Voter Registration Amendments – Proposed Legislation

During the upcoming legislative session, there are two bills that attempt to update the voter registration process. Both bills would make it easier for voters to register (or update their registration) at the Driver License Division (DLD). The County Clerks and Election Officials favor HB 67 sponsored by Rep. Handy.

The two bills are HB 67 and HB 154. The major difference between the two bills are that HB 154 would enlarge the font on the Driver License application with regards to the question about whether the individual would like to register to vote. This proposed legislation would also require the DLD to forward any *updates* to the record of a currently registered individual to the Elections Office.

House Bill 67 takes this idea further and would bring Utah into line with a growing list of States that are automatically registering any qualified citizen who applies for a Driver License. Citizens would have the opportunity to opt out of registering at the DLD while a process would also provide for people to "unregister" after leaving the DLD.

The Clerks and Election Officials overwhelmingly support HB 67 because it is more efficient and will remove the confusion that voters currently experience with the registration process. Most people who show up at a Vote Assistance Center on Election Day do so because they (mistakenly) believe that they registered (or updated their registration) when they applied for or renewed their driver license.

- Undeliverable ballots cost taxpayers significantly more money in postage and staff time to process and research.
- Automatic registration would result in more 16 & 17 year olds pre-registering to vote.
- Nearly 1/3 of all people who visit the DLD <u>do not</u> register to vote.
- The Driver License Division is the State agency best suited to verifying eligibility and citizenship.
- As Utah increasingly becomes a "vote by mail" State, this is the most efficient way to keep addresses up to date and to get ballots to all who expect them.

- Many people in line at polling places on Election Day are there because their registration is not up to date.
- 9 States have passed automatic registration processes (similar to HB 67) with another 32 states that currently have proposed (or pending) legislation. This is becoming a bipartisan effort.
- Most citizens believe that they are registering to vote when they obtain and renew their Driver License.
- Utah's voter participation is historically low, this would give more people an opportunity to participate.

States with Automatic Registration - 2017

States that are considering Automatic Registration in 2017-2018