Bipartisan Support for Election Modernization

Voter registration modernization, which increases the accuracy and security of the voter rolls and reduces taxpayer expense, has received acclaim across the political spectrum. In just four years some form of registration modernization, often called automatic voter registration, has passed in 23 states plus the District of Columbia.

As states prepare to convene their 2021 legislative sessions, bipartisan leadership across the country are proposing ways that America upgrades our democracy and ensures eligible voters have the freedom to vote for generations to come. We applaud those from both sides of the aisle who have already supported automatic voter registration and encourage others to join in supporting this bipartisan reform.

In their own words

Former Secretary of State Trey Greyson (R-KY): "[Voter registration] issues can be fixed with a few common-sense reforms that conservatives and liberals alike should support, along with a commitment from election administrators to do what is necessary to build confidence in the system at a time when our institutions are under attack. Fortunately, we can vastly reduce the number of provisional ballots by overhauling our registration system to use modern technologies to ensure that name and address information is as up to-date and accurate as possible. One way to do is automated voter registration, commonly known as AVR. Automating the registration process will create more accurate and up-to-date lists, improve Election Day operations, and make recounts more efficient in close races."[1]

Utah

State Representative Deidre Henderson (R-UT): "With greater accuracy of the rolls, there is less potential for fraud or interference. When our voter rolls are more accurate, our systems are more secure and less susceptible to tampering. It's simply harder to find areas to exploit when the state maintains the most up-to-date list of eligible voters."[2]

Illinois

Governor Bruce Rauner (R-IL): "This is good bipartisan legislation and it addresses the fundamental fact that the right to vote is foundational for the rights of Americans in our democracy. We as a people need to do everything we can to knock down barriers, remove hurdles for all those who are eligible to vote, to be able to vote."

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[1] https://www.insidesources.com/how-to-avoid-more-florida-recounts/

[2] https://www.sltrib.com/opinion/commentary/2018/06/02/commentary-the-right-to-vote-is-key-to-democracy/

Champaign County Clerk Gordy Hulten (R-IL): "AVR would have an enormous positive impact on our Election Day registration experience. Every automatic voter registration that we process prior to Election Day is one fewer voter who has to go through that process on Election Day. So, it speeds it up for the voter themselves because their record is correct and it also speeds it up for every other voter who shows up to that polling place because they don't have to wait behind somebody doing Election Day registration."[3]

Lake County Clerk Carla Wyckoff (R-IL): "The more accurate you can be the better it is, because not only does it save money but it improves relations with voters and the candidates. The campaigns like to be able to rely on our information."[4]

Champaign County Clerk Gordy Hulten (R-IL): "I think if our fundamental position is that if you are eligible to vote, you have the right to show up on Election Day, regardless of what your status is, register and vote, then we need to get as many of those people on the rolls prior to Election Day as we can. In terms of efficiency in operation on Election Day, it means people don't have to stand in lines, which means their voting experience is more pleasant, which means we encourage them to vote. Automatic voter registration will improve our ability to communicate with these voters prior to Election Day to tell them what the voting process looks like, where they need to go vote, here's your sample ballot…If there's an automatic voter registration bill, we have them on the rolls, we can mail them, we might even be able to email them, all of that information to make their voting experience more pleasant and make it more efficient for everybody."[5]

Alaska

US Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK): "Ballot Measure 1 [for AVR] supports the worthwhile goal of encouraging participation in our political system. At the same time that it makes registering more convenient, it also improves the registration system and reduces opportunities for voter fraud. That's a winning combination that I fully support."[6]

US Senator Dan Sullivan (R-AK): "Senator Murkowski and I are working every day to expand access to services and reduce costs for Alaskans, especially rural Alaskans, and [AVR] does exactly that for voter registration. It is an obvious fit for us. We should take advantage of any opportunity to cut waste and stop forcing people to fill out more and more forms."[7]

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[3] http://illinoispirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/The%2021st%20Century%20Election%20-%20IL%20Report%20FINAL.pdf

[4] Ibid.

[5] http://illinoispirg.org/sites/pirg/files/reports/The%2021st%20Century%20Election%20-%20IL%20Report%20FINAL.pdf

[6] http://pfdvoterregistration.cmail19.com/t/ViewEmail/t/EDFC1F96D84FDA0D/F1A5696E6A4D53C89A8E73400EDACAB4

[7] Ibid.

Oregon

Multnomah County Director of Elections Tim Scott: "Since Oregon's system was implemented in January, 2016, Multnomah County has added 80,000 voters at the same time as we've reduced temporary staff and overtime that used to input data from paper registration forms. Last-minute surges in registration are now smaller and manageable because voter registration activity is steady throughout the year. And third-party registration drives in Oregon now primarily focus on getting out the vote rather than registering voters on paper."

Secretary of State Dennis Richardson (R-OR): "I'm pleased to report that in Oregon we have reviewed the processes and we are confident that voter fraud in last November's election did not occur in Oregon. Oregon's landmark 'Motor Voter' law, a first-in-the-nation automatic voter registration system when drivers' licenses are issued or renewed, requires verification of residency and citizenship. This system is helping to ensure the integrity of Oregon elections and the trust of Oregon citizens in our election system."[8]

Linn County Clerk Steve Druckenmiller (R-OR) : "It's really good. It is working. It's a solid program. We're seeing that it's efficient and working. I'm really proud of it."[9]

Former Secretary of State Jeanne Atkins (D-OR): "These numbers are remarkable. For many of these new voters, the upcoming May election will provide their first opportunity to exercise their democratic right to vote. Oregon Motor Voter is working just as intended. The program is modernizing voter registration in Oregon and providing a secure, simple, and convenient way for more Oregonians to participate in the democratic process."[10]

Washington

Washington Secretary of State Kim Wyman (R-WA): "I am pleased to join Sen. Jayapal and a bipartisan group of legislators in proposing this welcome expansion of access to the voter rolls. We have a sizable group of people who have not chosen to register through the normal routes of online, motor-voter, mail or in-person registration. We know that some of these potential voters have already given proof of citizenship to the DOL or to health exchange, and so automatic registration should be

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[8] https://twitter.com/OregonSoS/status/826246728181436416

[9] http://democratherald.com/news/druckenmiller-oregon-motor-voter-program-working-well/article_6f4dd414-5e64-5b4a-8836-fadebff1a3d0.html

[10] Ibid.

allowed for them. Our goal in the election community is to register every eligible voter, to remove any barriers to voting, and to promote robust turnout."[11]

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[11] http://housedemocrats.wa.gov/news/bipartisan-bill-would-expand-democracy-through-automatic-voter-registration/