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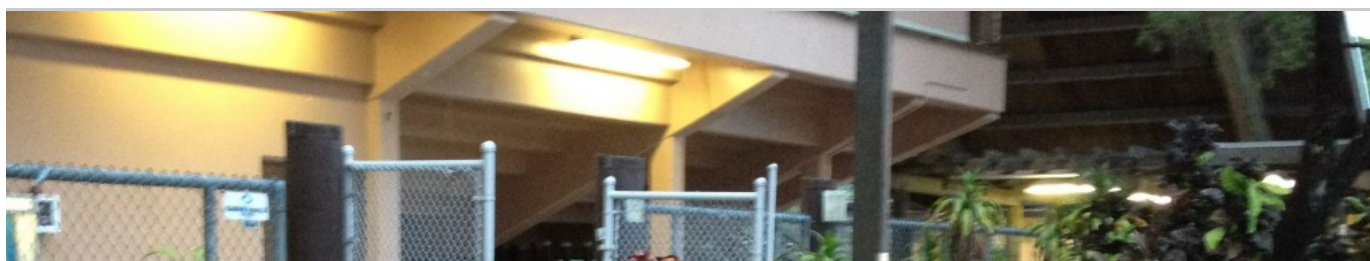
Lawmakers Move Toward Election-Day Voter Registration

By Dave Smith

Posted April 28, 2014, 07:07 PM HST

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The Legislature will vote Tuesday on a bill that could make Hawaii the 12th state to allow registration of voters on election day.

Conferees from the House and Senate on Friday worked out the final arrangements on [House Bill 2590](#).

Last-minute changes included dropping a requirement that those registering either at an absentee voting place before an election or at their precinct on voting day provide proof of their residence.

Other changes included making it a class “C” felony — punishable by a prison term of up to five years and fine of \$10,000 — to provide false information in the affidavit they sign to register.

Rep. Karl Rhoads, chair of the House Judiciary and one of the conference committee co-chairs, said today those changes were made to conform to existing voter registration requirements including Wiki-wiki registration forms.

“It’s the same information that’s required now,” Rhoads said.



He said although critics of voting-day registration say that it leads to voter fraud [Feedback](#) :

supported by statistics.

Rhoads said the state of Maine, which has about the same population as Hawaii, has allowed voting-day registration since 1973. Since then, there have been only two documented cases of voting fraud.

He said in 2010, Maine had about 60,000 voters sign up on election day.

Supporters of the bill say it should help boost Hawaii’s voter turnout, which was the highest in the country in the years following statehood, but now ranks last in the nation.

“It’s time we end this shameful distinction and foster a stronger public voice,” said Maui Rep. Kaniela Ing, who along with Rhoads was one of the bill’s primary sponsors.

“There are all kinds of reasons folks do not vote, but arbitrary, outdated registration deadlines should not be one of them,” Ing said in a statement.

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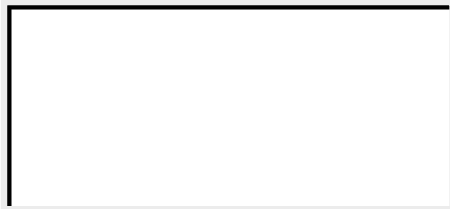
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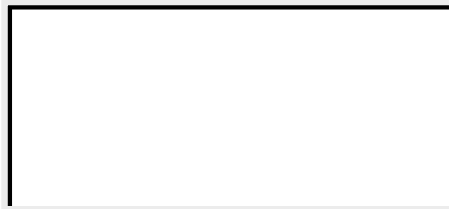
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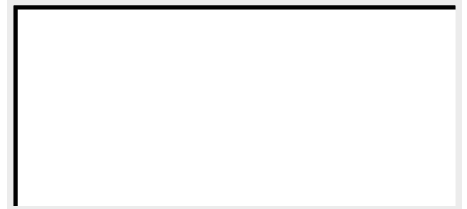
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