

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1993

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HOUSE BILL 445

Short Title: Statewide Voter Regist.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Michaux; Kennedy, Luebke, and Stamey.

Referred to: Judiciary I.

March 18, 1993

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

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 **"STATEWIDE COMPUTERIZED 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 distributed-network systems.

15 The Secretary of State shall develop and implement the system so that each county  
16 board of elections can:

- 17 (1) Verify instantly that an applicant to register in its county is not also  
18 registered in another county;  
19 (2) Be notified automatically that a registered voter in its county has  
20 registered to vote in another county; and  
21 (3) Receive automatically data about a person who has applied to vote at a  
22 drivers license office or at another public agency that is authorized to  
23 accept voter-registration applications.

1        Each county board of elections shall be responsible for registering voters within  
2 its county according to law. Each county board of elections shall maintain its own  
3 computer file of registered voters in accordance with rules promulgated by the Secretary  
4 of State. Each county board of elections shall transmit through the computer network all  
5 additions, deletions, and changes in its list of registered voters immediately to the  
6 Secretary of State. The Secretary of State shall maintain a continually updated duplicate  
7 file of each county's registered voters.

8 **"§ 163-83.1. Promulgation of rules relating to voter registration.**

9        (a) The Secretary of State shall make all rules necessary to administer the  
10 statewide voter registration system established by this Article. These rules shall include  
11 provisions for:

- 12            (1) Establishing, developing, and maintaining a computerized central voter  
13            registration file;
- 14            (2) Linking the central file through a network with computerized voter  
15            registration files in each of the counties;
- 16            (3) Interacting with the computerized drivers license records of the  
17            Division of Motor Vehicles and with the computerized records of other  
18            public agencies authorized to accept voter-registration applications;
- 19            (4) Protecting and securing the data; and
- 20            (5) Converting current voter registration records in the counties in  
21            computer files that can be used on the statewide computerized  
22            registration system.

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

25 **"§ 163-83.2. Voter Registration Council.**

26        (a) There is established a Voter Registration Council within the Office of the  
27 Secretary of State to monitor the voter registration process and to make  
28 recommendations concerning changes in the election laws. The Council shall have  
29 three members:

- 30            (1) The Secretary of State, who shall serve as chairman; and
- 31            (2) The chairmen, or their designees, of the two political parties having the  
32            highest voter registration in this State.

33        (b) Beginning March 1, 1995, the Voter Registration Council, after consulting  
34 with the county boards of elections, shall submit a biennial report to the General  
35 Assembly concerning the status of the centralized voter registration system. The  
36 Council shall include in this report any recommendations it has for modifying election  
37 law for full implementation of the centralized voter registration system.

38 **"§ 163-83.3. Access to statewide voter registration file.**

39        (a) Beginning January 1, 1996, the Secretary of State shall make available free of  
40 charge, upon written request, one magnetic copy of the statewide computerized voter  
41 registration file to the chairman of each political party as defined in G.S. 163-96 as soon  
42 as practicable after the close of registration before every statewide primary and election.  
43 The file made available to the political party chairmen shall contain the name, address,  
44 sex, political affiliation, and precinct of every registered voter in the State.

1       (b) Beginning January 1, 1996, the Secretary of State shall sell, upon written  
2 request, to other public and private organizations and persons magnetic copies of the  
3 statewide computerized voter registration file. The Secretary of State may sell selective  
4 lists of registered voters according to county, congressional or legislative district, party  
5 affiliation, sex, race, date of registration, or any other reasonable category, or a  
6 combination of categories. The Secretary of State shall require all persons to whom any  
7 list is furnished under this subsection to make full reimbursement of the expenses  
8 incurred in preparing it.

9 **"§ 163-83.4. Voter awareness and outreach programs.**

10       The Secretary of State shall establish plans for encouraging voter awareness and  
11 voter registration in North Carolina. He shall develop and conduct outreach programs  
12 periodically throughout the State. These outreach programs shall incorporate, but not be  
13 limited to, the following methods:

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

22       The Secretary of State shall report his efforts concerning the outreach program and  
23 the development of scholarship sponsorships to the election laws committees of the  
24 General Assembly annually beginning in 1994. The first report shall be presented to the  
25 1994 Session of the North Carolina General Assembly."

- 26       Sec. 2. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Secretary of State:
- 27           (1) One million four hundred fifteen thousand three hundred ninety dollars  
28           (\$1,415,390) for fiscal year 1993-94 for development and installation  
29           of voter registration system software and for conversion of current  
30           registration records in each of the 100 county boards of elections and  
31           in the Secretary of State's office;
  - 32           (2) One million one hundred forty-five thousand two hundred fourteen  
33           dollars (\$1,145,214) for fiscal year 1993-94 for the purchase and  
34           installation of personal computer and communications hardware in  
35           each county;
  - 36           (3) One hundred ninety-eight thousand one hundred fifty-five dollars  
37           (\$198,155) for fiscal year 1994-95 for maintenance and support of  
38           voter registration system software after installation;
  - 39           (4) One hundred sixty thousand three hundred thirty-three dollars  
40           (\$160,333) for fiscal year 1994-95 for maintenance and support of  
41           personal-computer and communications hardware;
  - 42           (5) Two hundred one thousand eight hundred forty-five dollars (\$201,845)  
43           for fiscal year 1994-95 for operations support facilities, equipment,  
44           and staff in the Secretary of State's office; and

- 1           (6)    One hundred eighty thousand dollars (\$180,000) for fiscal year 1994-  
2                    95 for communications charges for statewide network.  
3            Sec. 3. This act becomes effective July 1, 1993.