

## **FAQ about Online Voter Registration for Wisconsin**

### **What are other states doing?**

Arizona, Washington, Kansas, Oregon, Colorado, Louisiana, Utah, Indiana, and Nevada have successful models that Wisconsin can follow.

Arizona's system has been working since 2002, and in 2008, 39% of those who registered used the online system.

### **What are the advantages?**

We will save data entry time and money for local governments, reduce typographical errors, and make registration more accessible for voters.

### **What are the key items?**

- Only those with a Wisconsin driver's license or DOT ID card could use the paperless online system.
- Online registration would close at the same time that open registration closes, 20 days before the election.
- The data entered will be matched instantly with data from the driver's license database. Thus the HAVA check will be successfully completed before the application is finished. Those who cannot match cannot finish the paperless application.

These are the same restrictions as used by the states listed above.

### **Will it work with the new Photo ID bill?**

Indiana has a photo ID law, and they also have online registration. These are two separate concepts that can work together or they can stand-alone.

### **Who supports online voter registration?**

Organizations such as the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, Project Vote, The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board, the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire Student Senate, the UW-Stout Student Senate, the American Association of People with Disabilities, and Common Cause.

### **Why do we need this?**

Here are some of the controversies and problems of the current system.

- In 2008, many voters who filled out paper forms a month before Election Day found that they were not on the list at the polling place. The clerks simply were unable to process all the forms in time.
- Many paper forms are hard to read, have missing information, or are typed in wrong, resulting in failed HAVA checks. These require time-consuming follow-up.
- In 2009, 87,000 voters received letters From the GAB saying that they needed to contact their election official to correct their registration, because they failed the HAVA match. Many of these voters were very frustrated when they got a busy signal because the response was overwhelming.
- In 2008, the Wisconsin Attorney General filed suit to challenge the registration of 777,561 voters, over the HAVA check issue.
- Local election offices barely have enough money to carry out their duties. The GAB estimated that online registration would result in a "Reduction in cost to municipalities of approximately \$150,000 per year for staff data entry processing time."
- Online registration will lessen our reliance on registration drives by third parties, some of whom have been very controversial.

- Large numbers of people registering on Election Day can result in long wait times. The convenience of online registration would be a great complementary registration method to Election Day registration.

### **Will a human check the registrations?**

By current statute, municipal clerks check registrations for sufficiency. Anyone who registers currently during the open registration time (up until 20 days before the election) is sent a verification postcard, and if the postman cannot deliver it, it goes back to the clerk, who investigates. With online registration, this same postcard system will be used.

### **Is a signature required?**

The bill to be introduced in Wisconsin during June 2011 will have this clause in section 6:

“The form shall contain an authorization for the board to obtain from the department of transportation an electronic copy of the applicant’s signature, which signature shall constitute an affirmation that all information provided by the elector is correct and shall have the same effect as if the applicant had signed the application personally. Upon submittal of the electronic application, the board shall obtain from the department of transportation a copy of the electronic signature of the applicant and shall integrate the signature into the applicant’s electronic application.”

The above language would handle signatures almost identically to online registration laws passed by California, Oregon, Washington, Louisiana, and Utah, and slightly stronger than laws passed by Colorado and Indiana.

### **How easy is it to obtain a Wisconsin ID card or Drivers license?**

According to the DMV website, for either one, you need proof of name, date of birth, identity, Wisconsin residency, social security number, and proof of citizenship, or legal status as permanent resident, conditional resident, or temporary visitor.

### **What about people who don’t have a driver’s license?**

In late summer 2011, the GAB plans to launch hybrid form of registration, called “enhanced mail-in” registration. This is a series of web pages that help voters fill out a form, which they then print and mail. Although not as advantageous as paperless online registration, the enhanced mail-in registration will also help to eliminate typographical errors, reduce incomplete forms, and reduce the cost of data entry. A persistent citizen convinced the GAB to open this hybrid registration to all eligible voters.

### **Could somebody register online from several different counties and then vote in more than one location?**

No. There is one statewide database. If you tried to register at a second location using the same driver’s license number, the system would remove you from the pollbook at the first location.

### **Will an out-of-date address on the driver’s license prevent the voter from registering?**

No. For the HAVA check using paperless online registration, the voter must provide their name, date of birth, and the identifying numbers from the driver’s license number or DOT ID.

### **Where can I find information about online registration for Wisconsin?**

See the 7 minute movie and detailed information at

<http://tinyurl.com/WI-OLVR>

Or search for “Fair Elections Wisconsin” and click on ONLINE REG at the top.