

REPORT OF THE  
VOTER RESIDENCY AND REGISTRATION SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE  
STANDING COMMITTEES ON STATE GOVERNMENT

Submitted to the Members of the  
Second Session of the Sixty-fourth General Assembly  
Meeting in the Year 1972

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At its meeting of August 11, 1971, the Legislative Council appointed a joint subcommittee of the Standing Committees on State Government to consider needed changes in the state's voter registration and residency requirements. The Council authorized two meetings of the subcommittee and appointed the following members:

Representative Richard F. Drake, Chairman  
Senator James A. Potgeter  
Senator John C. Rhodes  
Senator John E. Tapscott  
Representative C. Raymond Fisher  
Representative Earl M. Willits

The Voter Residency and Registration Subcommittee of the Standing Committees on State Government met on September 24 and December 8. The Subcommittee reviewed the voter registration law, present voter residency requirements, and contacted the county auditors and city clerks for their suggestions regarding changes in the election laws.

The Subcommittee recommends the following changes in the election laws:

1. The order in which the names of candidates appear on the election ballot be changed so that the names of candidates for Congressional office appear immediately following the names of candidates for the office of United States Senator. This change will place the names of candidates for all national offices before the names of candidates for statewide offices on the election ballot.

2. The words "twenty-one years of age" and "age of majority" be changed to "eighteen years of age" wherever these words appear in the state's election laws.

3. Commissioners of registration be required to send post-card notification, by mail to other commissioners of registration when a new resident registers and lists another jurisdiction within the state, in which registration is required, as his former residence. This will assist commissioners of registration in obtaining current information on individuals registered in their jurisdiction and allows the commissioners of registration to strike the name of a registered voter when they receive the notice that the voter has moved, rather than carrying the name of the registered voter on the voter registration list for four years.

4. Township offices be appointive rather than elective. Presently, the law requires the printing of a separate township ballot in cases where township offices cannot be placed on the

voting machine. The printing of separate ballots is costly. The present law also provides that "In township offices, including trustees, by the trustees, but where the offices of the three trustees are all vacant, the county board of supervisors shall have the power to either instruct the county auditor to fill the vacancies or adopt a resolution stating that the board will exercise all powers and duties assigned by law to the trustees in which such vacancies exist, until such time as the vacancies may be filled by election."

5. A voter be notified of the reason his absentee ballot has been rejected. This can only be done when the error appears on the affidavit on the ballot envelope. The voter would be notified not later than the date set for the canvass of the votes. The responsibility of notifying the voter is with the election judges.

6. Every citizen of the United States of the age of eighteen years, who shall have been a resident of this state for thirty days next preceding the election shall be entitled to vote at all elections.

7. A person's residence, for voting purposes only, shall be that place which he maintains is his home with the intent to remain there permanently or for a definite or an indefinite or undeterminable length of time.

8. The county auditor in each county shall be the commissioner of elections for all general elections and any other elections conducted by any political subdivision of the state. He shall be responsible for the conduct of the elections in his county as prescribed by the Secretary of State. In counties in which permanent countywide registration is required, the county auditor shall also be designated the commissioner of registration responsible for the registration of voters and maintaining the permanent voter registration lists. In counties with a population of less than fifty thousand and in which a city is located with a population of ten thousand or more, the city clerk shall be the commissioner of registration for that city. The actual costs of any election conducted for any political subdivision of the state shall be assessed by the board of supervisors against the public body which has called for the election. Election costs do not include the cost of registration in political subdivisions where registration is required.

9. The Secretary of State be designated the state commissioner of elections to administer the election laws of this state.

10. An absentee ballot counting board be established in each county as a special precinct in the office of the county commissioner of elections. The creation of an absentee ballot counting board shall be required for all general elections, and shall be permissive in all other elections. The absentee ballot counting board will also be required to deliver to each election precinct a list of persons from that precinct who voted by absentee ballot.

11. Require mobile registrars to give the registrant a receipt for his registration rather than a copy of the registration, as is presently required.