Judiciary.

May 11, 1989

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A COMPUTERIZED CENTRAL VOTER  
3 REGISTRATION SYSTEM.

4 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

5 Section 1. Chapter 163 of the General Statutes is amended by adding a new  
6 Article to read:

7 **“ARTICLE 7A.**

8 **“COMPUTERIZED CENTRAL VOTER REGISTRATION.**

9 **“§ 163-83. Establishment.**

10 The Secretary of State shall develop and implement a statewide computerized  
11 voter registration system to facilitate voter registration and to provide a central data base  
12 containing voter registration information for each county. The system shall encompass  
13 both software development and purchasing of the necessary hardware for the central and  
14 online systems. The Secretary of State shall be responsible for maintaining the  
15 centralized voter registration system and for supplying all necessary election day  
16 materials relating to voter registration confirmation to the county boards of election.

17 County boards of election shall be responsible for the registering of voters within  
18 their county within the guidelines established by law. Each county board of election  
19 shall have direct online access to the central system with the ability to add, change and  
20 delete records relating to their county. The county boards shall maintain a duplicate  
21 registration file until such time as it is determined that a county's voter registration files  
22 and records have been completely converted to the statewide system.

23 **“§ 163-83.1. Promulgation of rules and regulations relating to voter registration.**

1       (a) The Secretary of State shall make all necessary rules required to administer  
2 the central voter registration system. These rules shall include:

- 3           (1) Provisions for voters to submit an approved voter registration form to  
4 any of the following:  
5           a. Board of elections in county of residence;  
6           b. Any public library or branch public library in county of  
7 residence;  
8           c. All high schools in the county of residence (only for students  
9 attending the high school);  
10          d. Drivers license renewal and license tag renewal offices of the  
11 Department of Motor Vehicles; and  
12          e. Through the mail using postcard registration.  
13          (2) Provisions for the establishment, development, and maintenance of a  
14 computerized central voter registration file including any and all  
15 provisions for accessing, inputing, and outputing data in the central  
16 voter registration system file with provisions for each county to  
17 identify the precinct to which a voter should be assigned for voting  
18 purposes;  
19          (3) Provisions for possible interaction with the computerized drivers  
20 license records of the Division of Motor Vehicles;  
21          (4) Provisions for full protection and security of the data with monitoring  
22 to ensure against unauthorized entry; and  
23          (5) Provisions for the phasing in and converting of current voter  
24 registration records at the county level to the central voter registration  
25 system.

26       (b) To the extent that rules adopted under this Article conflict with Article 7 of  
27 this Chapter, the rules shall prevail.

28 **"§ 163-83.2. Voter Registration Commission.**

29       (a) There is established a Voter Registration Commission within the Office of  
30 Secretary of State to oversee the voter registration process and to make  
31 recommendations concerning changes in the election laws. The Commission shall have  
32 three members: the Secretary of State who shall serve as chairman and the chairmen, or  
33 their designees, of the two political parties having the highest voter registration in this  
34 State.

35       (b) Beginning January 1, 1991, the Voter Registration Commission in  
36 consultation with the county boards of elections shall submit a biennial report to the  
37 General Assembly concerning the status of the centralized voter registration system.  
38 This report shall also contain any recommendations by the Voter Registration  
39 Commission as to election law modifications relating to the full implementation of the  
40 centralized voter registration system.

41 **"§ 163-83.3. Voter awareness and outreach programs.**

42       The Secretary of State shall establish plans for encouraging voter awareness and  
43 voter registration in North Carolina. Outreach programs shall be developed and

1 conducted periodically throughout the State. These outreach programs should  
2 incorporate, but not be limited to, the following methods:

- 3 (1) Signs, posters, brochures, informational pamphlets, and media  
4 promotions designed to increase and encourage voter awareness and  
5 registration;
- 6 (2) Use of a toll-free number to provide information on how, when, where,  
7 and procedures for registering to vote and voting; and
- 8 (3) Use of annual election essay and slogan contests for grades 9-12 with  
9 scholarship offerings for various sponsoring organizations to winners  
10 and runners-up.

11 The Secretary of State shall report his efforts concerning the outreach program and  
12 the development of scholarship sponsorships to the election laws committees of the  
13 General Assembly annually beginning in 1990. The first report shall be presented to the  
14 1990 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly.

15 **"§ 163-83.4. Drivers license and identification card applications.**

16 The Division of Motor Vehicles shall change its applications for an original,  
17 duplicate, or change of address of drivers licenses or special identification cards so that  
18 the forms may also serve as voter registration cards. The forms must contain spaces for  
19 the information required to process the forms for voter registration and conform to the  
20 applicable rules of the Secretary of State. Applicants for drivers licenses or  
21 identification cards, or those appearing for renewal or change of address must be asked  
22 if they want to register to vote at the same time. A copy of each application containing  
23 a completed voter registration must be sent by the end of the working week to the  
24 county board of elections of the county in which the voter maintains residence.

25 The computerized drivers license and special identification card record  
26 information relating to name, address, date of birth, drivers license number, county,  
27 town, and city must be made available for access by the county boards of election and  
28 the Secretary of State for interaction with the central voter registration system.

29 **"§ 163-83.5. Close of registration files.**

30 Until the end of the seventh working day before an election, any individual who is  
31 eligible to vote may register in person by completing under oath a registration card at  
32 one of the designated locations in the county of residence, in the form prescribed by the  
33 Secretary of State, and providing proof of residence. Registration by mail will be  
34 accepted if postmarked by the 10th working day before an election. An individual may  
35 prove residence for the purpose of registering by:

- 36 (1) Showing a drivers license or special identification card issued by the  
37 Division of Motor Vehicles;
- 38 (2) Showing any document approved by the Secretary of State as proper  
39 identification; or
- 40 (3) Having a voter who is registered to vote in the precinct sign an oath in  
41 the presence of the election judge vouching that the voter personally  
42 knows that the individual is a resident of the precinct. Anyone signing  
43 a false oath shall be guilty of a general misdemeanor. A voter who has

1                    been vouched for on election day may not sign a proof of residence  
2                    oath vouching for any other individual on that election day."

3                    Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Secretary of State  
4 \$550,000 for fiscal year 1989-90, and \$2,070,000 for fiscal year 1990-91, for start-up  
5 costs to implement this act, and \$855,000 for fiscal year 1989-90, and \$855,000 for  
6 fiscal year 1990-91, to implement this act.

7                    Sec. 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 1989.