



ACTION ALERT - 1/14/2014

## Time to act on election reform!

Election reform needs your help now.

The election reform bill, [H.3788](#), passed by the House in late November, is expected to be debated and voted on by the Senate this Thursday, Jan. 16. It is very important that you contact your Senator by phone or email **today** and ask him or her to support an election reform bill that includes the provisions detailed below. Click [here](#) to find your Senator's contact information.

The House bill provides for online voter registration, an important step forward which the League supports. The bill also permits early voting, but only during regular business hours at town halls and city election offices.

Please urge [your Senator](#) to vote for a bill that adds the following provisions to that House bill:

**Early voting:** Early voting should include some weekend and evening hours and should be offered at multiple locations in larger cities.

**Post-election audits:** Random post-election audits of a specified percentage of precincts help ensure that vote counts are accurate and that voting equipment and procedures are working properly. Twenty-six states already do audits; California has done them for 30 years. Audits will increase voter confidence in the system and detect problems before they become serious. For years, LWVMA has encouraged the legislature to enact post-election audits, which can be paid for with available Help America Vote Act funds. To implement post-election audits, it will be important to retain the current system of paper ballots with a law that requires paper ballots.

**Pre-registration of 16- and 17-year olds:** This provision would allow teens to pre-register to vote when they get their driver's license. The information would be kept in a central database and forwarded to the appropriate election officials when the teen turns 18. Pre-registration in 14 other states has been shown to increase voting by younger voters. And voting is habit-forming; people who start early become lifelong voters.

**Reform of "inactive voter" procedures:** Massachusetts is the only state that ties inactive voter status to return of a city or town census form rather than to voting history. Voters should not be put on the "inactive" list the first time they fail to return the census form.

**Election Day Registration:** Election Day registration, sometimes called same-day registration, permits a qualified citizen to register at the polls on Election Day and then cast a vote. Studies show it is the best way to increase voter participation. States which allow Election Day registration have a voter turnout rate 10-14% above the national average. To date, 11 states, including Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut, offer Election Day registration.

Passing these election reforms would put Massachusetts in the forefront of states encouraging voter registration and participation, an important step at a time when too many states are passing laws that discourage voting.

If you have questions about these provisions, please email [Nancy Brumback](#).

**And please contact your Senator right away! Click [here](#) to find your Senator's contact information.**