

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
SESSION 2025

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SENATE BILL 386

Short Title: Whiz Kids/Slow Pokes Voter Registration. (Public)

Sponsors: Senators Meyer and Smith (Primary Sponsors).

Referred to: Rules and Operations of the Senate

March 25, 2025

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT TO ENSURE PROCRASTINATORS THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE BY
ESTABLISHING SAME-DAY REGISTRATION ON ELECTION DAY AND TO
ENGAGE OVERACHIEVING TEENAGERS IN VOTING BY RECODIFYING THE
PROGRAM TO PREREGISTER INDIVIDUALS SIXTEEN AND SEVENTEEN YEARS
OF AGE.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

PART I. SAME-DAY VOTER REGISTRATION ON ELECTION DAY

SECTION 1.1. G.S. 163-82.6B reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-82.6B. Same-day registration.

(a) Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, an individual who is qualified to register to vote may register in person and then vote in the person's county of residence on election day or at an early voting site in the individual's county of residence during the period for early voting provided under Part 5 of Article 14A of this Chapter.

(b) To register and vote under this section, an individual shall do all of the following:

(1) Complete a voter registration application form as prescribed in G.S. 163-82.4.

(2) Provide proof of residence by presenting a HAVA document listing the individual's current name and residence address.

(3) Present photo identification in accordance with G.S. 163-166.16.

(c) An applicant who registers under this section shall vote a retrievable ballot as provided in G.S. 163-166.45 immediately after submitting the voter registration application form.

If a person declines to vote immediately, the registration shall be processed, and the person may later vote at an early voting site under this section in the same election if the early voting period has not closed.

(d) Within two business days of the individual's registration under this section, the county board of elections in conjunction with the State Board shall verify the North Carolina drivers license or social security number in accordance with G.S. 163-82.12, update the statewide registration database, search for possible duplicate registrations, and proceed under G.S. 163-82.7 to verify the applicant's address. The applicant's vote shall be counted unless the county board determines that the applicant is not qualified to vote in accordance with this Chapter. Notwithstanding any other provision of this Chapter, if the Postal Service returns the first notice required under G.S. 163-82.7(c) as undeliverable before the close of business on the business day before canvass, the county board shall not register the applicant and shall retrieve the applicant's ballot and remove that ballot's votes from the official count.



(e) For purposes of this section, a "HAVA document" is any of the following that shows the name and address of the individual:

- (1) A current utility bill.
- (2) A current bank statement.
- (3) A current government check.
- (4) A current paycheck.
- (5) Another current government document.
- (6) A current document issued from the institution who issued the photo identification shown by the voter pursuant to G.S. 163-166.16.

(f) Any person who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for which a partisan or nonpartisan primary is held, even though not so qualified by the date of the primary, may register for the primary and general election prior to the primary and then vote in the primary and general election after being registered in accordance with the provisions of this section."

SECTION 1.2. G.S. 163-59 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-59. Right to participate or vote in party primary.

No person shall be entitled to vote or otherwise participate in the primary election of any political party unless that person complies with all of the following:

- (1) Is a registered voter.
- (2) Has declared and has had recorded on the registration book or record the fact that the voter affiliates with the political party in whose primary the voter proposes to vote or participate.
- (3) Is in good faith a member of that party.

Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, any unaffiliated voter who is authorized under G.S. 163-119 may also vote in the primary if the voter is otherwise eligible to vote in that primary except for subdivisions (2) and (3) of the previous paragraph.

Any person who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for which the primary is held, even though not so qualified by the date of the primary, shall be entitled to register for the primary and general election prior to the primary and then to vote in the primary after being registered. Such person may register not earlier than 60 days nor later than the last day for making application to register under G.S. 163-82.6(d) prior to the primary. In addition, persons who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for which the primary is held, who do not register during the special period may register to vote after such period as if they were qualified on the basis of age, but until they are qualified by age to vote, they may vote only in primary elections. The person also may register and vote in the primary and general election pursuant to G.S. 163-82.6B."

SECTION 1.3. G.S. 163-82.6(d) reads as rewritten:

"(d) Registration Deadlines for a Primary or Election. – ~~In~~ Except as provided in G.S. 163-82.6B, in order to be valid for a primary or election, the form:

- (1) If submitted by mail, must be postmarked at least 25 days before the primary or election, except that any mailed application on which the postmark is missing or unclear is validly submitted if received in the mail not later than 20 days before the primary or election,
- (2) If submitted in person, by facsimile transmission, or by transmission of a scanned document, must be received by the county board of elections by a time established by that board, but no earlier than 5:00 P.M., on the twenty-fifth day before the primary or election,
- (3) If submitted through a delegatee who violates the duty set forth in subsection (a) of this section, must be signed by the applicant and given to the delegatee not later than 25 days before the primary or election, except as provided in subsection (f) of this section."

1 **SECTION 1.4.** G.S. 163-166.12(d), as amended by Section 3A.4(c) of S.L. 2024-57,
2 reads as rewritten:

3 "(d) Voting When Identification Numbers Do Not Match. – Regardless of whether an
4 individual has registered by mail or by another method, if the individual has provided with the
5 registration form a drivers license number or last four digits of a Social Security number but the
6 computer validation of the number as required by G.S. 163-82.12 did not result in a match, and
7 the number has not been otherwise validated by the county board, in the first election in which
8 the individual votes that individual shall submit with the ballot the form of identification
9 described in subsection (a) or subsection (b) of this section, depending upon whether the ballot
10 is voted in person or absentee. If that identification is provided no later than 12:00 P.M. on the
11 third business day after the election and the county board does not determine that the individual
12 is otherwise ineligible to vote a ballot, the failure of identification numbers to match shall not
13 prevent that individual from registering to vote and having that individual's vote counted. If the
14 individual registers and votes under G.S. 163-82.6B, the identification documents required in
15 that section, rather than those described in subsection (a) or (b) of this section, apply."

16 **SECTION 1.5.** G.S. 163-283 reads as rewritten:

17 **"§ 163-283. Right to participate or vote in party primary.**

18 No person shall be entitled to vote or otherwise participate in the primary election of any
19 political party unless that person complies with all of the following:

- 20 (1) Is a registered voter.
21 (2) Has declared and has had recorded on the registration book or record the fact
22 that the voter affiliates with the political party in whose primary the voter
23 proposes to vote or participate.
24 (3) Is in good faith a member of that party.

25 Notwithstanding the previous paragraph, any unaffiliated voter who is authorized under
26 G.S. 163-119 may also vote in the primary if the voter is otherwise eligible to vote in that primary
27 except for subdivisions (2) and (3) of the previous paragraph.

28 Any person who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for
29 which the primary is held, even though not so qualified by the date of the primary election, shall
30 be entitled to register while the registration books are open during the regular registration period
31 prior to the primary and then to vote in the primary after being registered, provided however,
32 under full-time and permanent registration, such an individual may register not earlier than 60
33 days nor later than the last day for making application to register under G.S. 163-82.6(d) prior to
34 the primary. In addition, persons who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the
35 general election for which the primary is held, who do not register during the special period may
36 register to vote after such period as if they were qualified on the basis of age, but until they are
37 qualified by age to vote, they may vote only in primary elections. The person also may register
38 and vote in the primary and general election pursuant to G.S. 163-82.6B."

39 **SECTION 1.6.** G.S. 163-283.1 reads as rewritten:

40 **"§ 163-283.1. Voting in nonpartisan primary.**

41 Any person who will become qualified by age to register and vote in the general election for
42 which a nonpartisan primary is held, even though not so qualified by the date of the primary,
43 shall be entitled to register for the primary and general election prior to the primary and then to
44 vote in the primary after being registered. Such a person may register not earlier than 60 days nor
45 later than the last day for making application to register under G.S. 163-82.6(d) prior to the
46 primary. The person also may register and vote in the primary and general election pursuant to
47 G.S. 163-82.6B."

48 49 **PART II. PREREGISTRATION**

50 **SECTION 2.1.** G.S. 163-82.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(d) Preregistration. – A person who is at least 16 years of age but will not be 18 years of age by the date of the next election and who is otherwise qualified to register may preregister to vote and shall be automatically registered upon reaching the age of eligibility following verification of the person's qualifications and address in accordance with G.S. 163-82.7."

SECTION 2.2. G.S. 163-82.3(a) is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

"(5) Preregister to vote."

SECTION 2.3. G.S. 163-82.4(e)(2) reads as rewritten:

"(2) The following ~~question~~questions and statement:

- a. "Will you be 18 years of age on or before election day?" and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant will be 18 years of age or older on election day.
- b. "Are you at least 16 years of age and understand that you must be 18 years of age on or before election day to vote?" and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant is at least 16 years of age and understands that the applicant must be at least 18 years of age or older by election day to vote.
- c. "If you checked 'no' in response to ~~this question~~, both of these questions, do not submit this form.""

SECTION 2.4. G.S. 163-82.19(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Voter Registration at Drivers License Offices. – The Division of Motor Vehicles shall, pursuant to the rules adopted by the State Board of Elections, modify its forms so that any eligible person who applies for original issuance, renewal or correction of a drivers license, or special identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7 may, on a part of the form, complete an application to register to vote, or to update the voter's registration if the voter has changed his or her address or moved from one precinct to another or from one county to ~~another~~another, or to preregister to vote. The person taking the application shall ask if the applicant is a citizen of the United States. If the applicant states that the applicant is not a citizen of the United States, or declines to answer the question, the person taking the application shall inform the applicant that it is a felony for a person who is not a citizen of the United States to apply to register to vote. The application shall state in clear language the penalty for violation of this section. The necessary forms shall be prescribed by the State Board of Elections. The form must ask for the previous voter registration address of the voter, if any. If a previous address is listed, and it is not in the county of residence of the applicant, the appropriate county board of elections shall treat the application as an authorization to cancel the previous registration and also process it as such under the procedures of G.S. 163-82.9. If a previous address is listed and that address is in the county where the voter applies to register, the application shall be processed as if it had been submitted under G.S. 163-82.9.

Registration shall become effective as provided in G.S. 163-82.7. Applications to register to vote accepted at a drivers license office under this section until the deadline established in G.S. 163-82.6(d)(2) shall be treated as timely made for an election, and no person who completes an application at that drivers license office shall be denied the vote in that election for failure to apply earlier than that deadline.

All applications shall be forwarded by the Department of Transportation to the appropriate board of elections not later than five business days after the date of acceptance, according to rules which shall be promulgated by the State Board of Elections. Those rules shall provide for a paperless, instant, electronic transfer of applications to the appropriate board of elections. All applications for preregistration shall be forwarded to the State Board of Elections."

SECTION 2.5. G.S. 163-82.20 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-82.20. **Voter registration at other public agencies.**

...

(b) Duties of Voter Registration Agencies. – A voter registration agency described in subsection (a) of this section shall, unless the applicant declines, in writing, to register ~~to vote~~; or preregister to vote, do each of the following:

- (1) Distribute with each application for service or assistance, and with each recertification, renewal, or change of address relating to such service or assistance:
 - a. The voter registration application form described in G.S. 163-82.3(a) or (b); or
 - b. The voter registration agency's own form, if it is substantially equivalent to the form described in G.S. 163-82.3(a) or (b) and has been approved by the State Board of Elections, provided that the agency's own form may be a detachable part of the agency's paper application or may be a paperless computer process, as long as the applicant is required to sign an attestation as part of the application to ~~register~~; register or preregister.
- (2) Provide a form that contains the elements required by section 7(a)(6)(B) of the National Voter Registration Act; ~~and Act.~~
- (3) Provide to each applicant who does not decline to register or preregister to vote the same degree of assistance with regard to the completion of the registration application as is provided by the office with regard to the completion of its own forms.

...
(e) Prohibitions. – Any person providing any service under subsection (b) of this section shall not:

- (1) Seek to influence an applicant's political preference or party registration, except that this shall not be construed to prevent the notice provided by G.S. 163-82.4(d) to be given if the applicant refuses to declare his party affiliation;
- (2) Display any such political preference or party allegiance;
- (3) Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to discourage the applicant from registering or preregistering to vote; or
- (4) Make any statement to an applicant or take any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead the applicant to believe that a decision to register or preregister or not to register has any bearing on the availability of services or benefits.

(f) Confidentiality of Declination to Register. – No information relating to a declination to register or preregister to vote in connection with an application made at a voter registration agency may be used for any purpose other than voter registration.

(g) Transmittal From Agency to Board of Elections. – Any voter registration or preregistration application completed at a voter registration agency shall be accepted by that agency in lieu of the applicant's mailing the application. Any such application so received shall be transmitted to the appropriate board of elections not later than five business days after acceptance, according to rules which shall be promulgated by the State Board of Elections.

...
(i) Ineligible Applications Prohibited. – No person shall make application to register or preregister to vote under this section if that person is ineligible on account of age, citizenship, lack of residence for the period of time provided by law, or because of conviction of a felony."

SECTION 2.6. G.S. 163-82.23 reads as rewritten:

"§ 163-82.23. Voter registration at public high schools.

Every public high school shall make available to its students and others who are eligible to register or preregister to vote the application forms described in G.S. 163-82.3, and shall keep a

sufficient supply of the forms so that they are always available. A local board of education may, but is not required to, designate high school employees to assist in completing the forms. Only employees who volunteer for this duty may be designated by boards of education."

SECTION 2.7. G.S. 115C-47(59) reads as rewritten:

"(59) To Encourage Student Voter ~~Registration.~~ Registration and Preregistration. – Local boards of education are encouraged to adopt policies to promote student voter ~~registration.~~ registration and preregistration. These policies may include collaboration with county boards of elections to conduct voter registration and preregistration in high schools. Completion and submission of voter registration and preregistration forms shall not be a course requirement or graded assignment for students."

SECTION 2.8. G.S. 115C-81.45(d)(1b)b. reads as rewritten:

"b. Instruction on the importance of voting and otherwise participating in the democratic process, including instruction on voter ~~registration.~~ registration and preregistration."

SECTION 2.9. The State Board of Elections and the Department of Public Instruction are encouraged to improve outreach to high school students on voter registration and preregistration programs when students are eligible to do either, including the curriculum element on instruction in voter registration and preregistration, as provided by G.S. 115C-47(59) and voter registration in public high schools authorized in G.S. 163-82.23.

PART III. EFFECTIVE DATE

SECTION 3.1. This act is effective when it becomes law.