



4 Park St. Room 200
Concord, NH 03301

February 14, 2017

re **SB 194—authorizing online voter registration**

To the Chair Senator Birdsell and members of the Senate Election Law Committee:

As you know, the League of Women Voters is a non-partisan grassroots organization that has been working for 97 years to encourage voting and informed participation in government. In spite of the League's longevity—today is in fact the 97th anniversary of the founding of the League of Women Voters—and the age of some of our members, we believe that online voter registration is the way to do things in the 21st century. As the First in the Nation Presidential Primary State, we should not be last in the way we handle elections. **We urge the committee to vote Ought to Pass on SB 194.**

We all do many things online, and for people under 40 anything not online is somehow suspect. We bank online, we buy items and pay bills online, we communicate with our friends, we learn online. We even research election law online. SB 194 does include options for those who do not wish to register online. An online system can keep the town elections officials informed in real time. With a secure centralized database we can have much quicker registration and cross-checking of identity through the already online Department of Motor Vehicles records.

The bill also provides that an original signature in addition to the digital signature on record in the DMV be provided to the supervisors of the checklist before voting for the first time. No absentee ballot would be issued without that original signature on file. This security measure is a good thing to build confidence in the system.

Additionally the bill includes a requirement for notification of the applicant if the registration can't be processed, for some reason, and alternative methods of registration. Using a "unique identifier" the applicant can check that the registration has been processed and received information about where to vote. All of these are modern ways of doing business.

Attached to this testimony is an explanation and a detailed chart of the other 38 states that have already made the decision to use online voter registration. It comes from the National Conference of State Legislatures, which I researched online. The website includes other references as well, should you wish to find out more from various sources. Their website is <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/electronic-or-online-voter-registration.aspx>

The League of Women Voters NH urges a vote of "Ought to Pass" on SB 194.

Respectfully submitted,

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From the National Conference of State Legislatures website: <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/electronic-or-online-voter-registration.aspx>

(Emphasis added by LWVNH)

As of January 27, 2017 a total of **34 states plus the District of Columbia offer online registration**, and **another four states have passed legislation to create online voter registration systems**, but have not yet implemented them. See the [table](#) below for details.

Online voter registration systems supplement the traditional paper-based process, by which new voters fill out a paper form that is submitted to election officials, who confirm the registration is valid and enter the information from the paper application into the registration system.

Online voter registration follows essentially the same process, but instead of filling out a paper application, the voter fills out a form via an Internet site, and that paperless form is submitted electronically to election officials. In most states the application is reviewed electronically; if the request is confirmed to be valid, the new registration is added to the state's voter registration list.

That validation step is done by comparing the information on the online registration form against the information provided by the same individual when he or she received a driver's license or other state-issued identification card. The signature already on record with the state becomes the signature on record for voting. When the information does not a match, the application is sent to officials for further review or action.

In most states, online voter registration systems work for people who have state-issued driver's licenses or identification cards, although a few states provide online access for other potential voters as well. In all states, paper registration forms are available for anyone, including those who cannot register online.

Arizona was the innovator in paperless voter registration, having implemented its system in 2002. Washington followed with authorizing legislation in 2007 and implementation in 2008. Since then, more and more states have gone live with online voter registration. While most states have enacted specific legislation to authorize online voter registration, some have made online voter registration available without enabling legislation. See the [table](#) below for details.

(Costs and Security measures are also discussed on this website.)

Recent Action

Ohio: Online registration was enacted in June 2016 ([SB63](#)), to be implemented in 2017.

Tennessee: Online registration was enacted in May 2016 ([SB1626/HB1742](#)).

Idaho: Online registration was enacted in April 2016 ([SB 1297](#)).

Rhode Island: Online registration was enacted in March 2016 ([SB 2513](#)).

Wisconsin: Online registration was enacted in March 2016 ([SB 295](#)) and implemented in 2017.

Kentucky: Online registration become available in March 2016. The system was developed without specific enabling legislation.

Alabama: Online registration became available in February 2016. The system was developed without specific enabling legislation.

Iowa and New Mexico: Online voter registration systems in both states went live in January 2016. Iowa's system was developed without specific enabling legislation, and New Mexico enacted online voter registration in 2015.

Alaska: Online voter registration became available in November 2015.

Vermont: The secretary of state launched the online voter registration system in October 2015. The system was developed without specific enabling legislation.

West Virginia: Online voter registration, which was enacted in 2013, was implemented in September 2015.

Nebraska: Online voter registration, which was enacted in 2014, was implemented in September 2015.

Pennsylvania: The governor announced the launch of the online voter registration system in August 2015. The system was developed without specific enabling legislation.

Hawaii: Online voter registration, which was enacted in 2012, was implemented in August 2015.

Florida: Online voter registration was enacted in May 2015 ([SB 228](#)).

Oklahoma: Online voter registration was enacted in April 2015 ([SB 313](#)).

New Mexico: Online voter registration was enacted in April 2015 ([SB 643](#)).

District of Columbia: Online voter registration was enacted in October 2014 ([B20-0264](#)).

Illinois: Online voter registration became available in June 2014.

Massachusetts: Legislation to create online voter registration was enacted in May 2014.

Delaware: Full online voter registration became available in April 2014.

Nebraska: Legislation to create online voter registration was enacted in March 2014.

Georgia: Online voter registration became available in March 2014.

Minnesota: Online voter registration became available in October 2013, without enabling legislation. In 2014, the legislature authorized the use of the system.

Connecticut: Online voter registration went "live" in December 2013.

Illinois, Virginia and West Virginia: Legislation to create online voter registration was enacted in 2013.

States With Online Voter Registration

State	Year Enacted	Bill Number	Year Implemented	Website
Alabama	n/a	No legislation required	2016	Alabama Votes
Alaska	n/a	No legislation required	2015	Alaska Online Voter Registration
Arizona	n/a	No legislation required	2002	EZ Voter Registration
California	2011	SB 397	2012	California Online Voter Registration
Colorado	2009	HB 1160	2010	Go Vote Colorado

State	Year Enacted	Bill Number	Year Implemented	Website
Connecticut	2012	HB 5024	2014	<u>Connecticut Online Voter Registration</u>
Delaware	n/a	No legislation required	2014	<u>I Vote Delaware</u>
District of Columbia	2014	B20-0264	2015	<u>District of Columbia Online Voter Registration</u>
Florida	2015	SB 228	n/a	Not implemented yet
Georgia	2012	SB 92	2014	<u>Georgia Online Voter Registration</u>
Hawaii	2012	HB 1755	2015	<u>Hawaii Online Voter Registration</u>
Idaho	2016	SB 1297	n/a	Not implemented yet
Illinois	2013	HB 2418	2014	<u>Illinois Online Voter Registration</u>
Indiana	2009	HB 1346	2010	<u>Indiana Online Voter Registration</u>
Iowa	n/a	No legislation required	2016	<u>Iowa Online Voter Registration</u>
Kansas	n/a	No legislation required	2009	<u>Kansas Online Voter Registration</u>
Kentucky	n/a	No legislation required	2016	<u>Kentucky Online Voter Registration</u>
Louisiana	2009	HB 520	2010	<u>Geaux Vote</u>
Maryland	2011	HB 740	2012	<u>Maryland Online Voter Registration</u>
Massachusetts	2014	HB 3788	2015	<u>Massachusetts Online Voter Registration</u>
Minnesota (a)	2014	HF 2096	2013	<u>MN Votes</u>
Missouri (b)	n/a	No legislation required	2014	<u>Vote Missouri</u>
Nebraska	2014	LB 661	2015	<u>Nebraska Online Voter Registration</u>

State	Year Enacted	Bill Number	Year Implemented	Website
Nevada	2011	AB 82	2012	Nevada Online Voter Registration
New Mexico	2015	SB 643	2016	New Mexico Online Voter Registration
New York (c)	n/a	No legislation required	2011	New York Electronic Voter Registration
Ohio	2016	SB 63	2017	Ohio Online Voter Registration
Oklahoma	2015	SB 313	n/a	Not implemented yet
Oregon	2009	HB 2386	2010	OreStar
Pennsylvania	n/a	No legislation required	2015	PA Online Voter Registration
Rhode Island	2016	SB 2513	2017	RI Online Voter Registration
South Carolina	2012	HB 4945	2012	S.C. Online Voter Registration
Tennessee	2016	SB1626/HB1472	n/a	Not implemented yet
Utah	2009	SB 25	2010	Utah Online Voter Registration
Vermont	n/a	No legislation required	2015	Vermont Online Voter Registration
Virginia	2013	HB 2341	2013	Virginia Voter Registration
Washington	2007	HB 1528	2008	MyVote
West Virginia	2013	SB 477	2015	West Virginia Online Voter Registration
Wisconsin	2016	SB 295	2017	MyVote Wisconsin

(a) Minnesota in 2013 made online voter registration available without enabling legislation but the legislature in 2014 authorized the state's system.

(b) In Missouri, a person can register to vote online and electronically provide a signature using a mobile device, tablet computer or touchscreen computer, but not a standard desktop computer. The state reviews the information and prints out the registration form, which it sends to the person's local elections office for verification.

(c) In New York, the registration system is not fully paperless. Voters can submit a voter registration application online, through a system run by the Department of Motor Vehicles, but paper is exchanged between the motor vehicle system and the statewide database. This creates a paperless experience from the voter's perspective, but administrative processes are still paper-based.