

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HB 2815

As Reported By House Committee On:

State Government

Title: An act relating to late registration of voters.

Brief Description: Revising late voter registration procedures.

Sponsors: Representatives Dunshee, D. Schmidt, Miloscia, Haigh and Hankins; by request of Secretary of State.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

State Government: 2/2/00, 2/4/00 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Expands the type of voter who may use the late registration procedure.
- Removes the ability of a voter registrar to register a person to vote under the late registration procedure.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Majority Report: Do pass. Signed by 7 members: Representatives McMorris, Republican Co-Chair; Romero, Democratic Co-Chair; Campbell, Republican Vice Chair; Miloscia, Democratic Vice Chair; Dunshee; Haigh and D. Schmidt.

Minority Report: Without recommendation. Signed by 1 member: Representative Lambert.

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

Generally, the period in which a person may register to vote ends 30 days before an election. A person who has not registered before the 30-day period may not vote at the polls.

However, an unregistered person who is otherwise qualified to vote may register to vote up to the 15th day before an election using a late registration procedure. Under this procedure, the person may register and apply for an absentee ballot at the county auditor's office or at a special place designated for late registration. The auditor or voter registrar must then register the person to vote. The application for the absentee ballot must be promptly transmitted to the auditor along with the completed voter registration form. A person who registers using the late registration procedure may not vote at the polls, but may only vote by absentee ballot.

Summary of Bill:

The type of voter who may avail himself or herself of the late registration procedure is expanded. Qualified voters who are not registered to vote in their counties of residence may avail themselves of the late registration procedures.

A voter registrar is no longer allowed to register a person to vote under the late registration procedure. After registering a person under the late registration procedure, the auditor must promptly execute the person's request for an absentee ballot.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Testimony For: Many counties already allow persons registered in other counties or states to register late in their counties of residence. This bill would allow voters the opportunity to vote on issues in the counties where they live.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Hal Lymus, Office of the Secretary of State.