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Friday Voter ID Update

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WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

County clerks across Illinois begrudgingly accept that Illinois may soon have automatic voter registration.

“It's a good thought,” McLean County Clerk Kathy Michael said. “But I don't think that anybody considers the cost. Now some people will say, ‘We shouldn't consider costs when we're talking about democracy and giving the people the chance to vote,’ and I say, yes, we should – when we don't have any money.” The clerks, who are tasked with running Illinois' elections, worry most about cost. Marion County Clerk Steve Fox said he pleaded with lawmakers to consider local budgets and local taxpayers.

[County Clerks Ponder Automatic Voter Registration](#)

STATES

LOUISIANA

In a few years, Louisiana college students would be able to use their university ID cards to vote in state elections, if the governor agrees to a proposal passed by lawmakers.

[Lawmakers agree to allow college student ID cards for voting](#)

MINNESOTA

Secretary of State Steve Simon announced Tuesday that Veteran Identification Cards are now acceptable photo identification documents for same-day voter

registration.

[*Veteran ID Cards Now Accepted For Same-Day Voter Registration*](#)

NEW MEXICO

During Thursday's regular meeting the Clovis City Commission passed a voter ID requirement for municipal elections by a vote of 7-1, with the lone dissenting vote cast by Commissioner Robert Sandoval.

The voter ID ordinance was introduced during the May 5 meeting, following the March municipal election in which 72.7 percent of Clovis voters favored creation of the ordinance.

[*City commissioners pass voter ID requirement*](#)

NORTH DAKOTA

Suits in North Dakota, Utah, South Dakota and Arizona claim new voting rules passed in majority Republican states are discriminatory and could reduce voting by tribal members, who tend to back Democrats. A suit in Alaska, for example, claimed the state violated federal rules by failing to translate voting materials for tribal voters.

The tribes say changes to voting rules in those states disproportionately affect Native Americans, an allegation the states and counties deny.

[*Native Americans move to frontlines in battle over voting rights*](#)

WISCONSIN

A nine-day court trial of the Wisconsin legal challenge concluded last week in federal court in Madison, and a forthcoming ruling in that case could decide how voter ID affects the state's 2016 general election. The outcome of that and another lawsuit also could influence the national back-and-forth on voter ID.

[*Wisconsin at vanguard of national legal fight on voter ID*](#)

The liberal groups challenging the law say it, and more than a dozen other election-related laws enacted since 2011, target voters who tend to support Democratic candidates. The state's lawyers said no such targeting exists, and pointed to high turnout in this spring's presidential primary as proof the law doesn't create barriers to voting.

[*Wisconsin Voter ID Trial Wraps Up With Verdict Expected In July*](#)

Starting this week, people working to get the documents they need for a state-issued ID --- which is now required to vote in the Wisconsin --- can get a receipt from the Division of Motor Vehicles that can serve as a substitute for an ID at the polls. The changes is the result of an emergency rule approved Wednesday by Gov. Scott Walker, that he says will make it easier to vote in Wisconsin – but opponents to the state's voter ID law say the new rule doesn't do enough.

[Walker Tweaks Voter ID Rules](#)

MANDATORY VOTER REGISTRATION

CONNECTICUT

An agreement between Secretary of the State Denise Merrill and Department of Motor Vehicle Commissioner Michael Byzdra to develop an automatic voter registration system is an unnecessary and expensive proposition. That was the message from four Republican lawmakers who held a press conference Wednesday at the Legislative Office Building in Hartford to criticize the decision.

[4 Connecticut GOP legislators oppose automatic voter registration via DMV](#)

ILLINIOS

If the bill is approved, Illinois would become the fifth state to enact automatic voter registration, joining California, Oregon, Vermont and West Virginia. In addition the Secretary of State's office, four other state agencies would be able to add eligible people to voter rolls. These include the Department on Aging and the departments of Human Services, Healthcare and Family Services, and Employment Security. State officials and local elections boards would have until Jan. 1, 2018, to fully implement the plan.

[Illinois could become the fifth state with automatic voter registration](#)

The measure approved 86-30 by the House on Tuesday would provide automatic registration for would-be voters visiting certain state agencies. Each person would have a chance to opt out at some point.

[Automatic voter registration goes to Rauner; he likes idea](#)

The state simply cannot afford to enact an expensive system of mandatory voter registration that will do very little to help voter turnout while threatening the integrity of Illinois' voter registration rolls.

[*LDF's Illinois Mandatory Voter Registration Talking Points*](#)

NEW JERSEY

That bill would automatically register people to vote when they apply for a new driver's license or a renewal and update their voter record if they change their address with the Motor Vehicle Commission. Right now registration is offered at the MVC but isn't automatic.

[*Should voter registration be automatic in New Jersey?*](#)

OREGON

More than a million Oregonians cast ballots in last week's primary, barely meeting expectations set by election officials. However, turnout was lower than in the presidential primary eight years ago and it was unclear what impact the state's new automatic voter registration system had on the election results. Oregon has several hundred thousand more registered voters than eight years ago.

[*Voter turnout is big, not a state record, stats show*](#)

According to the most recent analysis by the state Elections Division, 8,135 votes were cast by Oregonians who were registered through the Oregon Motor Voter program. With 43,571 eligible OMV voters, this means 18.7 percent of the OMV-registered voters who were eligible to vote on May 17th (registered by April 26th) participated in the primary election.

[*Oregon elections official details 'motor voter' impact*](#)

VERMONT

The problems raise immediate concerns for the coming two elections, she said, including this summer's gubernatorial primary election. There are also long-term questions about how well Vermont's new automatic voter registration will work. Starting in 2017, Vermonters will automatically be placed on the voter rolls when they apply for or renew a driver's license or nondriver identification card.

[Vermont motor voter registration raises concerns](#)

Compiled by Andrew Bennett and Lisa Dixon. If you have an item for a future voter ID update, please email lawyersdf@gmail.com. For the latest news on election integrity issues, check the [LDF website](#) or [LDF Twitter feed](#).

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