

By: Representative Reynolds

To: Apportionment and
Elections; Appropriations

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 1409

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE STATEWIDE CENTRALIZED VOTER SYSTEM TO
2 ASSIST COMMISSIONERS OF ELECTION IN MAINTAINING ACCURATE VOTER
3 ROLLS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE SHALL DEVELOP,
4 IMPLEMENT AND ADMINISTER THE SYSTEM; TO PROVIDE THAT THE SECRETARY
5 OF STATE SHALL PROCURE SERVICES NECESSARY TO CONVERT THE CURRENT
6 VOTER REGISTRATION RECORDS OF THE COUNTY INTO A STANDARD, INDUSTRY
7 ACCEPTED FILE FORMAT THAT CAN BE USED ON THE STATEWIDE CENTRALIZED
8 VOTER SYSTEM; TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO ESTABLISH AN
9 ADVISORY COMMITTEE TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING SYSTEM SPECIFICATIONS,
10 PROCUREMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND MAINTENANCE OF THE SYSTEM; TO
11 EXEMPT CERTAIN INFORMATION IN THE SYSTEM FROM THE MISSISSIPPI
12 PUBLIC RECORDS ACT OF 1983; TO REPEAL SECTIONS 23-15-139 AND
13 23-15-140, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, WHICH PROVIDE FOR A STATEWIDE
14 VOTER REGISTRATION RECORD; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

15 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

16 **SECTION 1.** The purposes of this act are:

17 (a) To establish a centralized statewide qualified
18 voter file that consists of all qualified electors who are
19 registered to vote;

20 (b) To enhance the uniformity of the administration of
21 elections by creating and maintaining a centralized statewide file
22 of qualified voters;

23 (c) To increase the efficiency and decrease the cost of
24 maintaining voter registration records and implementing the
25 National Voter Registration Act of 1993;

26 (d) To increase the integrity of the voting process by
27 compiling a single centralized qualified voter file from county
28 voter roll data that will permit the name of each citizen of this
29 state to appear only once; and

30 (e) To apply technology and information gathered by
31 principal executive departments of state government, state
32 agencies and local voter registrars in a manner that ensures that
33 accurate and current records of qualified voters are maintained



34 and to secure cooperation among all state entities to develop
35 systems and processes that are interfaced with the Centralized
36 Statewide Voter System.

37 **SECTION 2.** (1) From and after July 1, 2002, and subject to
38 the provisions of subsection (7) of this section, the Office of
39 the Secretary of State shall begin to procure, implement and
40 maintain an electronic information processing system and programs
41 capable of maintaining a centralized database of all registered
42 voters in the state. The system shall encompass software and
43 hardware, at both the state and county level, software development
44 training, conversion and support and maintenance for the system.
45 This system shall be known as the "Statewide Centralized Voter
46 System" and shall constitute the official record of registered
47 voters in every county of the state.

48 (2) The Office of the Secretary of State shall develop and
49 implement the Statewide Centralized Voter System so that the
50 commissioners of election of each county shall:

51 (a) Verify that an applicant that is registering to
52 vote in such county is not registered to vote in another county;

53 (b) Be notified automatically that a registered voter
54 in its county has registered to vote in another county;

55 (c) Receive regular reports of death, changes of
56 address and convictions for disenfranchising crimes that apply to
57 voters registered in the county; and

58 (d) Implement such other functionality as the state and
59 counties consider necessary to enhance the maintenance of accurate
60 county voter records.

61 (3) As a part of the procurement and implementation of the
62 system, the Office of the Secretary of State shall procure
63 services necessary to convert current voter registration records
64 in the counties into a standard, industry accepted file format
65 that can be used on the Statewide Centralized Voter System.



66 Thereafter, all official voter information shall be maintained on
67 the Statewide Centralized Voter System.

68 (4) The Secretary of State may adopt rules and regulations
69 necessary to administer the Statewide Centralized Voter System.

70 Such rules and regulations shall at least:

71 (a) Provide for the establishment and maintenance of a
72 centralized database for all voter registration information in the
73 state;

74 (b) Provide procedures for integrating data into the
75 centralized database;

76 (c) Provide security to insure that only county
77 commissioners of election can add information to, delete
78 information from and modify information in the system;

79 (d) Provide local and state election officials access
80 to the system for all purposes related to their official duties;

81 (e) Provide security and protection of all information
82 in the system and monitor the system to ensure that unauthorized
83 access is not allowed;

84 (f) Provide a procedure that will allow commissioners
85 of election to identify the precinct to which a voter should be
86 assigned; and

87 (g) Provide a procedure for phasing in or converting
88 existing manual and computerized voter registration systems in
89 counties to the Statewide Centralized Voter System.

90 (5) The Secretary of State shall establish an advisory
91 committee to assist in developing system specifications,
92 procurement, implementation and maintenance of the Statewide
93 Centralized Voter System. The committee shall include local
94 election officials as a majority of its membership. It is the
95 intent of this act that the committee reflect the demographics of
96 the state as much as is practicable.

97 (6) (a) Social security numbers, telephone numbers and date
98 of birth and age information in statewide, district, county and



99 municipal voter registration files shall be exempt from and shall
100 not be subject to inspection, examination, copying or reproduction
101 under the Mississippi Public Records Act of 1983.

102 (b) Copies of statewide, district, county or municipal
103 voter registration files, excluding social security numbers,
104 telephone numbers and date of birth and age information, shall be
105 provided to any person in accordance with the Mississippi Public
106 Records Act of 1983 at a cost not to exceed the actual cost of
107 production.

108 (7) The purpose of this section is to receive the necessary
109 federal funding to carry out the provisions of this section.
110 Funds and grants from any other sources including funds that may
111 be appropriated by the Legislature may also be used, if available,
112 to carry out the provisions of this section.

113 **SECTION 3.** Sections 23-15-139 and 23-15-140, Mississippi
114 Code of 1972, which provide for a statewide voter registration
115 record, are hereby repealed.

116 **SECTION 4.** The Attorney General of the State of Mississippi
117 shall submit this act, immediately upon approval by the Governor,
118 or upon approval by the Legislature subsequent to a veto, to the
119 Attorney General of the United States or to the United States
120 District Court for the District of Columbia in accordance with the
121 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, as amended and
122 extended.

123 **SECTION 5.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
124 and after the date it is effectuated under Section 5 of the Voting
125 Rights Act of 1965, as amended and extended.

