HOUSE BILL 329

47TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2005

INTRODUCED BY

Greg Payne

AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTIONS; REQUIRING VOTERS TO PRESENT A PHOTO
IDENTIFICATION WHEN VOTING; CHANGING REGISTRATION PROCEDURES;
PROVIDING FOR EARLY PROCESSING OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS; AUTHORIZING
OBSERVATION OF BALLOT COUNTING AND CANVASSING; REQUIRING A
PAPER RECEIPT TO BE SUPPLIED TO EACH VOTER; PROVIDING
PENALTIES.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

Section 1. A new section of Chapter 1, Article 1 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] PHOTO IDENTIFICATION.--As used in the Election Code, "photo identification" means a state or federal government issued identification card or document containing the person's name, address and photograph."

Section 2. A new section of Chapter 1, Article 1 NMSA .152895.1

1978 is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] REGISTRATION AGENT.--As used in the Election Code, "registration agent" means a state or federal employee who provides voter registration at a state agency or any other individual who assists another person in completion of a voter registration application."

Section 3. Section 1-1-16 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, Chapter 240, Section 16, as amended) is amended to read:

"1-1-16. REGISTRATION OFFICER.--As used in the Election Code, "registration officer" means a county clerk or [his] a clerk's authorized deputy [or], a member of the board of registration or a state employee performing registration duties in accordance with the federal Help America Vote Act of 2002 or Section 1-4-5.2 NMSA 1978."

Section 4. A new section of the Election Code is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] BALLOT RECEIPT.--Each voter who votes in an election shall be given a numbered paper receipt corresponding to the voter's numbered ballot."

Section 5. Section 1-4-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, Chapter 240, Section 63, as amended) is amended to read:

"1-4-5. METHOD OF REGISTRATION--UNLAWFUL USE OF INFORMATION--PENALTY.--

A. A qualified elector may apply to a registration officer or agent for registration.

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B. The registration officer or agent or qualified
elector shall fill out each of the blanks on the original and
the voter's copy of the certificate of registration by typing
or printing in ink. [Carbon paper may be used between the
original and the voter's copy. The voter shall be given a
carbon copy of the original, which shall contain a number
traceable to the registration officer or agent.

- C. The qualified elector shall subscribe a certificate of registration as follows:
- (1) [a person shall sign his original] by signing the certificate of registration using [his] the qualified elector's given name, middle name or initial and last name; or
- (2) if any qualified elector seeking to register is unable to read and write either the English or Spanish language or is unable to read or write because of some physical disability, the certificate of such person shall be filled out by a registration officer and the name of the qualified elector so registering shall be subscribed by the making of [his] the qualified elector's mark.
- D. When properly executed by the registration agent or officer, [the original and the voter's copy of] the certificate of registration shall be presented, either in person or by mail by the qualified elector or by the registration agent or officer, to the county clerk of the .152895.1

county in which the qualified elector resides.

E. Only when the certificate of registration is properly filled out, subscribed by the qualified elector and accepted for filing by the county clerk as evidenced by [his] the clerk's signature or stamp and the date of acceptance thereon shall it constitute an official public record of the registration of the qualified elector. It is unlawful for any information required on the certificate of registration to be copied, conveyed or used by anyone other than the person registering to vote, either before or after it is filed with the county clerk, except by elections administrators for purposes of the registration process.

F. A person who unlawfully copies, conveys or uses information from a certificate of registration is guilty of a fourth degree felony."

Section 6. Section 1-4-5.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1993, Chapter 314, Section 7 and Laws 1993, Chapter 316, Section 7, as amended) is amended to read:

"1-4-5.1. METHOD OF REGISTRATION--FORM.--

A. A qualified elector may apply for registration by mail or in the office of the county clerk.

- B. Certificate of registration forms may be requested from the secretary of state or any county clerk in person, by telephone or by mail for oneself or for others.
- C. Except as provided in Subsection D of this .152895.1

section, a qualified elector who wishes to register to vote shall fill out completely and sign the certificate of registration. The qualified elector may seek the assistance of any person in completing the certificate of registration.

- D. A qualified elector who has filed for an order of protection pursuant to the provisions of the Family Violence Protection Act and who presents a copy of that order from a state or tribal court to the registration officer shall not be required to provide address information on the certificate of registration.
- E. Completed certificates of registration may be mailed or presented in person by the registrant or any other person to the secretary of state or presented in person by the registrant or any other person to the county clerk of the county in which the registrant resides.
- F. If the registrant wishes to vote in the next election, the completed and signed certificate of registration shall be delivered or mailed and postmarked at least twenty-eight days before the election.
- G. Upon receipt of a certificate of registration, the secretary of state shall send the certificate to the county clerk in the county where the qualified elector resides.
- H. Only when the certificate of registration is properly filled out, signed by the qualified elector and accepted for filing by the county clerk as evidenced by [his]
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the county clerk's signature or stamp and the date of acceptance thereon and when notice has been received by the registrant shall it constitute an official public record of the registration of the qualified elector.

- The secretary of state shall prescribe the form of the certificate of registration, which form shall be a postpaid mail-in format and shall be printed in Spanish and The certificate of registration form shall be clear English. and understandable to the average person and shall include brief but sufficient instructions to enable the qualified elector to complete the form without assistance. shall also include:
- the question "Are you a citizen of the United States of America?" and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant is or is not a citizen;
- the question "Will you be at least (2) eighteen years of age on or before election day?" and boxes for the applicant to check to indicate whether the applicant will be eighteen years of age or older on election day;
- the statement "If you checked 'no' in response to either of these questions, do not complete this form."; and
 - (4) a statement informing the applicant that:
- if the form is not submitted in person by the applicant and the applicant is registering for .152895.1

the first time in New Mexico, the applicant must submit with the form a copy of a current and valid photo identification [utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document] that shows the name and address of the applicant; and

(b) [if] the applicant [does not] must submit the required photo identification [he will be required to do so] when [he votes] voting in person or absentee."

Section 7. A new section of Chapter 1, Article 4 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] THIRD PARTY REGISTRATION AGENTS-REGISTRATION REQUIRED--PROCEDURES--REPORTS--PENALTY.--

A. Registration agents who either register or assist persons to register to vote on behalf of an organization that is not a state or federal agency shall register with the secretary of state, and the organization shall provide the secretary of state with:

- (1) the name and permanent address of the organization;
- (2) the names, permanent addresses, temporary addresses, if any, dates of birth and social security numbers of each person registering persons to vote in the state on behalf of the organization; and
- (3) a sworn statement from each registration agent employed by or volunteering for the organization stating .152895.1

that the agent will obey all state laws and rules regarding the registration of voters on a form that gives notice of the criminal penalties for false registration.

- B. Organizations employing registration agents or using volunteer registration agents shall deliver a certificate of registration to the secretary of state or county clerk within twenty-four hours of its completion by the person registering to vote or the next business day if the appropriate office is closed for that twenty-four-hour period.
- C. Registration agents may be paid an hourly rate or salary but shall not be paid based on the number of voters registered.
- D. The secretary of state may issue rules to ensure the integrity of the registration process, including rules requiring that organizations account for all registration forms used by their registration agents.
- E. A person who violates the provisions of this section is guilty of a fourth degree felony."
- Section 8. Section 1-5-10 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, Chapter 240, Section 112, as amended) is amended to read:
- "1-5-10. VOTER LISTS--SIGNATURE ROSTERS--USE DURING ELECTION.--
- A. Each precinct board using voter lists shall post securely at or near the entrance of the polling place one copy of the voter list for use of the voters prior to voting. The .152895.1

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posted copy shall not contain a listing of voter social security numbers.

- The presiding judge of the precinct board shall assign one judge of the board to be in charge of one copy of the voter list, which shall be used to confirm the registration and voting of each person offering to vote.
- The presiding judge of the precinct board shall assign one election clerk to be in charge of the signature roster.
- The judge assigned to the voter list used for confirmation of registration and voting shall determine that each person offering to vote is registered and, in the case of a primary election, that the voter is registered in a party designated on the primary election ballot. If the person's registration is confirmed by the presence of [his] the person's name on the voter list or if the person presents a certificate under the seal and signature of the county clerk showing that [he] the person is entitled to vote in the election and to vote in that precinct, the judge shall announce to the election clerks the list number and the name of the voter as shown on the voter list.
- The election clerk shall locate that list number Ε. and name on the signature roster and shall require the voter to sign [his] the voter's usual signature or, if unable to write, to make [his] the voter's mark opposite [his] the voter's .152895.1

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printed name. If the voter makes [his] the voter's mark, it shall be witnessed by one of the judges of the precinct board.

[If the signature roster indicates that the voter is required to present a form of identification before voting] The election judge shall ask the voter for a current and valid photo identification [or a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document] that shows and matches the name and address of the voter as indicated on the signature roster. If the voter does not provide the required photo identification, [he] the voter shall be allowed to vote on a provisional paper ballot.

- F. The election judge shall follow the procedures provided for in Sections 1-5-12 and 1-12-8 NMSA 1978 if a person whose name does not appear on the signature list requests to vote or a person is required to vote on a provisional paper ballot.
- G. A voter shall not be permitted to vote until [he] the voter has properly signed [his] the voter's usual signature or made [his] the voter's mark in the signature roster.
- H. After the poll is closed, the election clerk in charge of a signature roster shall draw a single horizontal line in ink through each signature space in the signature roster where no signature or mark appears."

Section 9. Section 1-6-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, .152895.1

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Chapter 240, Section 131, as amended by Laws 2003, Chapter 355, Section 4 and by Laws 2003, Chapter 356, Section 19 and also by Laws 2003, Chapter 357, Section 2) is amended to read:

- "1-6-5. PROCESSING APPLICATION--ISSUANCE OF BALLOT--MARKING AND DELIVERY OF BALLOT IN PERSON. --
- The county clerk shall mark each completed Α. absentee ballot application with the date and time of receipt in the clerk's office and enter the required information in the absentee ballot register. The county clerk shall then determine if the applicant is a voter, an absent uniformed services voter or an overseas voter.
- If the applicant does not have a valid certificate of registration on file in the county and [he] is not a federal qualified elector or if the applicant states [he] that the applicant is a federal qualified elector but [his] the application indicates [he] the applicant is not a federal qualified elector, an absentee ballot shall not be issued and the county clerk shall mark the application "rejected" and file the application in a separate file from those accepted.
- The county clerk shall notify in writing each applicant of the fact of acceptance or rejection of [his] the application and, if rejected, shall explain why the application was rejected.
- [If the applicant has on file with the county a valid certificate of registration that indicates that the .152895.1

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applicant is a voter who registered by mail without submitting the required identification] The county clerk shall notify the voter that [he] the voter must submit with [his] the absentee ballot a copy of a current and valid photo identification [utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document] that shows the name and address of the applicant. [The county clerk shall note on the absentee ballot register and signature roster that the applicant's absentee ballot must be returned with the required identification.]

If the county clerk finds that the applicant is a voter other than a federal qualified elector or overseas voter, the county clerk shall mark the application "accepted" and, beginning twenty-eight days before the election, deliver an absentee ballot to the voter in the county clerk's office or mail to the applicant an absentee ballot and the required envelopes for use in returning the ballot. If the county clerk finds that the applicant is a federal qualified elector or overseas voter, the county clerk shall mark the application "accepted" and beginning forty-five days before the election, mail to the applicant an absentee ballot and the required envelopes for use in returning the ballot. Acceptance of an application of a federal qualified elector constitutes registration for the election in which the ballot is to be cast. Acceptance of an application from an overseas voter who .152895.1

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is not an absent uniformed services voter constitutes a request for changing information on the certificate of registration of any such voter. An absent voter shall not be permitted to change [his] party affiliation during those periods when change of party affiliation is prohibited by the Election Code. Upon delivery of an absentee ballot to a voter in the county clerk's office or mailing of an absentee ballot to an applicant who is a voter, an appropriate designation shall be made on the signature line of the signature roster next to the name of the voter who has been provided or mailed an absentee ballot.

If an application for an absentee ballot is delivered in person to the county clerk and is accepted, and the voter presents the required photo identification, the county clerk shall provide the voter an absentee ballot and it shall be marked by the applicant in a voting booth of a type prescribed by the secretary of state, sealed in the proper envelopes and otherwise properly executed and returned to the county clerk or [his] the county clerk's authorized representative before the voter leaves the office of the county The act of marking the absentee ballot in the office of clerk. the county clerk shall be a convenience to the voter in the delivery of the absentee ballot and does not make the office of the county clerk a polling place subject to the requirements of a polling place in the Election Code other than is provided in this subsection. It [shall be] is unlawful to solicit votes,

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display or otherwise make accessible any posters, signs or other forms of campaign literature whatsoever in the clerk's office. Absentee ballots may be marked in person at the county clerk's office during the regular hours and days of business beginning on the twenty-eighth day preceding the election and from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on the Saturday immediately prior to the date of the election. In marking the absentee ballot, the voter, pursuant to the provisions of Section 1-12-15 NMSA 1978, may be assisted by one person of the voter's choice.

Commencing on the third Saturday prior to an election, an absent voter may vote in person, on an electronic voting machine at an alternate location established by the county clerk. In class A counties with more than two hundred thousand registered voters, the county clerk shall establish [not less] no fewer than twelve alternate voting locations as a convenience to the voters. For class A counties with two hundred thousand registered voters or [less] fewer, the county clerk shall establish [not less] no fewer than four alternate voting locations. In non-class A counties with more than ten thousand registered voters, the county clerk shall establish at least one alternate voting location. In non-class A counties with ten thousand registered voters or [less] fewer, early voting shall be conducted in the office of the county clerk or at such alternative locations as may be designated by the county clerk. Absentee voting may be done at an alternate .152895.1

location from 12:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Saturday through the Saturday immediately prior to the election. The county clerk shall ensure that procedures established for processing an absent voter application and for voting by absentee ballot are complied with at each alternate location. If the otherwise qualified voter does not present the required form of photo identification, the voter shall be given a provisional ballot in accordance with the provisions of Section 1-12-8 NMSA 1978.

- H. Absentee ballots shall be airmailed or, if so requested, electronically transmitted to applicants temporarily domiciled inside or outside the continental limits of the United States not later than on the [Thursday] Friday immediately prior to the date of the election.
- I. An absentee ballot shall not be delivered or mailed by the county clerk to any person other than the applicant for such ballot.
- [J. The county clerk shall accept and process, with respect to a primary or general election for any federal office, any otherwise valid voter registration application from an absent uniformed services voter or overseas voter if the application is received not less than thirty days before the election. The county clerk shall also accept and process federal write-in absentee ballots from overseas voters in general elections for federal offices in accordance with the .152895.1

provisions of Section 103 of the federal Uniformed and Overseas
Citizens Absentee Voting Act.

K.] J. The secretary of state and each county clerk shall make reasonable efforts to publicize and inform voters of the times and locations for absentee voting."

Section 10. Section 1-6-9 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, Chapter 240, Section 135, as amended) is amended to read:

"1-6-9. MANNER OF VOTING.--

A. A person voting pursuant to the Absent Voter Act shall secretly mark [his] the absentee ballot in the manner provided in the Election Code for marking emergency paper ballots, place it in the official inner envelope and securely seal the envelope. The voter shall then place the official inner envelope and a copy of the required identification inside the official mailing envelope and securely seal the envelope. The voter shall then complete the form on the reverse of the official mailing envelope, which shall include an affirmation by the voter under penalty of perjury that the facts stated in the form are true.

B. Federal qualified electors and overseas voters shall either deliver or mail the official mailing envelope or electronically transmit the absentee ballot to the county clerk of their county of residence or deliver it to a person designated by federal authority to receive executed ballots for transmission to the county clerk of the county of residence or .152895.1

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former residence as the case may be. Voters shall either deliver or mail the official mailing envelope to the county clerk of their county of residence."

Section 11. Section 1-6-14 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1971, Chapter 317, Section 11, as amended by Laws 2003, Chapter 354, Section 1 and by Laws 2003, Chapter 356, Section 22) is amended to read:

- HANDLING ABSENTEE BALLOTS BY ABSENT VOTER "1-6-14. PRECINCT BOARDS.--
- Before opening an official mailing envelope, the presiding judge and the election judges shall determine that the required information has been completed on the reverse side of the official mailing envelope.
- If the voter's signature is missing, the presiding judge shall write "Rejected" on the front of the official mailing envelope. The election clerks shall enter the voter's name in the signature rosters and shall write the notation "Rejected--Missing Signature" in the "Notations" column of the signature rosters. The presiding judge shall place the official mailing envelope unopened in an envelope provided for rejected ballots, seal the envelope and write the voter's name on the front of the envelope and deposit it in the locked ballot box.
- C. A lawfully appointed challenger may examine the official mailing envelope and may challenge the ballot of any .152895.1

absent voter for the following reasons:

- (1) the official mailing envelope has been opened prior to being received by the absent voter precinct board; or
- (2) the person offering to vote is not a federal voter, federal qualified elector, overseas voter or voter as provided in the Election Code.

Upon the challenge of an absentee ballot, the election judges and the presiding election judge shall follow the same procedure as when ballots are challenged when a person attempts to vote in person. If a challenge is upheld, the official mailing envelope shall not be opened but shall be placed in an envelope provided for challenged ballots. The same procedure shall be followed in canvassing and determining the validity of challenged absentee ballots as with other challenged ballots.

- D. If the official mailing envelope has been properly subscribed and the voter has not been challenged:
- (1) the election judges shall open the official mailing envelope and deposit the ballot in its still-sealed official inner envelope in the locked ballot box; and
- (2) the election clerks shall enter the absent voter's name and residence address as shown on the official mailing envelope in the signature rosters and shall mark the notation "AB" opposite the voter's name in the "Notations" column of the signature rosters.

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- E. Prior to the closing of the polls, the election judges and the presiding election judge may either remove the absentee ballots from the official inner envelopes and count and tally the results of absentee balloting or, under the personal supervision of the presiding election judge and one election judge from each major political party, count and tally the absentee ballots on an electronic voting machine the same as if the absent voters had been present and voted in person. It is unlawful for a person to disclose the results of a count and tally or the registration on a voting machine of absentee ballots prior to the closing of the polls.
- F. Absentee ballots shall be counted and tallied on an electronic voting machine as provided in the Election Code.
- G. Absent voter precinct polls shall close at the time prescribed by the Election Code for other polling places, and the results of the election shall be certified as prescribed by the secretary of state.
- H. The county clerk may convene the absent voter precinct board no more than three days before the day of the election to alphabetize, enter on the roster and sort the absentee ballots by legislative district; provided that a member of the absent voter precinct board shall not open an official <u>inner</u> mailing envelope or count and canvass any absentee ballot prior to the day of the election.
- I. If an absentee ballot does not contain the \underline{photo} .152895.1

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identification required pursuant to Subsection D of Section
1-6-5 NMSA 1978, it shall be handled as a provisional paper
ballot in accordance with the Election Code."
Section 12. Section 1-12-8 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969,
Chapter 240, Section 247, as amended) is amended to read:
"1-12-8. CONDUCT OF ELECTIONPROVISIONAL VOTING
A. A person shall be permitted to vote on a
provisional paper ballot even though [his] the person's
original certificate of registration cannot be found in the
county register or even if [his] the person's name does not
appear on the signature roster, provided:
(1) [his] the person's residence is within the
boundaries of the county in which [he] the person offers to
vote;
(2) [his] the person's name is not on the list
of persons submitting absentee ballots; and

[he] the person executes a statement (3) swearing or affirming to the best of [his] the person's knowledge that [he] the person is a qualified elector, is currently registered and eligible to vote in that county and has not cast a ballot or voted in that election.

A voter shall vote on a provisional paper ballot if the voter

[(1) has not previously voted in a general election in New Mexico;

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- (3) did not submit the required identification with the certificate of registration form; and
- (4)] does not present to the election judge
 [one of the following forms of identification that matches the
 name and address on the voter's certificate of registration:
- $\frac{(a)}{a}$] a current and valid photo identification
- (b) a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document] that shows the name and address of the voter.
- C. An election judge shall have the voter sign the signature roster and issue the voter a provisional paper ballot, an outer envelope and an official inner envelope. The voter shall vote on the provisional paper ballot in secrecy and when done, place the ballot in the official inner envelope and place the official inner envelope in the outer envelope and return it to the precinct officer. The election judge shall ensure that the required information is completed on the outer envelope, have the voter sign it in the appropriate place and place it in an envelope designated for provisional paper ballots.
- D. Knowingly executing a false statement constitutes perjury as provided in the Criminal Code of this state, and voting on the basis of such falsely executed .152895.1

statement constitutes fraudulent voting."

Section 13. A new section of Chapter 1, Article 14 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"[NEW MATERIAL] POST ELECTION DUTIES--OBSERVERS.--A candidate in the election being canvassed or the candidate's representative may observe the ballot counting process in a precinct, a county canvass and the state canvass of election returns."

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