



THE VERMONT DEMOCRATIC PARTY
PO BOX 1220 - MONTPELIER, VERMONT 05601
802.229.1783 vtdemocrats.org

March 11, 2015

Senate Committee on Government Operations
Vermont State House
Room 4
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Dear Madame Chair and the Members of the Senate Committee on Government Operations:

I am writing to you today to express the Vermont Democratic Party's ardent support for S. 29, An act relating to election registration. A citizen's right to vote is of paramount concern to our collective democracy and we see same-day registration as a tool to empower those that may not currently make it to the polls. Voter registration deadlines and bureaucracy present very real barriers to working Vermonters, young voters, geographically mobile voters, and those unacquainted with the elections calendar. As a result, too many people are simply unable to exercise their fundamental right to vote. The VDP is glad that Vermont is now in a position to move legislation forward that would take steps to rectifying this.

Today 13 states and the District of Columbia have same-day voter registration. They consistently have higher voter participation than the rest of the country. In fact, these states see an average of 10% higher voter turnout than states that do not.

States with same-day registration also report a significant decrease in provisional ballots, a very low cost to implementation, and have found no significant correlation between same-day registration and a compromise in the integrity of our elections. Between existing fraud protections and the fact that a voter voting in person is more verifiable than voting by mailed-in request.

The Vermont Democratic Party believes that same-day registration will help improve the health of our elections and increase Vermont's voter participation. Since it is a political party's job to engage voters in each election, this bill will make it easier for every one of our state's parties to get more people to the polls. I humbly ask that you support this bill and hope that my colleagues at the Progressive and Republican parties will also express their support.

I, or my staff, is happy to speak to our support further. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at ddeans@vtdemocrats.org.

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dottie Deans

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Chair, Vermont Democratic Party

CC: Secretary of State Jim Condos, Cheryl Ewen

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