

**Senate File 447 - Introduced**

SENATE FILE 447  
BY COMMITTEE ON STATE  
GOVERNMENT

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 343)

(COMPANION TO LSB 2173HH BY  
HUNTER)

**A BILL FOR**

1 An Act providing for the restoration of the right to register  
2 to vote and to vote and hold elective office for certain  
3 persons and including effective date and retroactive  
4 applicability provisions.  
5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. Section 39A.1, subsection 2, Code 2011, is  
2 amended to read as follows:

3 2. The purpose of this chapter is to identify actions which  
4 threaten the integrity of the election process and to impose  
5 significant sanctions upon persons who intentionally commit  
6 those acts. It is the intent of the general assembly that  
7 offenses with the greatest potential to affect the election  
8 process be vigorously prosecuted and strong punishment meted  
9 out through the imposition of felony sanctions which, as a  
10 consequence, remove the voting rights of the offenders until  
11 such rights are restored by the governor, by the president of  
12 the United States, or by operation of law. Other offenses are  
13 still considered serious, but based on the factual context in  
14 which they arise, they may not rise to the level of offenses  
15 to which felony penalties attach. The general assembly  
16 also recognizes that instances may arise in which technical  
17 infractions of chapters 39 through 53 may occur which do not  
18 merit any level of criminal sanction. In such instances,  
19 administrative notice from the state or county commissioner  
20 of elections is sufficient. Mandates or proscriptions in  
21 chapters 39 through 53 which are not specifically included in  
22 this chapter shall be considered to be directive only, without  
23 criminal sanction.

24 Sec. 2. Section 43.18, subsection 9, Code 2011, is amended  
25 to read as follows:

26 9. A statement that the candidate is aware that the  
27 candidate is disqualified from holding office if the candidate  
28 has been convicted of a felony or other infamous crime and the  
29 candidate's rights have not been restored by the governor, or  
30 by the president of the United States, or by operation of law.

31 Sec. 3. Section 43.67, subsection 2, paragraph i, Code 2011,  
32 is amended to read as follows:

33 *i.* A statement that the candidate is aware that the  
34 candidate is disqualified from holding office if the candidate  
35 has been convicted of a felony or other infamous crime and the

1 candidate's rights have not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~  
2 by the president of the United States, or by operation of law.

3 Sec. 4. Section 44.3, subsection 2, paragraph i, Code 2011,  
4 is amended to read as follows:

5 *i.* A statement that the candidate is aware that the  
6 candidate is disqualified from holding office if the candidate  
7 has been convicted of a felony or other infamous crime and the  
8 candidate's rights have not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~  
9 by the president of the United States, or by operation of law.

10 Sec. 5. Section 45.3, subsection 9, Code 2011, is amended  
11 to read as follows:

12 9. A statement that the candidate is aware that the  
13 candidate is disqualified from holding office if the candidate  
14 has been convicted of a felony or other infamous crime and the  
15 candidate's rights have not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~  
16 by the president of the United States, or by operation of law.

17 Sec. 6. Section 48A.6, subsection 1, Code 2011, is amended  
18 to read as follows:

19 1. A person who has been convicted of a felony as defined  
20 in section 701.7, or convicted of an offense classified as a  
21 felony under federal law. If the person's rights are later  
22 restored ~~by the governor, or by the president of the United~~  
23 ~~States,~~ pursuant to section 914.8, or by a pardon issued by the  
24 governor or the president of the United States, the person may  
25 register to vote.

26 Sec. 7. Section 57.1, subsection 2, paragraph c, Code 2011,  
27 is amended to read as follows:

28 *c.* That prior to the election the incumbent had been duly  
29 convicted of a felony, as defined in section 701.7, and that  
30 the judgment had not been reversed, annulled, or set aside, nor  
31 the incumbent pardoned by the governor or the president of the  
32 United States or restored to the rights of citizenship ~~by the~~  
33 ~~governor under chapter 914~~ pursuant to section 914.8, at the  
34 time of the election.

35 Sec. 8. Section 99B.1, subsection 13, paragraph a,

1 subparagraph (3), Code 2011, is amended to read as follows:

2 (3) The applicant has not been convicted of a felony.  
3 However, if the applicant's conviction occurred more than five  
4 years before the date of the application for a license, and  
5 if the applicant's rights of citizenship have been restored  
6 by the governor pursuant to sections 914.1 through 914.6, the  
7 director of the department may determine that the applicant is  
8 an eligible applicant.

9 Sec. 9. Section 123.3, subsection 26, paragraph d, Code  
10 2011, is amended to read as follows:

11 d. The person has not been convicted of a felony. However,  
12 if the person's conviction of a felony occurred more than five  
13 years before the date of the application for a license or  
14 permit, and if the person's rights of citizenship have been  
15 restored by the governor pursuant to sections 914.1 through  
16 914.6, the administrator may determine that the person is of  
17 good moral character notwithstanding such conviction.

18 Sec. 10. Section 161A.5, subsection 3, paragraph b, Code  
19 2011, is amended to read as follows:

20 b. Every candidate shall file with the nomination papers  
21 an affidavit stating the candidate's name, the candidate's  
22 residence, that the person is a candidate and is eligible for  
23 the office of commissioner, and that if elected the candidate  
24 will qualify for the office. The affidavit shall also state  
25 that the candidate is aware that the candidate is disqualified  
26 from holding office if the candidate has been convicted of a  
27 felony or other infamous crime and the candidate's rights have  
28 not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~ by the president of the  
29 United States, or by operation of law.

30 Sec. 11. Section 277.4, subsection 2, paragraph b, Code  
31 2011, is amended to read as follows:

32 b. Signers of nomination petitions shall include their  
33 addresses and the date of signing, and must reside in the same  
34 director district as the candidate if directors are elected  
35 by the voters of a director district, rather than at-large.

1 A person may sign nomination petitions for more than one  
2 candidate for the same office, and the signature is not invalid  
3 solely because the person signed nomination petitions for  
4 one or more other candidates for the office. The petition  
5 shall be filed with the affidavit of the candidate being  
6 nominated, stating the candidate's name, place of residence,  
7 that such person is a candidate and is eligible for the office  
8 the candidate seeks, and that if elected the candidate will  
9 qualify for the office. The affidavit shall also state that  
10 the candidate is aware that the candidate is disqualified  
11 from holding office if the candidate has been convicted of a  
12 felony or other infamous crime and the candidate's rights have  
13 not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~ by the president of the  
14 United States, or by operation of law.

15 Sec. 12. Section 376.4, subsection 2, paragraph b, Code  
16 2011, is amended to read as follows:

17 *b.* The petition must include the affidavit of the individual  
18 for whom it is filed, stating the individual's name, the  
19 individual's residence, that the individual is a candidate and  
20 eligible for the office, and that if elected the individual  
21 will qualify for the office. The affidavit shall also state  
22 that the candidate is aware that the candidate is disqualified  
23 from holding office if the candidate has been convicted of a  
24 felony or other infamous crime and the candidate's rights have  
25 not been restored by the governor, ~~or~~ by the president of the  
26 United States, or by operation of law.

27 Sec. 13. Section 914.2, Code 2011, is amended to read as  
28 follows:

29 **914.2 Right of application.**

30 Except as otherwise provided in section 902.2 or 914.8, a  
31 person convicted of a criminal offense has the right to make  
32 application to the board of parole for recommendation or to  
33 the governor for a reprieve, pardon, commutation of sentence,  
34 remission of fines or forfeitures, or restoration of rights of  
35 citizenship at any time following the conviction.

1     Sec. 14. NEW SECTION.   **914.8 Restoration of right to**  
2 **register and to vote.**

3     1. A person convicted of a felony criminal offense who has  
4 been discharged from probation under section 907.9, discharged  
5 from parole or work release under section 906.15, or who is  
6 released from confinement under section 902.6 because the  
7 person has completed the person's term of confinement shall  
8 have the right to register to vote and to vote restored in the  
9 manner provided in this section.

10    2. Upon complete discharge from criminal sentence,  
11 including any accompanying term of probation, parole, or  
12 supervised release, the department of corrections or judicial  
13 district department of correctional services, whichever  
14 is applicable, shall provide written notice to the inmate,  
15 parolee, or probationer of the person's discharge which  
16 shall include a voter registration form and a statement that  
17 the person's right to register to vote and to vote has been  
18 restored.

19    3. The department of corrections shall monthly provide a  
20 list of all persons discharged from confinement or supervision  
21 to the state registrar of voters who shall provide the  
22 information to the county registrars of voters as deemed  
23 necessary.

24    4. Offenders may still make application for a restoration  
25 of citizenship rights pursuant to this chapter. All such  
26 applications, unless withdrawn, shall be processed as required  
27 by this chapter.

28    5. This section shall not relieve an offender of any  
29 unpaid restitution, fine, or other obligation resulting from  
30 conviction.

31     Sec. 15. EFFECTIVE UPON ENACTMENT AND RETROACTIVE  
32 APPLICABILITY. This Act, being deemed of immediate importance,  
33 takes effect upon enactment and applies retroactively to  
34 January 14, 2011.

35

EXPLANATION

1 This bill requires that, upon the complete discharge from  
2 certain criminal sentences, citizenship rights related to  
3 voting and qualification for public office, must be restored.

4 The bill requires that the right to register to vote and to  
5 vote be restored for any individual who has been completely  
6 discharged from criminal sentence, including any accompanying  
7 term of probation, parole, or supervised release. The  
8 restoration of citizenship rights provided for under the bill  
9 shall only extend to the right to register to vote and to vote,  
10 and would not include any other citizenship rights. The bill  
11 would not relieve the individual of unpaid restitution, fines,  
12 or other obligations resulting from conviction within the  
13 terms or conditions of a criminal sentence. The bill will not  
14 limit an individual's ability to apply to the governor for a  
15 restoration of citizenship rights.

16 The bill requires that the department of corrections notify  
17 the state registrar of voters upon the complete discharge of  
18 criminal sentence for an individual. The bill requires that,  
19 where applicable, the judicial district department make the  
20 notification.

21 The bill takes effect upon enactment and applies  
22 retroactively to January 14, 2011.