
CONSENT

Bill No: AB 2153
Author: Berman (D)
Introduced: 2/18/26
Vote: 21

SENATE ELECTIONS & C.A. COMMITTEE: 5-0, 6/30/26

AYES: Wiener, Choi, Allen, Cervantes, Umberg

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 64-0, 4/9/26 (Consent) - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Voter registration: residency confirmation

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

ANALYSIS:

Existing federal law:

- 1) Requires, pursuant to the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA), that each state:
 - a) Provide that the name of a registrant may not be removed from the official list of eligible voters except at the registrant's request, as provided by state law by reason of criminal conviction or mental incapacity, or as provided by specified procedures outlined in the NVRA.
 - b) Conduct a general program that makes a reasonable effort to remove the names of ineligible voters from the official lists of eligible voters by reason of death, or a change in the residence of the registrant.
- 2) Requires all the following, pursuant to the NVRA and the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA):

- a) That a voter is not removed from the list of eligible voters in elections for federal office on the grounds that the registrant has changed residence unless either of the following is true:
 - i) The registrant confirms their change in residence in writing; or
 - ii) The registrant has failed to respond to a specified notice and has not voted or appeared to vote in an election between the time that the notice was sent and the date of the second federal general election after the notice was sent.
- b) That a voting registrar must correct an official list of eligible voters in elections for federal office in accordance with change of residence information obtained in conformance with the state program or activity to ensure the maintenance of an accurate and current voter registration roll for elections for federal office.

Existing state law:

- 1) Permits a person who meets the qualifications to vote under the California Constitution to register to vote.
- 2) Provides that a person's voter registration is permanent, unless it is canceled by the Secretary of State (SOS) or a county elections official, as specified.
- 3) Requires each county elections official to conduct a pre-election residency confirmation of each registered voter prior to each primary election.
- 4) Provides for the status of a voter's registration to be changed to inactive if change-of-address data received by the county elections official from the United States Postal Service or its licensees indicates that the voter has moved and left no forwarding address or has moved out of the state. County election officials must send a forwardable address verification mailing to the voter in that case.
- 5) Permitted a county elections official, until December 31, 2019, to send an alternate residency confirmation (ARC) postcard to any voter who had not voted in an election within the preceding four years, and who had not updated their residence address, name, or party preference during that time. A county elections official may have, until December 31, 2019, made a voter's registration inactive if the voter failed to respond to an ARC postcard. This provision of law was made inoperative on January 1, 2020, but remains in state law until January 1, 2029, at which point it will be repealed by its own terms.

- 6) Provides that voters with an inactive voter registration status do not receive vote by mail (VBM) ballots or other election materials that otherwise are sent to registered voters and are not included in voter registration numbers for the purposes of certain election administration related processes.
- 7) Provides that any voter whose registration is inactive, attempts to vote, notifies the elections official of a continued residency, or confirms the voter's registration record on the SOS' website, must be removed from the inactive list and placed on the active voter list.

This bill repeals an obsolete provision of law related to residency confirmation of registered voters.

Background

Assembly Bill 504 (Berman). AB 504 (Berman, Chapter 262, Statutes of 2019) sponsored by the SOS, made various changes to state law related to the confirmation of voters' residence addresses.

Additionally, AB 504, provided that if a voter verifies their registration record through the SOS' My Voter Status website, the verification would serve as confirmation of the voter's residency for the purposes of pre-election residency confirmation processes and voter list maintenance procedures. When AB 504 was enacted, California's centralized voter registration database, VoteCal, did not have the ability to notify the relevant county elections official when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS' My Voter Status website. As a result, AB 504 enacted two versions of Section 2226 of the Elections Code, which contains rules for voter list maintenance. One version of Section 2226 went into effect on January 1, 2020, and the second version specified it would go into effect only after the SOS certified necessary changes were made to VoteCal such that the relevant county elections official would be notified when a voter confirmed their registration record on the SOS' My Voter Status website. These changes were made to VoteCal in 2020 and the second version of the code section became operative.

Comments

Author's Statement. "State and federal law require election officials to follow specified procedures to confirm the residency of registered voters. These residency confirmation procedures are designed to keep voter registration rolls up-to-date by ensuring that voters' registrations are updated when voters move. If information from a residency confirmation process indicates that a voter has

moved and not left a forwarding address, the voter's registration becomes inactive. A voter whose registration is inactive remains eligible to vote, but their registration eventually may be canceled if the voter does not vote or confirm their address with the elections official.

I authored AB 504 in 2019 to, among other changes, allow a voter to confirm their address by logging in to the SOS' My Voter Status website, which ensures that the voter's registration remains active, or makes the registration active again if it was inactive. Because some of the changes made by AB 504 necessitated technology upgrades, the bill contained two nearly identical provisions of law, with one taking effect following passage and the second taking effect once the upgrades were completed. I am authoring this bill to clean up the law and prevent any confusion as to which provision of code is in effect."

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 1610 (Ransom) of 2026 creates uniform procedures for county election officials to follow when they receive notice that a voter has changed their mailing address but not their residence address.

AB 504 (Berman, Chapter 262, Statutes of 2019) made various changes to state laws related to the confirmation of voters' residence addresses.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: No Local: No

SUPPORT: (Verified 7/1/26)

California Association of Clerks and Election Officials

OPPOSITION: (Verified 7/1/26)

None received

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 64-0, 4/9/26

AYES: Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Bains, Berman, Boerner, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Castillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, DeMaio, Dixon, Elhawary, Ellis, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Hadwick, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Johnson, Krell, Lackey, Lee, Lowenthal, Macedo, McKinnor, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Sanchez, Schiavo, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Ta, Tangipa, Valencia, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Rivas

NO VOTE RECORDED: Addis, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Bonta, Bryan, Flora, Gallagher, Jeff Gonzalez, Haney, Kalra, Ortega, Celeste Rodriguez, Schultz, Zbur

Prepared by: Scott Matsumoto / E. & C.A. / (916) 651-4106
7/1/26 16:55:09

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