

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

FILE NUMBER: H.F. 1546

DATE: March 5, 2008

Version: Second engrossment

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Subject: Voter Registration; Automatic Address Updates

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Overview

This bill modifies the procedures for processing voter registration notices that are returned as undeliverable due to a lack of a valid address, and establishes procedures for the secretary of state to collect address information from the U.S. Postal Service and distribute it to county auditors for purposes of updating the statewide voter registration system.

Section

1 Registration Verification. Modifies the procedure for handling registration verification notices returned as undeliverable by the postal service.

If a notice is returned as undeliverable, but includes a permanent forwarding address in Minnesota, the county auditor may change the voter's status to "inactive" in the statewide registration system. The county auditor is required to notify the voter's appropriate new county auditor. The new auditor must update the voter's address in the statewide system, and also mail the voter a notice of registration. The notice must include the voter's name, address, precinct, and polling place, and advise the voter that the voter's address has changed and that the voter must notify the county auditor within 21 days if the new address is not where the voter resides.

If a notice is returned as undeliverable and the forwarding address indicates that the voter has moved out-of-state, the county auditor must mail the voter a notice advising the voter that the voter's status will be changed to "inactive" unless the voter notifies the county

Section

auditor within 21 days that the voter intends to keep the Minnesota address as the voter's address of residence. If the voter does not notify the county auditor within 21 days, the auditor must change the voter's status to "inactive."

If a notice is returned as undeliverable with no forwarding address provided, the county auditor must change the voter's registration status to "challenged," requiring the voter to comply with the procedures necessary for challenged voters to be permitted to vote, as described in section 204C.12. Section 204C.12 requires a challenged voter to swear to answer questions truthfully about the voter's eligibility to vote and requires the election judge to ask the voter questions to test the voter's residence and right to vote.

- 2** **Change of address system.** Requires the secretary of state to obtain a monthly list of individuals in Minnesota who have filed a permanent change of address with the U.S. Postal Service. If a voter has moved to a new address in Minnesota, the secretary of state must electronically notify the county auditor of the voter's new county, and the auditor must update the statewide registration system and send the appropriate registration notice to the voter.

If a voter has moved out-of-state, the voter's former county auditor must be notified. The auditor must send the appropriate notice to the voter's new address and change the voter's status to "inactive" if the voter does not respond within 21 days indicating an intention to retain the Minnesota address as the voter's address of residence.

- 3** **Effective Date.** This bill is effective the day following final enactment, once the secretary of state has certified that the statewide voter registration system has been tested and shown to accurately update records and prepare appropriate notices.