

JAN 12 1999
STATE GOVERNMENT

HOUSE FILE 32
BY HEATON

Passed House, Date _____ Passed Senate, Date _____
Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____ Vote: Ayes _____ Nays _____
Approved _____

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to voter registration deadlines and voter
2 registration by mail.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

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HF 32

1 Section 1. Section 48A.5, subsection 6, Code 1999, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 6. The deadlines for voter registration shall not apply to
4 a person who has been discharged from military service within
5 thirty sixty days preceding the date of an election. The
6 person shall present to the precinct election official a copy
7 of the person's discharge papers. The person shall complete a
8 voter registration form and give it to the official before
9 being permitted to vote.

10 Sec. 2. Section 48A.8, Code 1999, is amended to read as
11 follows:

12 48A.8 REGISTRATION BY MAIL.

13 An eligible elector may register to vote by completing a
14 mail registration form. The form may be mailed or delivered
15 by the registrant or the registrant's designee to the
16 commissioner in the county where the person resides. A
17 separate registration form shall be signed by each individual
18 registrant. An eligible elector who registers by mail is
19 required to vote in person at the polling place at the first
20 election following registration in which the voter casts a
21 vote. However, this does not apply to mail registration forms
22 received from a motor vehicle driver's license station or from
23 any voter registration agency, to confined persons voting
24 pursuant to section 53.22, or to persons voting pursuant to
25 section 53.45.

26 Sec. 3. Section 48A.9, subsection 1, Code 1999, is amended
27 to read as follows:

28 1. Registration closes at five p.m. eleven thirty days
29 before each election ~~except-primary-and-general-elections.~~
30 ~~For-primary-and-general-elections, registration closes at five~~
31 ~~p.m.-ten-days-before-the-election.~~ An eligible elector may
32 register during the time registration is closed in the
33 elector's precinct but the registration shall not become
34 effective until registration opens again in the elector's
35 precinct.

1 | Sec. 4. Section 48A.9, subsection 3, Code 1999, is amended
2 to read as follows:

3 | 3. A registration form submitted by mail shall be
4 considered on time if it is postmarked no later than the
5 ~~fifteenth-day~~ thirty-five days before the election, even if it
6 is received by the commissioner after the deadline, or if the
7 registration form is received by the commissioner no later
8 than five p.m. on the last day to register to vote for an
9 election, even if it is postmarked after the ~~fifteenth~~ thirty-
10 fifth day before the election.

11 | Sec. 5. Section 53.2, unnumbered paragraph 6, Code 1999,
12 is amended to read as follows:

13 | If an application for an absentee ballot is received from
14 an eligible elector who is not a registered voter the
15 commissioner shall send a registration form under section
16 ~~48A.8 and an absentee ballot to the eligible elector. If the~~
17 ~~application is received so late that it is unlikely that the~~
18 ~~registration form can be returned in time to be effective on~~
19 ~~election day, the~~ The commissioner shall enclose with the
20 ~~absentee ballot~~ registration form a notice ~~to that effect,~~
21 informing the ~~voter~~ elector of the registration time limits in
22 section 48A.9 and informing the elector that if the elector
23 registers by mail, the elector will not be allowed to vote
24 absentee until the elector has voted in person at the polling
25 place. The commissioner shall record on the elector's
26 application that the elector is not currently registered to
27 vote. If the registration form is properly returned by the
28 time provided by section 48A.9, the commissioner shall record
29 on the elector's application the date of receipt of the
30 registration form and enter a notation of the registration on
31 the registration records.

32 | Sec. 6. Section 53.49, Code 1999, is amended to read as
33 follows:

34 | 53.49 APPLICABLE TO ARMED FORCES AND OTHER CITIZENS.
35 | The provisions of this division as to absent voting shall

1 apply only to absent voters in the armed forces of the United
2 States as defined for the purpose of absentee voting in
3 section 53.37. The provisions of sections 53.1 to 53.367
4 shall apply to all other qualified voters not members of the
5 armed forces of the United States.

6 EXPLANATION

7 This bill provides that an elector who registers to vote by
8 mail shall not be allowed to vote absentee until the elector
9 has voted in person at the polling place at the first election
10 held after registration in which the voter chooses to vote.
11 This does not apply to mail registrations received from a
12 motor vehicle driver's license station, a voter registration
13 agency, from confined persons voting absentee, or from persons
14 working, stationed, or residing outside of the United States
15 at the time of the election.

16 The bill changes the voter registration deadline to 30 days
17 before all elections. Currently, the deadline is 10 days
18 before a general or primary election and 11 days before all
19 other elections. A corresponding amendment is made to provide
20 that the registration deadline does not apply to military
21 personnel discharged within 60 days preceding an election.

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