

JAN 20 2023

A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO VOTER REGISTRATION.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that voter turnout in the
2 State remains low and continues to decline. In 2022, Hawaii had
3 one of the lowest voter turnouts in the United States. Only
4 48.7 per cent of registered Hawaii voters cast ballots in the
5 2022 general election. This represents a sharp decline in voter
6 turnout over the years, as approximately ninety-four per cent of
7 registered voters cast ballots in the State's first
8 gubernatorial election in 1959.

9 Additionally, the State has a historically low rate of
10 registered voters. According to a 2016 estimate from the United
11 States Census Bureau, Hawaii had the lowest percentage of
12 registered voters in the country at 49.8 per cent, well below
13 the national average of 64.2 per cent. Therefore, of the
14 1,064,000 people in Hawaii who were qualified to vote in the
15 2016 election, 534,128 were not registered to vote.

16 The legislature further finds that voting at a young age
17 creates and empowers life-long voters. Data shows that after an



1 individual votes once, the individual often becomes a habitual
2 voter. Therefore, by facilitating the ability of those sixteen
3 years of age and older to preregister or register to vote, the
4 State can empower a new generation of lifelong voters.

5 Accordingly, the purpose of this Act is to increase voter
6 participation and encourage civic engagement in Hawaii's public
7 higher education institutions by establishing a process for the
8 automatic preregistration and registration of University of
9 Hawaii system-enrolled students who are at least sixteen years
10 of age.

11 SECTION 2. Chapter 11, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is amended
12 by adding a new section to part II to be appropriately
13 designated and to read as follows:

14 "§11- Automatic voter preregistration and registration;
15 opt out. (a) Beginning January 1, 2024, any person who:
16 (1) Is enrolled in the University of Hawaii system at any
17 level;
18 (2) Is otherwise qualified to preregister or register to
19 vote under this part;
20 (3) Is at least sixteen years of age; and



1 (4) Properly completes and submits a voter registration
2 affidavit,
3 shall be automatically preregistered or registered to vote as
4 provided in this section.

5 (b) Between January 1 and January 31 of each year, the
6 chancellor of each University of Hawaii campus shall provide and
7 may collect from each student who is at least sixteen years of
8 age a voter affidavit containing the information required by
9 section 11-15 to allow the student to preregister or register to
10 vote or to opt out of preregistering or registering to vote.

11 The chancellor of each University of Hawaii campus shall
12 transmit the collected voter registration affidavits to the
13 clerk of the county in which the applicant resides; provided
14 that the chancellor of each University of Hawaii campus shall
15 not maintain, scan, review, or copy any voter affidavit nor
16 transmit any information maintained by the University of Hawaii.

17 (c) Upon receipt of a collected voter registration
18 affidavit, the clerk shall determine whether the applicant is
19 currently preregistered or registered in the general county
20 register."



1 SECTION 3. Chapter 304A, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
2 amended by adding a new section to part II, subpart G, to be
3 appropriately designated and to read as follows:

4 "§304A- Automatic voter preregistration and
5 registration. The board of regents and the chancellor of each
6 campus, in consultation with the office of elections, may adopt
7 policies as necessary to maximize and facilitate the
8 preregistration and registration of qualifying students to vote
9 as provided in section 11- ."

10 SECTION 4. New statutory material is underscored.

11 SECTION 5. This Act shall take effect on January 1, 2024.

12

INTRODUCED BY: 



S.B. NO. 1165

Report Title:

Automatic Voter Preregistration or Registration; University of Hawaii; Opt Out

Description:

Establishes a process, beginning on January 1, 2024, for automatically preregistering or registering University of Hawaii System students who are at least sixteen years old to vote. Effective 1/1/2024.

The summary description of legislation appearing on this page is for informational purposes only and is not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.

