

HB 2371 -- ELECTIONS

SPONSOR: Merideth

This bill allows individuals confined under a sentence of imprisonment or while on probation or parole to vote, provided that they were not convicted of a felony or misdemeanor connected with the right of suffrage.

This bill repeals voter registration deadlines, allowing a person to register to vote before or on election day at a local election authority or polling location and allows for registering to vote via any state approved online voter registration system.

Currently, no person can be compensated for soliciting voter registration applications, other than a governmental entity or a person who is paid or compensated by a governmental entity for such solicitation. A voter registration solicitor that solicits more than 10 voter registration applications must register for every election cycle that begins on the day after the general election and ends on the day of the general election two years later. A voter registration solicitor must be 18 years of age along with additional requirements as specified in statute. A voter registration solicitor who fails to register with the Secretary of State is guilty of a class three election offense. This bill repeals these provisions.

This bill allows no-excuse absentee voting. Absentee ballot application forms and absentee voter statements are updated to reflect this change. No absentee ballot application will be required to be notarized.

This bill allows absentee ballot applications to be made available on the website of the SOS and local election authorities. Election authorities are required to notify an absentee ballot applicant if the applicant fails to provide any necessary information required to process the application. All absentee ballots received by the election authority within seven days after an election are required to be counted if postmarked by the date of the election.

Subject to appropriation, the SOS will establish an online absentee ballot tracking system that allows the voter to track the current status of the person's absentee ballot. The system must be easily accessible on the main page of the SOS website and provide updates to the voter, as specified in the bill.

This bill adds photo identification cards issued by a school or employer to the list of acceptable identification required to vote.

Subject to appropriation, a system of automatic voter registration will be established by the SOS. The Department of Revenue will periodically provide the SOS with such information as the Secretary deems necessary to conduct automatic voter registration. The SOS will provide local election authorities with lists of non-binding recommendations for inclusion on voter registration lists. Within two months of receipt of recommendations, local election authorities must send a notice of potential automatic registration to potential voters. Such notice will include a postage-paid postcard for the purpose of declining registration. If, after a period of one month, the postcard is not returned to the local election authority, the individual's name will be added to the voter registration list. The SOS is authorized to promulgate all rules necessary for the administration of automatic voter registration.

This bill is similar to HB 642 (2023).