

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 1989

H

1

HOUSE BILL 550

Short Title: Motor Voter.

(Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Mills; Albertson, Hardaway, Wisner, and Bowman.

Referred to: Judiciary.

March 14, 1989

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
2 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR USE OF DRIVER'S LICENSE APPLICATIONS AND
3 APPLICATIONS FOR SPECIAL IDENTIFICATION CARDS TO ALSO BE
4 APPLICATIONS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION.

5 Whereas, the 1983 General Assembly enacted a program to allow persons to
6 register to vote when that person applies for the issuance, renewal or correction of a
7 driver's license; and

8 Whereas, that program stated that each person at a drivers' license office for
9 the purpose of obtaining, renewing, or correcting a driver's license was to be given the
10 opportunity to register to vote; and

11 Whereas, in 1984, 60,507 persons registered to vote under that program, but
12 the total dropped to 6,501 in 1985, 6,246 in 1986, and 3,355 in 1987; and

13 Whereas, the deficiency of the program is that it requires an already
14 overburdened agency staff to separately register voters; and

15 Whereas, a program to build voter registration into the application process
16 itself will lead to substantially more registration with an integrated process; Now,
17 therefore,

18 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

19 Section 1. G.S. 163-81 reads as rewritten:

20 "**§ 163-81. Driver license examiners authorized to accept applications to register**
21 **voters.**

22 (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, ~~the State Board of Elections is~~
23 ~~authorized to appoint as special registration commissioners duly appointed driver~~
24 ~~license examiners of the Division of Motor Vehicles.~~

1 ~~The State Board of Elections may appoint such number of license examiners as it~~
2 ~~deems necessary as special registration commissioners, and the persons appointed shall~~
3 ~~serve at the pleasure of the State Board of Elections, and may be removed as a~~
4 ~~registration commissioner at any time for any reason satisfactory to the Board.~~

5 ~~Before entering upon the duties of the office each special registration commissioner~~
6 ~~shall take the oath of office prescribed in Section 7 of Article VI of the North Carolina~~
7 ~~Constitution.~~ driver license examiners are ex officio special registration commissioners
8 for the purpose of this section.

9 (b) Special registration commissioners appointed under this section are
10 authorized to accept applications to register persons who are qualified for registration
11 regardless of that person's voting precinct or county of residence in the State. The
12 special registration commissioners appointed pursuant to this section ~~shall possess those~~
13 ~~qualifications set forth in G.S. 163-41(b), and shall have the same authority to accept~~
14 applications to register voters as is conferred upon registration officials in this Chapter.

15 (c) The Division of Motor Vehicles shall, pursuant to the rules ~~and regulations~~
16 adopted by the State Board of Elections, ~~afford a~~ modify its forms so that any eligible
17 person who applies for original issuance, renewal or correction of a driver's license or
18 special identification card issued under G.S. 20-37.7 may, on a detachable part of the
19 form an opportunity to complete an application to register to vote or to update his
20 registration if the voter has changed his address or moved from one precinct to another
21 or from one county to another. Such application shall be under oath. The necessary
22 forms shall be prescribed by the State Board of Elections. All applications shall be
23 forwarded by the Department of Transportation to the appropriate county board of
24 elections. The form must ask for the previous voter registration address of the voter, if
25 any. If a previous address is listed, and it is not in the county of residence of the
26 applicant, the appropriate county board of elections shall treat it as an authorization to
27 cancel the previous registration and also process it as such under the procedures of G.S.
28 163-72.1(c) through (e).

29 Registration shall become effective as provided in G.S. 163-67(a).

30 (d) The State Board of Elections is authorized to promulgate rules ~~and regulations~~
31 necessary to implement the provisions of this section."

32 Sec. 2. G.S. 163-80 reads as rewritten:

33 "**§ 163-80. Officers authorized to register voters.**

34 (a) Only the following election officials shall be authorized to register voters:

- 35 (1) Any member of a county board of elections who has been duly
36 appointed pursuant to G.S. 163-22(c) and properly installed as required
37 by G.S. 163-30 and 163-31.
- 38 (2) The supervisor of elections of a county board of elections appointed
39 pursuant to the provisions of G.S. 163-35.
- 40 (3) Precinct registrars and judges of election appointed pursuant to the
41 provisions of G.S. 163-41.
- 42 (4) Special registration commissioners appointed pursuant to the authority
43 and limitation contained in G.S. 163-41(b) , or serving ex officio
44 pursuant to G.S. 163-81.

1 (5) Full-time and salaried deputy supervisors of elections employed by the
2 county board of elections and who work under the direct supervision
3 of the board's supervisor of elections appointed pursuant to the
4 provisions contained in G.S. 163-35.

5 (6) Local public library employees designated by the governing board of
6 such public library to be appointed by the county board of elections as
7 special library registration deputies. Appointment of such deputies is
8 mandatory for libraries covered by G.S. 153A-272; appointment is
9 optional for other libraries. Persons appointed under this subsection
10 shall be given the oath contained in G.S. 163-41(b), and shall be
11 authorized to accept applications to register on those days and during
12 those hours said special deputies are on duty with their respective
13 libraries. If, for good and valid reasons, the local public library director
14 shall request that the county board of elections appoint 'replacement'
15 special library registration deputies before the two-year term ends, the
16 county board of elections shall do so.

17 (7) Public high school employees appointed under this subdivision. A
18 local board of education may, but is not required to, designate high
19 school employees to be appointed by the county board of elections as
20 special high school registration commissioners. Only employees who
21 volunteer for this duty, and who are acceptable to the county board of
22 elections, may be designated by boards of education. A special high
23 school registration commissioner may register voters only while on
24 duty as a high school employee and only at times and under
25 arrangements approved by the local school board of education. A
26 person appointed under this subdivision shall take the oath prescribed
27 in G.S. 163-41(b).

28 (b) All election officials authorized to register voters under authority of this
29 section shall not be authorized to register voters who reside outside the boundaries of
30 their respective counties except in those specific instances involving municipalities
31 which lie within the boundaries of two or more counties and except as provided by G.S.
32 163-81. The State Board of Elections shall have authority to promulgate rules for the
33 processing of voters in such instances.

34 (c) All election officials authorized by this section to register voters shall register
35 any qualified voter without regard to political party affiliation and without
36 discrimination in any manner whatsoever.

37 (d) The State Board of Elections shall promulgate rules for the proper training of
38 those persons qualifying under this section as registrars."

39 Sec. 3. This act shall become effective with respect to all applications for
40 issuance, renewal, or correction of driver's licenses or special identification cards issued
41 by the Department of Transportation on or after January 1, 1990, provided that it may
42 be implemented prior to that with the approval of the Secretary of Transportation and
43 the State Board of Elections.