

Date of Hearing: April 5, 2017

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON ELECTIONS AND REDISTRICTING

Evan Low, Chair

AB 4 (Waldron) – As Amended March 29, 2017

SUBJECT: Voter notification.

SUMMARY: Permits an elections official to notify an individual by text message or email when an affidavit of registration is submitted or updated in accordance with existing law. Specifically, **this bill** allows an elections official, upon receipt of a properly executed affidavit of registration or address correction notice or letter, as specified, to notify the sender by text message or email that his or her voter registration information has been received and that he or she will receive a subsequent notification by mail in accordance with current law.

EXISTING LAW:

- 1) Permits a person who is a United States citizen, a resident of California, not imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony, and at least 18 years of age at the time of the next election, to register to vote.
- 2) Permits any person who is at least 16 years of age and otherwise meets all eligibility requirements to vote to preregister to vote, but provides that such a person is not eligible to vote until he or she is 18 years of age.
- 3) Prohibits a person from being registered as a voter except by affidavit of registration.
- 4) Permits a person who is qualified to register to vote and who has a valid California driver's license or state identification card to submit an affidavit of registration electronically on the Internet Web site of the Secretary of State.
- 5) Requires a county elections official, upon receipt of a properly executed affidavit of registration or address correction or letter, as specified, to send the voter a voter notification by nonforwardable, first-class mail, address correction requested. Requires the voter notification to state the party preference for which the voter has registered in the following format:

Party: (Name of political party)

The voter notification shall be substantially in the following form:

VOTER NOTIFICATION

You are registered to vote. The party preference you chose, if any, is on this card. This card is being sent as a notification of:

1. Your recently completed affidavit of registration.

OR,

2. A change to your registration because of an official notice that you have moved. If your residence address has not changed or if your move is temporary, please call or write to our office immediately.

OR,

3. Your recent registration with a change in party preference. If this change is not correct, please call or write to our office immediately.

You may vote in any election held 15 or more days after the date on this card. Your name will appear on the index kept at the polls.

Please contact our office if the information shown on the reverse side of this card is incorrect.

- 6) Requires a county elections official, if a person under 18 years of age and submits an affidavit of registration in accordance with existing law, to send a preregistration notice upon a determination that the affidavit of registration is properly executed and that the person otherwise satisfies all eligibility requirements to vote, except that he or she is under 18 years of age.
- 7) Requires a county elections official to send the voter a preregistration notice by nonforwardable, first-class mail, address correction requested. Requires the voter preregistration notice to be in the following form:

VOTER PREREGISTRATION NOTICE

Thank you for preregistering to vote. You may vote in any election held on or after your 18th birthday.

Your party preference is: (Name of political party)

Before any election in which you are eligible to vote, you will receive a state voter information guide and county voter information guide by mail.

If the information on this card is incorrect, please contact our office or update your preregistration at the Internet Web site of the Secretary of State.

FISCAL EFFECT: Keyed non-fiscal by the Legislative Counsel.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose of the Bill:** According to the author:

AB 4 will bring the voter registration process into the 21st century by authorizing the elections official to send a text message or email to the voter in addition to the postcard when a voter has updated their voter information. The goal of this legislation is to ensure that all eligible voters are able to exercise their right to vote and that none are disenfranchised. It is vital to keep the voters in our state apprised of any changes made to their registration information and AB 4

accomplishes just that.

- 2) **Current Practice:** Under current law, if an individual submits an affidavit of registration or updates the address on his or her voter registration, a county elections official is required to send the individual a nonforwardable, first-class voter notification card alerting the voter of the completed affidavit of registration or the updated address change. This bill additionally permits a county elections official to notify an individual by text message or email that his or her voter registration information was received and that he or she will receive a subsequent notification by mail in accordance with current law. While it could be argued that this is not prohibited under current law, this bill makes it abundantly clear that a county elections official may notify a voter by text message or email if the information is available to the elections official as part of the voter's registration record.

REGISTERED SUPPORT / OPPOSITION:

Support

Election Integrity Project California, Inc. (Prior version)
Southwest California Legislative Council (Prior version)

Opposition

None on file.

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