

HB 2109 -- Voter Registration

Sponsor: Schoeller

This bill requires a person seeking to register to vote to present a form of personal identification that provides evidence of United States citizenship. All forms presented must be kept confidential by the election authority. The acceptable forms of identification are specified in the bill. An applicant can provide other evidence of citizenship to the Secretary of State who must make a determination as to whether the evidence is sufficient for registration. An appeal based on 8 U.S.C. Section 1503 is also allowed and the Secretary of State's judgment of insufficient evidence can be reversed based on a declaratory judgment under that federal law. The new registration requirement applies to only new registrants and all persons registered to vote on the effective date of the bill are exempt from this requirement.

The Department of Health and Senior Services must provide a free certified copy of a birth certificate upon the request of any person 17 years of age or older for the purpose of these provisions and may establish rules to implement this requirement.

The bill also allows a voter to have a designated person return an absentee ballot if the designated person is specified in writing at the time the voter requests an absentee ballot. Currently, a relative of the voter who is within the second degree of consanguinity or affinity may return the ballot. Any person designated by the voter to return the absentee ballot must also sign a statement that he or she has not exercised any undue influence on the voting decisions of the voter than that he or she agrees to deliver the ballot as directed by the voter.