

Comment Report

SF 2078

A bill for an act relating to voter registration, including verification of voter citizenship.

Subcommittee Members: Salmon-CH, Weiner, Westrich

Date: 02/14/2024

Time: 01:00 PM

Location: Room 217 Conference Room

Name: Mary Jobst

Comment: Verification of eligibility to vote is common sense. I support this bill

Name: Sandy Wilson

Comment: Citizen Engagement declares IN FAVOR of SF 2078. Please advance the bill.

Name: Cheryl Tillman

Comment: I agree with this bill. The root cause is the number of migrants that have entered through the southern border and not vetted. Border Patrol estimates 2.8 million in 2023 and 2.7 million 2022. A few months ago the public reported a busload of migrants were dropped off in Marion, Iowa, at 10 p.m. One wonders how many others were sent into Iowa and not seen.

Name: Michael Bayer

Comment: I fully support this bill and urge its adoption. U.S. citizenship is one of the primary requirements to register to vote and to vote under both federal and state law. However, in Iowa, as in most states, there is no verification of that citizenship. The voter only needs to sign an affidavit when they register to vote stating that they are a citizen of the United States. No verification! Since 2017, anyone who declares on a jury summons that they are not a citizen must be reported to the Secretary of State's (SOS) office to determine if they are registered to vote. If they are registered, their voter registration must be canceled. In April, 2021, I requested from the SOS how many voters in their database have been canceled under this law. Here is the response that I received. There are currently 91 voters who are cancelled with a status reason Jury Declination Not a Citizen. Our voter registration can only show what that current number is as of today. We are unable to internally produce a report that shows how many voter registration have ever been cancelled with that status reason. There are noncitizens on our voter rolls. The response from the SOS office shows that. Remember that the percent of registered voters who are summoned for jury duty each year is small probably from 2 to 10% of the registered voters. Thus, the actual number of noncitizens on our voter rolls is much higher likely hundreds if not thousands. With the surge in illegal immigrants into the United States, it is all the more critical that we verify citizenship of people who are registering to vote as well as people who are already on the voter rolls. If a registered voter is a citizen, that verification only needs to be done one time. I request that you advance this bill.

Name: Thomas McInerney

Comment: I support this bill because the State should verify citizenship when registering to vote. The verification process should utilizing the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements Program database at the Department of Homeland Security.

Name: Sharon Schiefen

Comment: I support Bill SF2078. Currently, the Iowa Code section 48A.26 specifies the

requirements of processing Voter Registration Forms in the following manner: If the registration form appears on its face to be complete and proper, the acknowledgment shall state that the registrant is now a registered voter of the county. It appears there is no real effort at this point to verify citizenship. With an open border and people entering our country every day, we need to make sure only our citizens who are voting in our leadership and laws.

Name: Michael Bayer

Comment: I fully support SF 2078 to verify the citizenship of registered voters. However, I am concerned about a few things. First, Section 1.3 says that "the state registrar of voters shall cancel the registration of a voter found to be ineligible pursuant to section 48A.30. Section 48A.30 gives a list of reasons why a voter's registration may be canceled. I'm not sure that it includes noncitizenship. Second, I am concerned about how same day registrants will be handled. The bill does not seem to address that issue directly.

Name: Randy Hefel

Comment: I support SF2078. Information provided by Micheal Bayer received from the SOS in 2021 about the 91 noncitizens is enough proof that illegal voters are on our voter list and need to be prevented from voting in our elections.