

Frequently Asked Questions about “Registration & Voting at One-Stop Sites”

NC HOUSE BILL 91 (Sponsored by Reps. Ross, Holliman, Parmon, Tolson)

What does House Bill 91 do? This act will allow a citizen who misses the deadline to register to vote (25 days before the election) to go to a One-Stop, Early Voting site in the county, show proper ID, register and vote – all on the same day. (One-Stop sites are open from 19 days to 3 days before Election Day.) The ballot is a retrievable ballot, so if a problem is found with the registration, it can be pulled and not counted in the official canvass.

Does a person have to show identification to register and vote on the same day? Yes. A person who wishes to register at an early voting site must show the elections official a NC driver's license, utility bill, bank or payroll statement, or government document with current address.

How will we know people are who they say they are? All registrations go through a verification process that includes confirmation of the driver's license or Social Security number given, matching for duplicate names in the state-wide registration file, and a mail verification of the address. If the ID or address presented is false, then the ballot will be pulled.

What about registering on Election Day itself? The bill does not authorize registration on Election Day. It instructs the State Board of Elections to study how well “same-day registration” (SDR) at the One-Stop sites works and report the feasibility of expanding it to Election Day.

What has happened in other states with Same-Day Registration? In the November 2004 election, 74% of all *eligible* adults in the six states* with Same-Day Registration voted, but only 60% of *eligible* adults in the other states voted – a difference of 14 percentage points. (*The six states are: ID, ME, MN, NH, WI, and WY.)

Is voter turnout a problem in North Carolina? Yes. Year after year, North Carolina ranks as one of the worst 15 states for voter turnout. About one million voting-age citizens are not even registered and 400,000 are between the ages of 18 and 25.

Isn't it easy to register to vote already? It might seem pretty easy, but for many people the process can be confusing or a mystery. A 2005 poll by Democracy North Carolina found that only 2% of 18-24 year olds knew the deadline to register.

Will this help youth register to vote? North Carolina has one of the worst youth voter turnout rates. In 2004, only 38% of 18-24 year olds in NC voted compared to a 56% in states with Same-Day Registration. Young people (and first time voters) often find the election process intimidating. Young people also move often and forget to re-register.

What does the State Board of Elections think of this proposal? State Elections Director Gary Bartlett has told legislative leaders that the steps described in H-91 are feasible and SDR can work.

Will this favor one party or certain candidates? No. As now, the advantage goes to the candidate who motivates a large number of people to vote.

Why don't people vote? A Census Bureau study found that the top reason cited by nonvoters was that they didn't have time. Many people don't tune into elections until after the registration deadline.

What about voter fraud? A person must provide proof of residency and swear that he or she is a US citizen and resides at the address given. Lying is a felony crime. There are very few documented instances of fraud in the states with Same Day Registration – no more than in states *without* SDR.

*For more, contact the NC Coalition for Same-Day Registration at 1-866-302-0031 or
Democracy North Carolina at 1-888-OUR-VOTE www.democracy-nc.org*