

1 A bill to be entitled

2 An act relating to voter registration; amending s.
3 97.057, F.S.; revising procedures governing voter
4 registration by the Department of Highway Safety and
5 Motor Vehicles; providing that driver license or
6 identification card applications, license or
7 identification card renewal applications, and address
8 updates for existing driver licenses or identification
9 cards submitted to the department serve as voter
10 registration applications; specifying that an
11 applicant consents to the use of his or her signature
12 for voter registration purposes; requiring specified
13 applications to include a voter registration
14 component; specifying required content for the voter
15 registration component; providing for paper-based
16 applications; requiring the supervisor of elections to
17 provide a notification of registration to each
18 applicant; providing that an applicant is registered
19 if he or she fails to respond to the notification
20 within a specified timeframe; requiring the supervisor
21 to forward declinations to the statewide voter
22 registration system; amending s. 98.045, F.S.;
23 conforming a cross-reference; providing an effective
24 date.

25
26 WHEREAS, voter registration is one of the biggest barriers

27 | to participation in our democracy, and

28 | WHEREAS, in 1993, Congress enacted the National Voter
 29 | Registration Act of 1993, commonly known as the "Motor Voter
 30 | Act," with findings recognizing that the right of citizens to
 31 | vote is a fundamental right and that federal, state, and local
 32 | governments have the duty to promote the exercise of this right,
 33 | and

34 | WHEREAS, the Legislature intends to provide residents of
 35 | this state with enhanced access to participate in democracy
 36 | through exercise of their fundamental right to vote by
 37 | streamlining and modernizing voter registration procedures used
 38 | by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, NOW,
 39 | THEREFORE,

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 41 | Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

42 |
 43 | Section 1. Subsections (1) through (5) of section 97.057,
 44 | Florida Statutes, are amended, new subsections (6) and (7) are
 45 | added to that section, and present subsections (6) through (12)
 46 | of that section are renumbered as subsections (8) through (14),
 47 | respectively, to read:

48 | 97.057 Voter registration by the Department of Highway
 49 | Safety and Motor Vehicles.—

50 | (Substantial rewording of subsections. See
 51 | s. 97.057(1)-(5), F.S., for present text.)

52 | (1) Each of the following serves as an application to

53 register to vote or to update a voter registration record when
 54 submitted to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor
 55 Vehicles:

56 (a) An application for a driver license, including a
 57 renewal application or an address update for an existing driver
 58 license.

59 (b) An application for an identification card issued
 60 pursuant to chapter 322, including a renewal application or an
 61 address update for an existing identification card.

62
 63 For voter registration purposes, an applicant shall consent to
 64 the use of the signature from his or her driver license or
 65 identification card application unless the applicant declines to
 66 register to vote or declines to update his or her voter
 67 registration record.

68 (2) An application for a driver license or an
 69 identification card must include a voter registration component.
 70 The voter registration component must be approved by the
 71 Department of State. The voter registration component of a
 72 driver license or identification card application must contain:

73 (a) The minimum amount of information necessary to prevent
 74 duplicate voter registrations and preserve the ability of the
 75 department and supervisors of elections to assess the
 76 eligibility of the applicant and to administer voter
 77 registration and other parts of the election process.

78 (b) A statement setting forth voting eligibility

79 requirements.

80 (c) An explanation that the applicant has consented, for
81 voter registration purposes, to the use of his or her signature
82 from the applicant's driver license or identification card
83 application. By consenting to the use of his or her signature,
84 the applicant is deemed to have subscribed to the oath required
85 by s. 3, Art. VI of the State Constitution and s. 97.051 and to
86 have sworn and affirmed that the voter registration information
87 contained in the application is true under penalty for false
88 swearing pursuant to s. 104.011.

89 (d) An option that allows the applicant to decline to
90 register to vote or to decline to update his or her voter
91 registration record. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor
92 Vehicles shall note any such declination on its records and
93 forward the declination to the statewide voter registration
94 system.

95 (3) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
96 shall develop a voter registration component for paper-based
97 renewal applications which meets the requirements specified in
98 subsection (2). The voter registration component must be
99 approved by the Department of State.

100 (4) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
101 shall electronically transmit the voter registration component
102 of an applicant's driver license or identification card
103 application to the statewide voter registration system within 24
104 hours after receipt. Upon receipt of the voter registration

105 component, the Department of State shall provide the information
106 to the supervisor of the county in which the applicant has been
107 registered as an elector. For completed paper-based
108 applications, the Department of Highway Safety and Motor
109 Vehicles shall forward the voter registration component to the
110 supervisor of the county in which the office that processes or
111 receives that application is located within 5 days after
112 receipt.

113 (5) Following receipt of voter registration information,
114 the supervisor shall notify each applicant of the process to:

115 (a) Decline being registered as an elector or decline to
116 update his or her voter registration record.

117 (b) Adopt a political party affiliation if the applicant
118 is not currently registered to vote in this state.

119 (6) If an applicant who is notified under subsection (5)
120 does not decline to be registered as an elector or to update his
121 or her voter registration record within 21 calendar days after
122 the supervisor issues the notification, the applicant's voter
123 registration component of his or her application constitutes a
124 completed voter registration for purposes of this chapter. The
125 applicant shall be registered to vote if the supervisor
126 determines that the applicant is eligible to vote under s.
127 97.041 and the applicant is not already registered to vote. An
128 applicant who does not respond to the notification to adopt a
129 political party affiliation shall be registered without party
130 affiliation as provided under s. 97.053(5)(b).

131 (7) If an applicant declines to register to vote or to
 132 update his or her voter registration record after receiving a
 133 notification issued pursuant to subsection (5), the supervisor
 134 shall note such declination on his or her records and forward
 135 the declination to the statewide voter registration system.
 136 However, an applicant's declination may not be used for any
 137 purpose other than voter registration.

138 Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (4) of section
 139 98.045, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

140 98.045 Administration of voter registration.—

141 (4) STATEWIDE ELECTRONIC DATABASE OF VALID RESIDENTIAL
 142 STREET ADDRESSES.—

143 (b) The department shall make the statewide database of
 144 valid street addresses available to the Department of Highway
 145 Safety and Motor Vehicles as provided in s. 97.057(12) ~~s.~~
 146 ~~97.057(10)~~. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
 147 shall use the database for purposes of validating the legal
 148 residential addresses provided in voter registration
 149 applications received by the Department of Highway Safety and
 150 Motor Vehicles.

151 Section 3. This act shall take effect January 1, 2017.