CHAPTER 2015-36

Committee Substitute for
Committee Substitute for Senate Bill No. 228

An act relating to online voter registration; creating s. 97.0525, F.S.; requiring the Division of Elections of the Department of State to develop an online voter registration system; providing application and security requirements; requiring the division to conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of the online voter registration system; requiring the system to compare information submitted online with Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles records; providing for the disposition of voter registration applications; requiring system compliance with federal accessibility provisions; providing for construction; requiring the division to report to the Legislature regarding online voter registration implementation by a specified date; providing an appropriation; providing an effective date.

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

Section 1. Section 97.0525, Florida Statutes, is created to read:

97.0525 Online voter registration.—

(1) Beginning October 1, 2017, an applicant may submit an online voter registration application using the procedures set forth in this section.

(2) The division shall establish a secure Internet website that safeguards an applicant's information to ensure data integrity and permits an applicant to:

(a) Submit a voter registration application, including first-time voter registration applications and updates to current voter registration records.

(b) Submit information necessary to establish an applicant's eligibility to vote, pursuant to s. 97.041, which includes the information required for the uniform statewide voter registration application pursuant to s. 97.052(2).

(c) Swear to the oath required pursuant to s. 97.051.

(3)(a) The online voter registration system shall comply with the information technology security provisions of s. 282.318 and shall use a unique identifier for each applicant to prevent unauthorized persons from altering a voter's registration information.

(b) The division shall conduct a comprehensive risk assessment of the online voter registration system before making the system publicly available and every 2 years thereafter. The comprehensive risk assessment must comply with the risk assessment methodology developed by the Agency for

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State Technology for identifying security risks, determining the magnitude of such risks, and identifying areas that require safeguards.

(4)(a) The online voter registration system shall compare the Florida driver license number or Florida identification number submitted pursuant to s. 97.052(2)(n) with information maintained by the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles to confirm that the name and date of birth on the application are consistent with the records of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

(b) If the applicant's name and date of birth are consistent with the records of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, the online voter registration system shall transmit, using the statewide voter registration system maintained pursuant to s. 98.035, the applicant's registration application, along with the digital signature of the applicant on file with the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, to the supervisor of elections. The applicant's digital signature satisfies the signature requirement of s. 97.052(2)(q).

(c) If the applicant's name and date of birth cannot be verified by the records of the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, or if the applicant indicated that he or she has not been issued a Florida driver license or Florida identification card, the online voter registration system shall populate the applicant's information into a printable voter registration application pursuant to s. 97.052(2) and direct the applicant to print, sign, and date the application and deliver the application to the supervisor of elections for disposition pursuant to s. 97.073.

(5) Upon submission of a completed online voter registration application, the website must generate an immediate electronic confirmation that the supervisor of elections has received the application and provide instructions regarding the ability of a registrant to check the status of the application thereafter.

(6) Except as otherwise provided in this section, the supervisor of elections shall process the application pursuant to s. 97.053.

(7) The online voter registration system must conform to nationally accepted standards for accessibility for individuals with disabilities, including s. 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, s. 255 of the Telecommunications Act of 1996, and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines of the World Wide Web Consortium, to ensure equal access for voters with disabilities.

(8) A legal distinction may not be made between online voter registration under this section and voter registration in person, by mail, or by other methods provided by general law.

Section 2. No later than January 1, 2016, the Division of Elections shall submit a report to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of Representatives regarding the implementation of online voter

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registration. In the report, the division shall summarize progress to date in implementing online voter registration and expected implementation time-frames, and shall propose any further legislation needed to facilitate online voter registration.

Section 3. For the 2015-2016 fiscal year, the sum of $1.8 million in nonrecurring funds from the Federal Grants Trust Fund is appropriated to the Department of State to implement this act.

Section 4. This act shall take effect July 1, 2015.

Approved by the Governor May 15, 2015.

Filed in Office Secretary of State May 15, 2015.