



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

Oregon State Legislature
State Capitol
Salem, OR

NEWS RELEASE

May 26, 2011

CONTACT: Molly Woon (503) 986-1074
molly.woon@state.or.us

Senate approves voter access bill

HB 2880 ensures Oregon is in compliance with national voter reg laws

SALEM – The Oregon Senate approved legislation this evening that will help Oregon improve voter registration outreach across state agencies. House Bill 2880 will require state agencies to evaluate their compliance with the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) and make plans for improving their compliance.

“The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy and Oregonians are proud of our high rate of registration and turnout in elections,” said Senate Majority Leader Diane Rosenbaum (D-Portland), who carried the bill on the floor. “We have a responsibility to reach out to as many Oregonians as possible about their right to engage in the democratic process. Understanding how we are registering voters across the spectrum of state services and agencies will help us meet this goal. This bill will increase transparency and efficiency in Oregon’s voter registration system.”

HB 2880 will help Oregon avoid potentially expensive lawsuits by directing a 10-member council to assess federal guidelines, identify barriers and ensure compliance with the NVRA. The National Voter Registration State Compliance Council will consist of representatives from the Governor, county clerks, the Secretary of State, and five designated voter registration agencies. The Council will be required to submit a report its first report to an interim committee of the Legislature by December 1, 2011.

“Our work to include all citizens in the democratic process can always be improved,” said Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson (D-Gresham). “This bill will help us integrate Oregon’s voter registration system through technology and increased coordination amongst state agencies. Oregon is already a national leader when it comes to voter engagement. HB 2880 will only help.”

The NVRA was passed by Congress in 1993 to establish procedures for increasing voter registration, protecting identities in the political process, and to assure accurate and current voter registration rolls. It requires states to permit voter registration through the DMV, via a uniform mail application, and by application in person at designated agencies.

HB 2880 was introduced in the House by Representatives Jefferson Smith (D-Portland) and Ben Cannon (D-Portland). The bill now goes back to the House for concurrence.

###