

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1991

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SENATE BILL 488
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Short Title: Registrations Forwarded Promptly.

(Public)

Sponsors: Senators Forrester; and Carter.

Referred to: Election Laws.

April 8, 1991

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE REGISTRATION OFFICIALS TO FORWARD TO
2 COUNTY BOARDS OF ELECTIONS COMPLETED APPLICATIONS TO
3 REGISTER NO LATER THAN SEVENTY-TWO HOURS AFTER THE CLOSE
4 OF REGISTRATION.
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6 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

7 Section 1. G.S. 163-67(a) reads as rewritten:

8 "(a) The county boards of elections shall establish, prior to January 1, 1971, a full-
9 time system of registration, as prescribed by the State Board of Elections, under which
10 the registration books, process, and records shall be open continuously for the
11 acceptance of registration applications and for the registration of voters at all reasonable
12 hours and time consistent with the daily function of all other county offices. In such
13 counties no registration shall entitle a registrant to vote in any primary, general or
14 special election unless the registrant shall have made application not later than the
15 twenty-first day, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, immediately preceding such
16 primary, general or special election, provided that nothing shall prohibit registrants from
17 registering to vote in future elections during such period.

18 When full-time registration has been established in a county, the official record of
19 registration shall be made and kept in the form of an application to register which, as
20 prescribed by the State Board of Elections, shall contain all information necessary to
21 show the applicant's qualifications to register. In such a county, no person shall be
22 registered to vote without first making a written, sworn, and signed application to
23 register upon the form prescribed by the State Board of Elections. If the applicant

1 cannot write because of physical disability, his name shall be written on the application
2 for him by the election official to whom he makes application, but the specific reason
3 for the applicant's failure to sign shall be clearly stated upon the face of the application.

4 Registrars, judges of election, and special registration commissioners appointed
5 under the provisions of G.S. 163-41 may take registration applications from and
6 administer registration oaths to qualified applicants without regard to the precinct
7 residence of the registrar, judge of election, special registration commissioner, or
8 applicant.

9 Applications to register which have been completed by persons who have taken the
10 required oath shall be forwarded promptly, and in no case more than 72 hours after the
11 close of registration, to the county board of elections. Failure to forward the application
12 within 72 hours shall not disqualify an otherwise properly qualified voter from voting.
13 An application to register shall constitute a valid registration unless the county board of
14 elections shall notify the applicant of its rejection within 30 days after its completion;
15 provided that where the application is completed during the last 51 days prior to the
16 election but at least 21 days, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, prior to the election, the
17 notification of rejection shall be made no less than 14 days prior to the election or the
18 application shall constitute a valid registration. If the application is rejected after the
19 close of the registration books as provided in G.S. 163-67(a) the board shall notify the
20 applicant at least 14 days before the election that it has rejected his application. The
21 applicant may appear before the board and, if he establishes his qualifications to register
22 prior to the election, he shall be permitted to vote. The loose-leaf binders containing the
23 precinct records and the duplicate registration record, required by G.S. 163-65(a), shall
24 be kept at all times in a safe place.

25 For the purpose of receiving registration applications, registrars shall attend the
26 voting places in their precincts only on such days and at such hours as may be fixed by
27 the county board of elections: Provided, the county board of elections shall not require
28 registrars to be present at the voting places for this purpose on any day later than the
29 twenty-first day, excluding Saturdays and Sundays, prior to a primary or election. In its
30 discretion, the county board of elections may require no attendance by registrars at the
31 voting places for the purpose of receiving registration applications.

32 The county board of elections is authorized to make reasonable rules and
33 regulations, not inconsistent with law and State Board regulations, to insure full-time
34 registration as provided in this section."

35 Sec. 2. This act is effective upon ratification.