



Election Modernization Coalition Applauds Passage of Online Voter Registration and Early Voting in House

The Election Modernization Coalition today applauded the Massachusetts House of Representatives for passing two important election law reforms—online voter registration and early voting—as part of a larger package that also included additional training for election administrators and several election reform study committees. The bill passed overwhelmingly, 141 to 10, after many hours of debate.

“At a time when voting rights are under attack across the country, the Massachusetts State House should be applauded for taking a stand against voter suppression by passing legislation that encourages the participation of all Bay State voters,” said Sara Brady, Policy Director at MassVOTE.

“We need to do everything we can to remove barriers to exercising the right to vote,” added Gavi Wolfe of the Massachusetts ACLU. “We hope these reforms, and more, make it to the Governor’s desk without delay.”

Janet Domenitz, Executive Director of MASSPIRG, commented: “In today’s world, most transactions, from the trivial to the most important, happen electronically. With online voter registration, we bring one of the state’s most important democratic tools into the 21st century.”

If passed by the Senate and signed by the Governor, Massachusetts would join 19 other states in passing online voter registration, which allows citizens to register to vote online if they are already in the registry of motor vehicles database. Information is automatically matched and voters must show identification when voting for the first time. States like Georgia and Arizona have found it to be more secure and cost effective, cutting voter registration processing costs significantly as well as boosting registration numbers. Early voting is currently available in 32 states.

"The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts is pleased that the legislature is working to update the state's election laws. Online voter registration will greatly increase the chances citizens will register to vote, and early voting options will make it easier to cast a ballot. We look forward to meaningful election reform legislation this session," said Anne Borg, LWVMA co-president.

“This is a major victory; we commend the House for moving these significant election reforms forward. They will make voting easier and more convenient and encourage more voter participation. We look forward to working with the Senate to further strengthen the bill,” said Pam Wilmot, Executive Director of Common Cause Massachusetts.

"This important bill reduces some barriers to voting, and we are eager to work with the Senate to achieve even more improvements to modernize our elections process," said Eva Millona, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA).

"While online voter registration and early voting are significant, we can do even better," said Deborah Shah, Executive Director of Progressive Massachusetts. "We urge the State Senate to pass early voting and online voter registration along with other reforms like pre-registration for teens, post-election audits of our voting machines, and Election Day registration. Massachusetts has not updated its voting laws in decades and we have a lot of work to do to catch up with other states in modernizing our elections."

The Election Modernization Coalition is comprised of 45 advocacy groups and led by ACLU Massachusetts, Common Cause Massachusetts, League of Women Voters Massachusetts, MASSPIRG, MassVOTE, MIRA Coalition, and Progressive Massachusetts.