

1 H.671

2 Introduced by Representative Tagliavia of Corinth

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Elections; qualification and registration of voters; proof of U.S.

6 citizenship

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require

8 documented proof of U.S. citizenship to register to vote. It also requires that

9 the Secretary of State enter into a memorandum of agreement with the U.S.

10 Department of Homeland Security to access and utilize the Systematic Alien

11 Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program for the purposes of verifying

12 citizenship status during voter registration and for ongoing voter roll

13 maintenance.

14 An act relating to requiring proof of U.S. citizenship for voter registration

15 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

16 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2121 is amended to read:

17 § 2121. ELIGIBILITY OF VOTERS

18 (a) Any person may register to vote in the town of ~~his or her~~ the person's

19 residence in any election held in a political subdivision of this State in which

20 ~~he or she~~ the person resides who, on election day:

1 submitted by the applicant is accurate and truthful. The affirmation shall
2 include the following information:

3 (A) The applicant's place and date of birth.
4 (B) The applicant's town of legal residence.
5 (C) The applicant's street address or a description of the physical
6 location of the applicant's residence. The description must contain sufficient
7 information so that the town clerk can determine whether the applicant is a
8 resident of the town.

9 (D)(1) If the applicant has been issued a current and valid driver's
10 license or nondriver's identification, the applicant's driver's license number or
11 nondriver's identification number;

12 (2) If the applicant does not possess a driver's license number, the
13 last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number; or

14 (3) If the applicant does not possess a Social Security number, the
15 town clerk shall contact the Secretary of State and the Secretary shall assign a
16 unique identifier for the applicant.

17 (E) The applicant's email address, which shall be optional to provide.

18 (2) The voter's oath.

19 (3) Space for the town clerk to document action on the application.

1 (4) The following statements:

2 (A) "If you were provided with this application form by a voter
3 registration agency, you may decline to register. If you decline to register,
4 your failure to register will remain confidential and will be used only for voter
5 registration purposes."

6 (B) "If you are submitting this application through a voter
7 registration agency, the office through which you submitted this application
8 will remain confidential and will be used only for voter registration purposes."

9 (5) A requirement for documented proof of U.S. citizenship, which must
10 be submitted with the application and verified by the town clerk. Acceptable
11 forms of proof include:

17 (b) A town clerk shall record the proof of U.S. citizenship provided on the
18 application form and, where feasible, verify the applicant's citizenship status
19 using the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program
20 administered by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services.

21 * * *

1 Sec. 3. 17 V.S.A. § 2145a is amended to read:

2 § 2145a. REGISTRATIONS AT THE DEPARTMENT OF MOTOR
3 VEHICLES

4 (a) An application for, or renewal of, a motor vehicle driver's license or
5 nondriver identification card shall serve as a simultaneous application to
6 register to vote if the applicant ~~attests to~~ provides proof of U.S. citizenship or
7 the Department has proof of U.S. citizenship unless the applicant checks the
8 box on the application designating that the applicant declines to use the
9 application as a voter registration application.

10 (b)(1) A motor vehicle driver's license or nondriver identification card
11 application shall provide and request the following information and shall be in
12 the form approved by the Secretary of State:

- 13 (A) The applicant's citizenship.
- 14 (B) The applicant's place and date of birth.
- 15 (C) The applicant's town of legal residence.
- 16 (D) The applicant's E-911 street address or a description of the
17 physical location of the applicant's residence. The description must contain
18 sufficient information so that the town clerk can determine whether the
19 applicant is a resident of the town.

1 (E) The voter's oath.

2 (F) The applicant's email address and phone number, which shall be
3 optional to provide.

4 (2) A motor vehicle driver's license or nondriver identification card
5 application shall provide the following statements:

6 (A) "By signing and submitting this application, you are authorizing
7 the Department of Motor Vehicles to transmit this application to the Secretary
8 of State for voter registration purposes. YOU MAY DECLINE TO
9 REGISTER. ~~Both the office through which you submit this application and~~
10 ~~your decision of whether or not to register will remain confidential and will be~~
11 ~~used for voter registration purposes only.~~"

12 (B) "In order to be registered to vote, you must: (1) be a U.S. citizen;
13 (2) be a resident of Vermont; (3) have taken the voter's oath; and (4) be 18
14 years of age or older. Any person meeting the requirements of (1)–(3) who
15 will be 18 years of age on or before the date of a general election may register
16 and vote in the primary election immediately preceding that general election.
17 Failure to decline to register is an attestation that you meet the requirements to
18 vote."

19 * * *

20 (4)(A) An applicant who simultaneously applies to register to vote shall
21 provide proof of U.S. citizenship. Acceptable forms of proof include:

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* * *

2 Sec. 4. 17 V.S.A. § 2154 is amended to read:

3 § 2154. STATEWIDE VOTER CHECKLIST

4 (a) The Secretary of State shall maintain a uniform and nondiscriminatory
5 statewide voter checklist. This checklist shall serve as the official voter
6 registration list for all elections in the State. In maintaining the statewide voter
7 checklist, the Secretary shall:

8 (1) limit a town clerk to adding, modifying, or deleting applicant and
9 voter information on the portion of the checklist for that clerk's municipality;

10 (2) limit access to the statewide voter checklist for a local elections
11 official to verifying whether the applicant is registered in another municipality
12 in the State by a search for the individual voter;

13 (3) notify a local elections official when a voter registered in that
14 official's district registers in another voting district so that the voter may be
15 removed from that official's district checklist;

16 (4) provide adequate security to prevent unauthorized access to the
17 checklist;

18 (5) ensure the compatibility and comparability of information on the
19 checklist with information contained in the Department of Motor Vehicles'
20 computer systems; ~~and~~

9 (b)(1) A registered voter's month and day of birth, driver's license or
10 nondriver identification number, telephone number, email address, and the last
11 four digits of ~~his or her~~ the voter's Social Security number shall be kept
12 confidential and are exempt from public inspection and copying under the
13 Public Records Act.

5 (C) comparing a voter's information maintained in the checklist to
6 personally identifying information contained in other ~~federal or~~ state databases.

7 (c)(1) Any person wishing to obtain a copy of all of the statewide voter
8 checklist must swear or affirm, under penalty of perjury pursuant to 13 V.S.A.
9 chapter 65, that the person will not:

10 (A) use the checklist for commercial purposes; or

11 (B) knowingly disclose the checklist to any foreign government ~~or to~~
12 a ~~federal agency or commission~~ or to a person acting on behalf of a foreign
13 government ~~or of such a federal entity~~ in circumvention of the prohibited
14 purposes for using the checklist set forth in subdivision (b)(2) of this section.

15 (2) The affirmation shall be filed with the Secretary of State.

16 (d) An elections official shall not access the portion of the statewide voter
17 checklist that is exempt from public inspection pursuant to 1 V.S.A.
18 § 317(c)(31), except for elections purposes.

1 Sec. 5. SYSTEMATIC ALIEN VERIFICATION FOR ENTITLEMENTS

2 (SAVE) PROGRAM; MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

3 On or before January 1, 2027, the Secretary of State shall enter into a
4 memorandum of agreement with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to
5 access and utilize the Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE)
6 Program for the purposes of verifying citizenship status during voter
7 registration and for ongoing voter roll maintenance. The Secretary shall
8 implement bulk uploads and other available enhancements and shall report to
9 the General Assembly on the status of this agreement and implementation
10 within six months following the effective date of this act.

11 Sec. 6. APPROPRIATION

12 The sum of \$300,000.00 is appropriated from the General Fund to the
13 Secretary of State in fiscal year 2027 for the purpose of integrating the
14 Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program into State and
15 local systems and training town clerks.

16 Sec. 7. EFFECTIVE DATE

17 This act shall take effect on passage.