



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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Motor Voter legislation passes Senate, on the way to Governor Brown

HB 2177 modernizes and simplifies voter registration for Oregonians

SALEM – Oregon Senate Democrats voted to approve historic legislation this morning that will dramatically expand access to Oregon elections. House Bill 2177 will make voter registration simpler, more convenient, and more secure by using the data that the Department of Motor Vehicles currently collects for drivers' licenses. The modernized process will provide simple and accurate voter registration to eligible voters and will update address information for people who have already registered.

“Our democracy is about each and every citizen. With passage of HB 2177, we are empowering our democracy by removing barriers for citizens to vote,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland). “While other states take steps to limit voter participation and to disenfranchise voters, the Oregon Legislature is bucking that trend. We are leading the nation. Today we are making history by giving more Oregonians the opportunity to exercise their right to vote.”

Once signed into law by Governor Kate Brown, an estimated 300,000 currently unregistered—but eligible—voters will now get ballots at election time, giving them the opportunity to weigh in on the issues that affect their families and their communities. Under current election laws, many students, young people, and working parents lose the ability to vote if they move and don't update their voter registration information. HB 2177 would end that practice by automatically updating voter registration information when someone moves—or when someone isn't registered.

“Voting is a right, not a privilege. Regardless of party affiliation, every single one of us, as elected officials, should want as many Oregonians as possible engaged as voters,” said Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward (D-Beaverton).

By utilizing the existing DMV system, which requires stringent proof-of-citizenship, it will now be easier to determine whether someone is eligible to register to vote in Oregon, increasing the security of Oregon’s voter registration system. Importantly, HB 2177 protects the privacy of minors and others who have privacy protections through the DMV, including victims of domestic violence.

HB 2177 will now go to the Governor for her approval.

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