

By Senator Siplin

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A bill to be entitled
An act relating to elections; providing a short
title; amending s. 97.041, F.S.; providing for
automatic restoration of former felons' right
to vote following completion and satisfaction
of sentence of incarceration and community
supervision; providing conditions for such
automatic restoration; amending ss. 97.052,
97.053, and 98.0977, F.S., to conform;
providing a conditional effective date.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Citizens'
Empowerment Act."

Section 2. Paragraph (b) of subsection (2) of section
97.041, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

97.041 Qualifications to register or vote.--

(2) The following persons, who might be otherwise
qualified, are not entitled to register or vote:

(b) A person who has been convicted of any felony by
any court of record; however, such a person's right to
register or vote is automatically restored by operation of law
6 months after completion and satisfaction of all sentences
imposed upon such person. For the purposes of this paragraph,
"completion and satisfaction of all sentences" occurs when a
person is released from incarceration upon expiration of
sentence and has achieved or completed all other nonmonetary
terms and conditions of the sentence or subsequent supervision
or, if the person has not been incarcerated for the felony
offense, has achieved or completed all nonmonetary terms and

1 conditions of community supervision imposed by a court ~~and who~~
2 ~~has not had his or her right to vote restored pursuant to law.~~
3 If a majority of the Board of Executive Clemency objects
4 before the automatic restoration of the right to register or
5 vote, such rights shall be restored only upon application to,
6 and approval by, the Board of Executive Clemency.

7 Section 3. Subsection (2) of section 97.052, Florida
8 Statutes, is amended to read:

9 97.052 Uniform statewide voter registration
10 application.--

11 (2) The uniform statewide voter registration
12 application must be designed to elicit the following
13 information from the applicant:

- 14 (a) Full name.
15 (b) Date of birth.
16 (c) Address of legal residence.
17 (d) Mailing address, if different.
18 (e) County of legal residence.
19 (f) Address of property for which the applicant has
20 been granted a homestead exemption, if any.

21 (g) Race or ethnicity that best describes the
22 applicant:

- 23 1. American Indian or Alaskan Native.
24 2. Asian or Pacific Islander.
25 3. Black, not Hispanic.
26 4. White, not Hispanic.
27 5. Hispanic.
28 (h) State or country of birth.
29 (i) Sex.
30 (j) Party affiliation.
31 (k) Whether the applicant needs assistance in voting.

- 1 (l) Name and address where last registered.
2 (m) Last four digits of the applicant's social
3 security number.
4 (n) Florida driver's license number or the
5 identification number from a Florida identification card
6 issued under s. 322.051.
7 (o) Telephone number (optional).
8 (p) Signature of applicant under penalty for false
9 swearing pursuant to s. 104.011, by which the person
10 subscribes to the oath required by s. 3, Art. VI of the State
11 Constitution and s. 97.051, and swears or affirms that the
12 information contained in the registration application is true.
13 (q) Whether the application is being used for initial
14 registration, to update a voter registration record, or to
15 request a replacement registration identification card.
16 (r) Whether the applicant is a citizen of the United
17 States.
18 (s) That the applicant has not been convicted of a
19 felony or, if convicted, has had his or her civil rights
20 restored.
21 (t) That the applicant has not been adjudicated
22 mentally incapacitated with respect to voting or, if so
23 adjudicated, has had his or her right to vote restored.

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25 The registration form must be in plain language and designed
26 so that convicted felons whose voting ~~civil~~ rights have been
27 restored and persons who have been adjudicated mentally
28 incapacitated and have had their voting rights restored are
29 not required to reveal their prior conviction or adjudication.

30 Section 4. Paragraph (a) of subsection (5) of section
31 97.053, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

1 97.053 Acceptance of voter registration
2 applications.--
3 (5)(a) A voter registration application is complete if
4 it contains:
5 1. The applicant's name.
6 2. The applicant's legal residence address.
7 3. The applicant's date of birth.
8 4. An indication that the applicant is a citizen of
9 the United States.
10 5. The last four digits of the applicant's social
11 security number.
12 6. An indication that the applicant has not been
13 convicted of a felony or that, if convicted, has had his or
14 her voting ~~civil~~ rights restored.
15 7. An indication that the applicant has not been
16 adjudicated mentally incapacitated with respect to voting or
17 that, if so adjudicated, has had his or her right to vote
18 restored.
19 8. Signature of the applicant swearing or affirming
20 under the penalty for false swearing pursuant to s. 104.011
21 that the information contained in the registration application
22 is true and subscribing to the oath required by s. 3, Art. VI
23 of the State Constitution and s. 97.051.
24 Section 5. Subsection (1) of section 98.0977, Florida
25 Statutes, is amended to read:
26 98.0977 Statewide voter registration database;
27 development and maintenance.--
28 (1) From the funds appropriated, the department may
29 contract with the Florida Association of Court Clerks to
30 analyze, design, develop, operate, and maintain a statewide,
31 on-line voter registration database and associated website, to

1 be fully operational statewide by June 1, 2002. The database
2 shall contain voter registration information from each of the
3 67 supervisors of elections in this state and shall be
4 accessible through an Internet website. The system shall
5 provide functionality for ensuring that the database is
6 updated on a daily basis to determine if a registered voter is
7 ineligible to vote for any of the following reasons,
8 including, but not limited to:

9 (a) The voter is deceased;

10 (b) The voter has been convicted of a felony and has
11 not had his or her voting ~~civil~~ rights restored; or

12 (c) The voter has been adjudicated mentally
13 incompetent and his or her mental capacity with respect to
14 voting has not been restored.

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16 The database shall also allow for duplicate voter
17 registrations to be identified.

18 Section 6. This act shall take effect on the effective
19 date of Senate Joint Resolution No. ___ or another amendment
20 to the State Constitution which authorizes, or removes
21 impediments to, enactment of this act by the Legislature.

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24 LEGISLATIVE SUMMARY

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26 Creates the "Citizens' Empowerment Act." Provides that a
27 convicted felon who is incarcerated or is on probation,
28 parole, or community control may not vote. Provides for
restoration of that right 6 months after completion of
the sentence, unless automatic restoration is objected to
by a majority of the Board of Executive Clemency.

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