

House Research Act Summary

CHAPTER: 238

SESSION: 2014 Regular Session

TOPIC: Elections data sharing

Analyst: Matt Gehring, 651-296-5052

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Overview

This act authorizes sharing of certain driver's license and identification card data with the secretary of state, and establishes data handling standards, if the secretary of state enters into an election and voter registration data sharing agreement with a group of states.

Eight states and the District of Columbia currently participate in a data sharing agreement called the "Electronic Registration Information Center" (ERIC). ERIC is a nonprofit organization, formed by the participating states with the assistance of the Pew Charitable Trusts, designed to improve the accuracy of participating states' voter registration data by, among other things, sharing driver's license data to identify voters who have moved, died, or who have duplicate registrations. The system also helps identify voters who are eligible but not registered to vote.

Minnesota is not currently a member of the ERIC system; by authorizing data sharing, this act allows Minnesota to become a participating member if the secretary of state so chooses.

Section

- 1 Disclosure of personal information.** Requires the commissioner of public safety to disclose personal information to the secretary of state, for purposes of increasing voter registration and maintaining voter registration records. These data may be maintained by the secretary of state for no more than 60 days.

The term "personal information" is a reference to a defined term in federal law, related to the use of driver's license and motor vehicle registration data.

Section

- 2** **Use of change of address system.** Permits the secretary of state to periodically obtain lists of individuals with driver's licenses or state identification cards, to identify those who may have applied for a replacement card with a different address, or who may have moved out of state.

If it appears a voter has moved to a new address within the state, but the secretary of state is unable to determine the correct precinct, the secretary may forward the information to the appropriate county auditor for individual review.

New paragraph (d) provides that, if the secretary of state enters into a data sharing agreement with a group of states, the secretary must first determine whether the data security protocols are sufficient to safeguard the information to be shared.

The secretary of state is permitted to share data as part of such an agreement. The specific data sets that may be shared are listed in the bill.

If the secretary enters into a data sharing agreement, the secretary of state and county auditors must process the data consistent with the requirements of this section. If data are received from another state, the secretary must maintain it with the same data classification as it had in the state that provided it.

- 3** **Use of funds.** Prohibits the secretary of state from using any state funds appropriated to the secretary for purposes of entering an agreement to share voter registration data with a group of states. This prohibition applies until June 30, 2015. A procedure is included in this section for receipt of funds from 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations, including reports to the chairs and ranking minority members of appropriate legislative committees.
- 4** **Effective date.** Provides that this act is effective the day following final enactment. The act became effective May 14, 2014.