



FLORIDA STATE ASSOCIATION OF SUPERVISORS OF ELECTIONS

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FSASE SUPPORTS CS/CS/SB 228

CS/CS/SB 228 provides that the Department of State will develop a secure online voter registration application process in Florida by October 2017. Twenty-five states currently have such a system or are implementing such a process. In states where this application process exists, it has been determined to assist military voters, lessen costs and taxpayer expenses and results in fewer errors on the voter rolls. There have been no reported instances of fraud or system manipulation. The bill requires or will:

- Allow citizens to fill out a voter registration application and submit it online to the county supervisor of elections.
- The Department of State and supervisors will use current verification criteria (the same as paper applications) before anyone is placed on the voter rolls. The Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles will, for eligible voters, continue to transmit digital signatures to the supervisors of elections as has been done for nearly the last ten years.
- The Department of State will provide a report to the President and Speaker no later than January 1, 2016, regarding implementation of the system, including time frames and the need for further legislation.
- States which have implemented these systems have generally done so in less than six months and \$250,000.00. Costs to supervisors and counties should be minimal.

FSASE requests your support and favorable vote on CS/CS/SB 228.



BIPARTISAN POLICY CENTER

April 20, 2015

The Honorable Garrett Richter
Chairman, Senate Ethics & Elections Committee
404 S. Monroe Street, 404 SOB
Tallahassee, FL 32399
Richter.Garrett.web@FLSenate.gov

Via Electronic Mail

Dear Senator Richter:

I am currently with the Bipartisan Policy Center in Washington, D.C as a senior advisor on election administration and have provided educational information to election officials and state legislatures on online voter registration systems. Prior to my involvement with the Center, I had the privilege to serve as the Secretary of State Board of Virginia from 2011-2013, appointed by Governor Bob McDonnell (R). My responsibilities included the administration of elections in that state and implementation of voting laws enacted by the Legislature.

While serving as the Secretary, I successfully implemented an online voter registration system in Virginia in 2013. During the years 2008-2011, I was the Director of the Division of Elections in the Florida Department of State (DOS). Because of that tenure, I am very familiar with all of the Division's activities, including the Florida Voter Registration System (FVRS) and the Florida Department Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) activities and responsibilities dealing with voter registration and the daily interactions with the DOS and FVRS.

Based on my personal experience, implementing online registration in Virginia required less than six months, at a cost of \$120,000. We completed this projected in the midst of a number of other technology projects I had initiated at the state level. Because this is not a new or complicated technology, the vast majority of states that have implemented online voter registration find their expenses to be under \$200,000. Many states that I have surveyed completed the project at minimal costs with a reliance on internal staff programming. However, the use of outside contractors or vendors to support development is often recommended and utilized in implementation of online voter registration. Based on my background and knowledge of the FVRS and DHSMV system, I believe Florida would be able to implement an online registration system in a similar time frame and cost, particularly with the existing technological relationship between the DOS and DHSMV.

To be specific, the Florida Division of Elections already receives electronic registrations and signatures from DHSMV of customers who register each day. This existing modernized process with electronic registration is significantly ahead of where Virginia started when we

began our project to complete online voter registration. To account for outside vendor support that DOS salaried employees cannot resolve and DHSMV process changes, an appropriation of \$250,000 would cover those additional potential costs.

If you would like further information on my experience in Virginia and understanding of other states implementation costs, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DP', with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Donald Palmer
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cc: Ron Labasky
Dawn Roberts