EXHIBIT I
1 (Recording begins)

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: This opens the hearing on House Bill 176. Oh, excuse me, Representative Heyman, I'm sorry? REPRESENTATIVE HEYMAN: I'm sorry to interrupt. I just thought you could share if we had the EA today.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Oh, thank you. There will be no executive action today. We'll have that on Tuesday, Representative Heyman, thank you so much for asking.

REPRESENTATIVE HEYMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay. I have to start again. This opens the hearing on House Bill 176. Welcome to the podium Representative Greef.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF: Ty, Madam Chair.

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I am Sharon Greef, and I represent House District 88, which is the north end of the Bitterroot Valley, the towns of Florence and Stevensville.

I am here today to bring to you House Bill 176. The purpose of this bill is to change registration from the day of election until the Friday before. There is a provision that allows military and overseas electors to register on the day of the election. I am proud to be bringing the first in election integrity bills, and I'm happy to support our new Secretary of State, Christi Jacobsen, as she assures election integrity in Montana.

We are blessed with the privilege of voting, but we also must accept responsibility for that privilege. Elections don't pop up out of the blue and surprise us. If we are a responsible voter, we study the ballot ahead of time, and we also note -- need to know that we need to register to vote.

One of our state's election administrators pointed out to me that we are only one of 11 states that still allows same-day registration. That's less than 25 percent of our states. Many states require an average of 15 days prior to the election to register, and she adds, changing the statute is a best practice approach, to mitigate against voter fraud, and ensure voter integrity. The changes proposed will make the Montana voting system more robust, and ensures that every legitimate vote by every legitimate voter, is counted.

The intent of House Bill 176 is to provide a solution for citizens discouraged from registering to vote and casting a ballot due to long lines and extended wait times by making the process more efficient for the benefit of all Montanans, and it will reduce the opportunity for mistakes.

Current law places election officials, in between handling new voter registration, issuing replacement ballots, accepting deposited ballots, and even counting ballots, all at the same time. The focus of House Bill 176 is not to burden. It is not to disenfranchise, and it is not to provide a forum for a historical debate. But it is important to administer an election with complete fairness for all voters.

Madam Chair and members of the committee, I urge you to consider the importance of this bill. There are others here also to testify on it. Madam Chair.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Representative. Are there proponents for House Bill 176?

SECRETARY JACOBSEN: Madam Chair and members of the committee, I'm Christi Jacobsen. I'm the new Secretary of State, and it's an absolute honor and privilege to be here before all of you. I look forward to our partnership during the legislature. And I want to thank Representative Greef for bringing this very important legislation forward to strengthen the integrity of elections.
I stand here to support this, along with four other legislative priorities that we will be bringing to your committee along the way, and I thank you for your time today.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Secretary of State.

Are there further proponents for House Bill 176?

MR. CORSON: Yes, good morning Madam Chair and members of the committee. I'm Dana Corson. D-A-N-A. C-O-R-S-O-N. And I'm the director of elections and voter services for the Montana Secretary of State's Office.

And thank you, Representative Greef, for addressing your concerns about voter registration, and the impacts it has on the operations of the election office in the closing days of an election. It's a huge challenge to address and attend to all of the details and the surprises that the two days before an election can bring to the county election offices, and I think I can speak for everybody here, that we appreciate all the good work and efforts of our county election offices.

But despite all that good effort, our office continues to hear about the confusion and frustration that voters have who are in line, waiting for considerable periods of time, just trying to get their business done, and they end up walking away and still not being able to exercise their right to vote. The stories aren't new. We hear about the same stories time and time again, election after election.

Some would want to put the blame on the procrastination of the voter, insisting that with rights come responsibilities. Others claim that better planning by the voter would fix the issue. Others blame the local election office for a lack of resources. And others blame advocacy groups for driving voters at the last minute.

Unless a change is made, the problem will continue, and the problem will grow. Montanans deserve a better voting experience, and this bill will reallocate the necessary resources of the county election office to address registrations and free up time for election officials on the Monday and Tuesday of the election for all registered voters. I recommend the committee due pass House Bill 176, and thank you for your time.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you very much, Director Corson.

Do we have further proponents for the House Bill 176?
the committee, my name is Mary Beveridge. M-A-R-Y. B-E-V-E-R-I-D-G-E. And I come to you today in support of this bill. I started a group where I trained about 600 poll workers on election laws. We met with the county clerks before we went out into their counties, and this was one of the issues that they brought up, because one of the questions I did ask them was, what would you change? And this was by far the foremost item that they would have changed.

And the reason I started our poll watching adventure was to find out firsthand what was really happening at the polls. And this -- the same-day registration did cause a lot of chaos that was there, and my support of this bill is that that day should be for voting, and not registering.

And as the previous sponsor and other proponents have stated, it's very difficult not to know that there's an election. And when I was looking at the numbers of registered voters in Montana, if you take our population, which is, we'll just say, roughly about a million people, and if there's 85 percent that are voting age, we had, right before the election, around 730,000 of those people registered. So the majority of people are registered, and are registering before the election. And I think that's all I have.

Thank you so much.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Beveridge.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Do you need me to stay?

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Good idea, yes, please.

Everyone who provides testimony should be available.

Next proponent for House Bill 176?

MR. ELLIS: Pardon my hearing aids falling out. My name is Doug Ellis. I'm here from Broadwater County. I'm currently the Treasurer, Clerk and Recorder, Superintendent of Schools, and Election Administrator of that county. I've been in this position for about eight years. Before that, I was the Chief Deputy in the same office. So I've worked elections for about 19 years. Seen a lot of changes.

I would like to support this bill wholeheartedly, and thank you for bringing it forward.

One of our biggest problems is trying to run an election in a decent and -- decent way that is -- excuse my words, but, organized, when you still have people coming in to vote, to register to vote.

We -- our day starts off, on an election, about five in the morning, getting the machines ready to take to the polling places, and loading up our reports, and getting our people ready, our poll workers. So it's a long day. My first election, I worked from five in the morning until five at night. I was back at eight o'clock the next day.

So I just want to tell you, your election workers for the county, and the election judges that we have to hire, are very dedicated to elections.

Elections is probably by far the most trying position that I have, and a lot of it is because of same-day registration. It's extremely hard to put the information of all of the voters into the system, get their ballots counted, and keep the numbers correct, while you're still registering people to vote the same day you're having an election. It's extremely hard. I can't emphasize that enough.

We -- before an election, an election administrator puts in three to four ads in the local paper, to let people know the date of the close of registration, so they've had three or four warnings that the election registration is going to close, plus they've already had 365 days to get in and vote. Four years, if you go by presidential elections. We're not trying to keep people from voting. We want people to vote. My county had the largest turnout of any election we've ever had for this last presidential election.
the November election just happens to come about the same time we're mailing out 7,000 tax bills, and we're collecting payments for those tax bills, and we're mailing out 5,000 ballots, and we're collecting those ballots, and the ballots have to be mailed out on a certain day. A lot of them come back about the same time. So it's not uncommon to have 400 ballots come in on one day that you have to put into the system, we have to verify every signature on every ballot, to make sure it matches the voter’s signature. It’s a time intensive thing, to put on an election, and the Clerk and Recorders and the Election Administrators, need that time in order to bring the ballots in, put them in the system, verify the signatures. The day before the election, you have to run your reports for the poll workers so they know who's registered, who's not registered, who might be provisional. There's a lot of work that goes into reports and preparing of this election. This is a very important bill.

Again, I'd like to say, we're not trying to keep people from voting. We want them to vote. I love it when people come out to the polls. I love having a poll election. But if it's a mail election, it doesn't change the work that you do. You still have to bring

in all those ballots. You still have to verify all the signatures. You have to count all the ballots, whether it's by a machine or by hand. And again, that's very time intensive. It takes a lot of time, a lot of preparation. We have six people in my office, and I'm glad I have six. I wish I had more, because when the election comes, all six of the people in my office are election judges. They're trained. And I -- besides the other four trainings I had this year to try and bring people in to run an election on a very hard year to have an election, but I would just ask all of you to vote in favor of this bill. It's very well needed, and it would be very well appreciated.

Our offices need the time to run an election. It would be nice to be able to just put on an election and not have to run an election like you're running a marathon. When we're done, at the end of the day we are completely drained, and we need that time to get this done correctly, to get the votes cast correctly, to get them counted, and our reports done. There are so many things we need to do that most people don't even see. I would just urge you to support this bill, and I thank you for bringing it forward. Thank you for listening to me.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you very much,
MR. SUNCHILD: Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Keaton Sunchild, S-U-N-C-H-I-L-D. I am the political director for Montana Native Vote.

I just want to talk about a couple of the hurdles that the people that our organization has members from, that they face when it comes to voting in elections. We know that our reservations are very large in terms of land area, and lots of these folks are traveling great distances, and by closing off voter registration earlier than needed, we're making it even harder for them to vote. And part of the tradition on a lot of our reservations is, they go to vote on Election Day, and if you're a first-time voter, part of that includes registering to vote, and so we need to make sure that it's still an option for them. And we heard today about how the people have spoken, and Jordan just talked about it, too.

You know, they spoke when it came to L.R. 126, a number of years ago, that they didn't want to end voter registration early. So we've seen a lot lately that there's a small number of people that don't necessarily think that the will of the people is correct, but I think we need to get back to that tradition, and the only thing I've heard today is that we don't need to end registering to vote early, we just need to invest in more open and more free and more fair elections. And for those reasons, I am urging you to vote no on this bill, and I thank you guys for your time.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Sunchild. Further opponents on site for House Bill 176?


And back in 2005, when we originally adopted this measure, we did it with many, many individuals, many, many stakeholders, including the clerks, that were all embracing making sure that everybody who's eligible to vote can vote. And we were all excited. It was a wonderful time, and we -- it's been a tremendous success.

And one of the reasons I was involved -- and just a bit about our organization. We were federally created in the '70s to investigate abuse and neglect of people with disabilities in institutional settings, and that's what we still do. And one of the things that we see all of the time is that with all of the work that goes into finding an appropriate placement for somebody who has serious health conditions, whether it be a nursing home, assisted living, another hospital setting, nobody is thinking about voting.

And that's because there are other things to think about. There are other emergency things that have to be handled, but unfortunately what that means is, direct care stuff that work at these institutions are left to be the ones to help people register to vote, and they often have many, many other things that they have to do instead, and so registration to vote is really not considered when people are going into those settings.

So we've been able to fill that gap, and we're happy to do it. We've worked hard to get agency into the law, and that's a reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities that can have somebody else go and get them registered, and help them get the ballot and deliver the ballot. But if they can't register late, we can't help them. And unfortunately, this happens far more often than you might think. It's not a huge number of people, but they're people that earned their right to vote. They've lived long lives. They happen to need some help right now, and they really need the ability to exercise that right to vote, not just because it's their constitutional right, but because it's normalcy.

And in a situation like that, where everyone is placed in crisis, it's really important for people to be able to have that, to be able to participate in their community and to be able to vote.

This is similarly true for people in the community with serious disabilities that have home health care. Again, our rates are not good, and home health care have a whole lot of things to worry about. Helping people get dressed, making sure that they have their catheter, making sure that they eat, as opposed to making sure that they're registered to vote. That's not a perfect system, it's not a perfect system, I wish they had the time to really help people with those issues, but they don't.

Please don't make it harder for these people to vote. Late registration has been a godsend for them, and we do all that we can to make sure that people can exercise the franchise. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you very much, Ms. Brenneman.

Next opponent -- excuse me, pro -- next opponent on House Bill 176.

MS. STUTZER: Thank you. Good morning, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Katjana...
and we have a responsibility to protect that for all of
democracy in the world because of access to the ballot,
the United States is recognized as the leading
law.
So clearly, this bill causes harm. We're --
registration was out of date. That's a large group of
They simply showed up on Election Day, and their voter
were not new to the state, and were not new voters.
2018, over 40 percent of those late registration users
registrant in 2018, and every single county had an
all from the same place. Fifty-four out of fifty-six
name, or if you move, and don't even realize that you
good reasons, as folks have pointed out today, that people
need to register on Election Day. But I would also ask
you to bear in mind that there are some very good
reasons, as folks have pointed out today, that people
may need to register late.
I would just close with further, I know that
we heard earlier that the people have spoken in saying
they're concerned about Election Day registration. But
the people also spoke in 2014, when they voted no on
L.R. 126. With the majority of the districts
represented by you, members of the committee in this
room, your districts voted no on L.R. 126, including
the district of the sponsor of this bill.
We've had same-day, Election Day registration
for over a decade that passed through these chambers
with bipartisan support, and it's been working for
elections offices and for the people since then. We
reviewed it in 2014. The people have spoken on this
issue, and I really encourage you to take that to heart
when you vote, and I urge you to vote no on this bill.
Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Stutzer.
Are there further opponents to House Bill 176
on site?

MR. FORSTAG: Madam Chair, members of the
our citizens no matter what the reason is that they
over 60,488 Montanans used same-day voter registration,
and as a former proponent of the bill pointed out, the
vast majority of people are registered before Election
Day, to keep in mind.
So although this is -- in the total
percentage of voters, a small amount, over 60,000
people using same-day voter registration clearly causes
harm to that group of people, and over 137,000 use late
registration as well.
And this is across the board. These aren't
all from the same place. Fifty-four out of fifty-six
of our counties had at least one Election Day
registrant in 2018, and every single county had an
Election Day registrant in 2016. And also note that in
2018, over 40 percent of those late registration users
were not new to the state, and were not new voters.
They simply showed up on Election Day, and their voter
registration was out of date. That's a large group of
our reliable voters who are just trying to participate
in our election system being disenfranchised by this
law.
So clearly, this bill causes harm. We're --
the United States is recognized as the leading
democracy in the world because of access to the ballot,
and we have a responsibility to protect that for all of

committee. My name is Sam Forstag, and I'm here on --
that is F-O-R-S-T-A-G, and I am here on behalf of the
American Civil Liberties Union of Montana. We rise in
opposition to this bill.
Article 2, Section 13, of our state's
Constitution declares that all elections shall be free
and open, and that no power, civil or military, shall
prevent the free exercise of this right. We know that
thousands of Montanans use same-day registration and
late registration as a vital means of accessing that
right to vote, and that Montanans in every county,
every legislative district, Montanans that voted for
and are represented by each of you, voted
overwhelmingly to -- against these restrictions that
are proposed in House Bill 176 today.
Beyond the Montana State Constitution, the
United States Constitution instructs that -- instructs
us to afford citizens equal protection under the law,
with particular care to the fundamental right to vote.
And these constitutional imperatives are something we
ought to strive toward, not back away from.
With respect to the sponsor, to proponents of
this bill, we ask that you please provide Montanans
with consistency and with fidelity to the vote that
they all took in 2014, and vote no on this bill. Thank
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you for your time, and I am available for questioning.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Forstag.

Are there any further opponents on site for
House Bill 176?

Seeing none, we will go to the Zoom list, and
we will first hear from Ms. Sellers.

UNIDENTIFIED: Chairwoman, Ms. Sellers has
not called in as of yet.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay. We will move to
the next one in line. We will follow -- just by way of
information, Ms. Street, we will just follow the order
consecutively down the list as it was printed off by
you. Will that be okay?

MS. STREET: Yes.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay. Thank you,
Ms. Sellers [sic].

All right. Then Ms. Millie Robinson, please.

MS. ROBINSON: Yes. Thank you, Madam Chair
and members of the committee. My name is Millie
Robinson. Last name is R-O-B-I-N-S-O-N, and I live in
Glendive. I'm here testifying on behalf of the
Northern Plains Resource Council, in opposition to
House Bill 176.

Northern Plains is opposing this bill because
it contradicts our belief in a fair and transparent
democracy that is accessible to everyone. We believe
that it's the right and responsibility of all citizens
to participate in decisions that affect their lives,
and that citizens' rights to vote should not be
suppressed or made more difficult by their decision
makers.

As others have mentioned, Montanans have
already fairly recently resoundingly rejected this same
proposal in 2014, on L.R. 126. Election Day voter
registration provides just one additional opportunity
for working people to cast their vote when they might
not otherwise be able to. Before I retired, I drove 35
minutes to Wibaux to work, and I taught many years
long, long hours in schools. I know lots of other
people who drive those distances to get to work. They
work in our communities, in our clinics, our schools,
our businesses. They don't have time to get to a
courthouse to get late registered during a work break.

We need to be able to register on Election
Day. There have already been many reasons given why
somebody might need to late register on Registration
[sic] Day. All of them legitimate.

It's not the government's job to infringe on
our right to vote in Montana elections. That right
extends through Election Day. We have a fairly small
population, much smaller than other states who also
have same-day registration rights, and luckily,
Election Day voter registration is not something new.
It doesn't require significant implementation. We
already have it, and our county election officials are
already doing a fantastic job of handling it. Please,
don't try to fix something that isn't broken. Protect
our rights to Election Day registration by voting no on
House Bill 176. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Robinson.

Next opponent on Zoom on the list is Alexa
Bunyon? Runnion? Runnion. Yes. There we go. This
print is very small. Welcome to the

MS. RUNNION: Madam --

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Uh-huh.

MS. RUNNION: -- thank you, Madam Chair and
members of the committee. My name is Alexa Runyon, R-
U-N-I-O-N. I'm a University of Montana student, and
I oppose this bill which unnecessarily makes it more
difficult for students to vote.

Our elections thus far have been free, fair,
and accessible, and I'm asking you to keep them that
way. I've submitted written testimony as well, and I
urge you to read them. Please vote no on House Bill
176, and thank you all.

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already fairly recently resoundingly rejected this same
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our rights to Election Day registration by voting no on
House Bill 176. Thank you for your time.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Runnion.

Next will be -- there's no last name provided
here -- oh. The next one will be Alanna Wulf. Thank
you. Welcome, Ms. Wulf.

MS. WULF: Can you hear me?

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Yes, we can.

MS. WULF: Okay, great. Thank you very much.

My name is Alanna Wulf. That's A-L-A-N-N-A. W-U-L-F.
And I work for Big Sky 55 Plus, which is a non-profit
organization that advocates for policies, public
policies that make a difference in the lives of
Montanans 55 and older, as well as the lives of future
generations. We have 2,000 members across the state,
and our organization stands in opposition to House Bill
176.

Same-day voter registration benefits our
elderly, mobility limited members, who don't have
constant access, or consistent access to
transportation, and our rural members, who don't work
traditional hours, and don't often make it into town.
Any barrier that prevents our eligible voters from
participating in the democratic process is unmistakably
undemocratic, and on a personal note, working on a
campaign to defeat L.R. 126 back in 2014 was my first
venture into political organizing, and I canvassed
1. thousands of people that year, and I will not forget a
2. particular, but not uncommon conversation I had with a
3. gentleman who did not hold the same political
4. persuasion that I do.
5. He told me that while we disagree on many
6. things, we agree that maintaining Election Day voter
7. registration protects all Montanans, that all
8. Democrats, all Republicans, all Independents, all of
9. our ability to exercise our constitutional right, not
10. privilege, our constitutional right to vote. So I urge
11. you, and so does Big Sky 55 Plus and our members, to
12. vote no on House Bill 176. Thank you.
13. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Wulf.
14. MS. STREET: Ms. Chair?
15. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Street, yes?
16. MS. STREET: Andy has not called in to testify.
17. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay, thank you.
18. MS. STREET: Next on the list is John Elliston.
19. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Welcome, John Elliston.
20. MR. ELLISTON: Good morning, Madam Chair and
21. members of the committee. Thank you for giving me this
22. opportunity to register my opposition to House Bill
23. 176.
24. | Page 29 |

1. from their election office. If they are needing to
2. bring their registration up to date, it imposes upon
3. them, this bill would impose upon them, the necessity
4. of making two long distance trips to the election
5. office, one to register, and one to vote. This is
6. simply an increased burden upon the electorate, which
7. diminishes the likelihood that they will participate.
8. Moreover, the people of the state have twice
9. reaffirmed the importance of this in rejecting L.R.
10. 126, and once before this came before the legislature,
11. and it was killed. I would urge you to vote against
12. House Bill 176. Same-day voter registration for
13. Montana voters has made it easier for Montanans to vote
14. and participate in our democracy. This is a result
15. that we should all be able to support. Please vote no
16. on this bill. Thank you for giving me this opportunity
17. to express these opinions.
18. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you very much,
19. Mr. Elliston.
20. Is the next person Danielle Vazquez?
21. MS. VAZQUEZ: Yeah. hi. Can you all hear me?
22. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Yes, we can.
23. MS. VAZQUEZ: Cool. Good morning, Madam
24. Chair, members of the committee. My name is Danielle

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1. on Zoom?

2. MS. STREET: Six, ma'am.

3. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you very much, Ms. Street.

4. Okay. Ms. Smith, welcome to the House State Administration.

5. MS. SMITH: Thank you, Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Eleanor Smith.


7. Low-income Montanans and working families rely on same-day voter registration for access to the ballot and for all of the reasons previously stated, we also rise in opposition to this bill. Thank you so much.

8. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Smith.

9. Is Ms. Caldwell -- welcome to State Administration, Ms. Caldwell.

10. MS. CALDWELL: Hello, Chairwoman McKamey.

11. Can you hear me okay?

12. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: We can, thank you.

13. MS. CALDWELL: Thank you so much.

14. And I'm here on behalf of E-L-L.

15. E-L-L.

16. I am here with you virtually on behalf of the Montana Federation of Public Employees, and the educators and employee members we represent across Montana.

17. Every two years, our members through a democratic process draft, amend, and pass our legislative program in which they task us as staff to carry out their will at the legislature. And one of the principal components of their directive is to protect voting rights, specifically to oppose legislation that is designed to -- and this is a quote from our legislative program.

18. ÿDeny or impede any eligible Montana citizen's right to register and vote.ý

19. Unfortunately, House Bill 176 does just that, which is why I'm here today. As you've heard, and as you know, this is not a new debate. In 2005, as Senator Elliston was just mentioning, nearly unanimous bipartisan majorities voted to pass same-day voter registration in Senate Bill 302, and I just wanted to ground that in specifics. It passed 42 to 8 in the Senate, and 89 to 8 in the House, on third reading.

20. Then in 2013, your predecessors wanted to review this question again, and they chose to put it to a vote of the people through L.R. 126. In 2014, Montanans voiced their opinion on it loud and clear. They rejected 126 by majorities statewide, and majorities in 80 out of 100 legislative districts.

21. Because of that choice, Montanans continue to turn out to vote in record numbers. We should be proud of that fact. We're very high compared to other states, and indeed, I think that the bar should be set very high for the legislature when you specifically asked Montanans to weigh in on an issue, they let you know what they think, and then you consider overturning it. There should be a really high bar for that.

22. Some of these facts have been shared, so I just want to emphasize a few about how many Montanans would be impacted if House Bill 176 is allowed to pass.

23. So late registration figures from the Secretary of State for the 2021 election aren't available yet, but what we can tell you is that between 2006 and 2018, 60,488 Montanans used same-day voter registration.

24. But this bill, as you know, isn't just about same-day voter registration. It rolls it back to the Friday before. So it's important to also know that 137,957 Montanans utilized late voter registration to cast a ballot. And those statistics are all available on the Secretary of State's website.

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1. In 2018 alone, an election in which many of you were on the ballot, 8,053 voters registered on Election Day, and 21,700 registered during the late registration window for the general election.

2. Fifty-six out of four -- I'm sorry. Fifty-four out of fifty-six counties had at least one Election Day registrant in 2018, and in 2016, every single county in the state had Election Day registrants.

3. For the most recently available data, the 2018 general election, as was mentioned, over 40 percent of Montanans who used late voter registration were not new to the state, or newly registering in Montana. They were county to county or precinct to precinct registration changes. That tells us that a lot of these folks are showing up to vote on Election Day. They have done their work to register, but they find once they arrive at their polling place that they are still registered at the previous address. Right now, they have a clear remedy for this, but if this bill were to pass, those Montanans would be unable to have their voice heard in our elections.

4. You all are in a critical position. Thank you for your service on a committee charged with the fairness, security, and accessibility of our elections, serving on a committee to uphold our state
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<td>1-2. constitutional promise that all Montanans have a right to access the ballot without interference. I urge you to stand with Montanans and reject this attempt to thwart their will, disenfranchise thousands of Montanans every election, and undermine our strong election laws. Please vote no on House Bill 176. Thank you very much. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Caldwell. Next we will hear from Ms. Kindness. We're not hearing you, Ms. Kindness. MS. KINDNESS: Hello? Can you hear me? CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: We can now, thank you. MS. KINDNESS: Good morning Madam Chair and members of the committee. My name is Lori Kindness. Last name spelled K-I-N-D-N-E-S-S. In appearance before the committee today on House Bill 176, I am in opposition. This election season I assumed a role to get out the vote with Montana Native Vote as an advocate for the Crow Reservation and Bighorn County. My teammates and I worked tirelessly for the people by registering them to vote, and encouraging the important message that your vote is your voice. Amid a global pandemic, we adapted and rotated weekly through six districts, and set up drive through pop-up sites, ensuring COVID-19 safety protocol. We assisted every person we could reach within voter age to register to vote. This took place until the very minute the polls closed on Election Night. My team set up a drive through site across Bighorn County Courthouse with a bulk supply of registration cards and made ourselves available for any questions the public may have had. Bighorn County Courthouse was the only location in all of Bighorn County that -- the location that you could vote. The line spilled into the alleyway and near Forest Street. We assisted over 150 people on Election Day alone with voter registration. As a result of full force aided efforts, the Secretary of State's website recorded history voter turnout in Bighorn County despite the pandemic. Every voter should be given every opportunity to register to vote, considering the real issues the very rural populations face. The economy, lack of employment, lack of income, and lack of transportation, as well as recognizing our disabled and elderly, and those who are at high risk, especially during these times. If denying satellite sites in our county wasn't already a cue for voter suppression, denying citizens their due diligence may certainly contribute.</td>
<td>1-2. Bill 176 proposes would prevent them from exercising their constitutional right. Same-day voter registration ensures that every voter has equitable access to the polls, and allows our democracy to thrive. Montana's record voter turnout in the 2020 elections demonstrates how engaged the people of Montana are in their local and national elections. This past election cycle, our organization aided in staffing a non-partisan voter hotline that helped voters remedy issues with casting a ballot, like updating their address, or finding their polling location. Many of these people that we talked to in those days leading up to the election ultimately ended up using same-day registration services to make their voice heard. Whether you're a single parent with limited access to childcare, someone who works full-time, a full-time student, or someone who doesn't have reliable access to transportation, or someone who simply lives at an extreme distance from their polling location, sometimes the only opportunity to register to vote and cast a ballot may be on the day of the election. For many rural and indigenous people, the</td>
<td>1-2. It is so important that House Bill 176 does not close late voter registration. It is my plea to the committee to consider no on House Bill 176. Thank you. CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Kindness. Next we have Ms. Barbour. MS. BARBOUR: Thank you Chairwoman McKamey and members of the committee. Are you able to hear me? CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Yes, we are. Thank you. MS. BARBOUR: Hi there. My name is Ruthie Barbour, spelled B-A-R-B-O-U-R. And I'm here today on behalf of Forward Montana. Forward Montana is the largest civic engagement organization in the state. We work to engage and mobilize young Montanans to participate in all aspects of democracy. As an organization there was also -- we were also in opposition of L.R. 126 in 2014, which I'm sure you've heard, it's a similar referendum that sought to remove same-day voter registration. And we strongly rise in opposition to House Bill 176. Forward Montana works specifically with college students and young people across all corners of the state. Our members feel enormously passionate about being involved in our democratic process and making sure their voices are heard. But barriers such as the ones that House</td>
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long commute to their local elections office may be the
only possible day to register and cast a ballot as in
person or by mail voter registration is the only way to
register to vote in Montana, it's important that all
Montanans have every avenue open to them to register
and cast a ballot.

This bill is directly harmful to Montana's
seniors, folks who live in rural areas, young people,
and indigenous people. Why change a process that has
not only been working to serve Montanans, but has shown
no negative effects on the efficacy and efficiency of
our elections?

As you've heard, L.R. 126 was voted down in
2014 by the majority of Montana voters, who believe
that every resident of Montana should have the right to
register to vote on the day of the election. Please
honor the will of your constituents, who have already
spoken on this issue, and stand with the majority of
Montanans in voting no for House Bill 176. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Barbour.

Next we have Delilah [sic] Killsback.

Welcome.

MS. KILLSBACK: Good morning, Madam Chair and
members of the committee. My name is Daiyah
Chair, Mr. Corson, I'm curious to know the process of

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Good morning. Madam Chair.

MR. CORSON: Good morning.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Mr. Corson, please.

Chair. I had a question for Mr. Dana Corson.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair. I had a question for Mr. Dana Corson.

MR. CORSON: Good morning.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Good morning. Madam Chair, Mr. Corson, I'm curious to know the process of

verification when someone is registering to vote. What type of -- do you go against a database? Are they registered in another county? Are they registered in another state? What is the time frame? I guess I just would like some information regarding that, I'm sorry.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Representative, we certainly welcome all of your questions.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: And just ask one question at a time --

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, thank you --

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: -- no, it's not --

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: -- I apologize.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: -- no, no problem. I just want to get all of your questions answered.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: So one at a time, please.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you. So what's the verification process?

MR. CORSON: Okay, so Madam Chair and Representative Binkley, so for new registration, it requires the application, and the voter's affirmation that they are 18 years old, a U.S. citizen, have resided in the county for 30 days. They also present some form of ID. Typically we'll get like the last four digits of their Social Security number, along with their name, their date of birth, which can be checked against the Social Security database, and then they can do a Montana driver's license or Montana ID.

They could also do the supplemental forms of that as well. Failing that, people will end up in what we call a provisional voter until those things are identified and cured, and identity can be assured of the voter. Does that answer your question?

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Yes, and I have -- may I have follow up?

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Follow up, Representative Binkley.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you.

So what is the process on same-day voter registration for verifying that information that you just supplied me with?

MR. CORSON: So, Madam Chair and Representative Binkley, the voter will come in. They will either have their form filled out or not filled out, so when they step up, they're probably working on the form so that the clerk can take that information to the form and get it into the Montana Votes database,

the present-day voter registration system. And that's when those checks are done in terms of new registration. Other activities will occur if you're there, maybe moving between precincts or county to county. There's further checks that will need to be done prior to a ballot being issued. But strictly -- and what I'm talking about is just brand new voter registrations.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: May I have one more follow up?

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Follow up, Representative Binkley.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. CORSON: Good morning.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Follow up, Representative Binkley.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

MR. CORSON: Good morning.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Follow up, Representative Binkley.

REPRESENTATIVE BINKLEY: Thank you.

MR. CORSON: And Madam Chair and Representative Binkley, so this doesn't guarantee that the person is registered somebody -- somewhere else. That is on the applicant's own affirmation, and it's a violation of election law in their own state or the other state where they might be registered. It doesn't do that. It only proves identity. It proves I'm Dana Corson because I present myself with that name, with my
Representative Putnam.

Further questions from the committee?

Representative Whitman.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMAN: Oh, I think we're running down the line here with our questions.

CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Not quite.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMAN: And again a question for Mr. Corson. And I hope that this is the right direction. Can you tell me for registering to vote, is it just in person? Can people register to vote by mail, or by online? Are those acceptable methods to vote or are they only allowed to register in person?

MR. CORSON: Madam Chair and Representative Whitman, so that's a good question, and a point of clarification after listening to some of the testimony today.

So regular registration ends, you know, approximately 30 days before the election. Up to that point, there's a variety of ways for the voter to get that information to the Clerk's Office. It doesn't have to be in person. So with that being said, when late registration starts, it requires the person to appear in person anyway during the late registration period, to process that voter application.

REPRESENTATIVE WHITMAN: Okay. Thank you.
1 REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Madam Chair, I have another question, but I need a moment.

2 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay. We'll go to Representative Karjala.

3 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question is for Ms. Plettenberg, please.

4 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Ms. Plettenberg. We're not hearing you. You are muted. There you go.

5 MS. PLETENBERG: Madam Chair, Representative Karjala, yes.

6 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you. Madam Chair, Ms. Plettenberg, you know we've heard a lot of testimony today about the number of people who utilize voting at the polls. We've heard a lot of testimony about folks who are using same-day voter registration, late voter registration, and it seems to me the preponderance of the numbers of people who are voting at the polls are either previously registered voters or late registered voters, and not same-day registered voters, and yet same-day voters who are registering cut across all demographics of the state of Montana, and they also are spread all across the state of Montana. I think Ms. Caldwell's testimony backed that up, speaking to the --

7 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Excuse me. Excuse me.

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8 Is there a --

9 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: -- common late registrants --

10 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Excuse me, Representative. Is there a question here?

11 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Yeah, no, I'm trying to ground it. Thank you, Madam Chair.

12 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Okay. Proceed.

13 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you.

14 MS. PLETENBERG: Representative Karjala.

15 Yes, so I can't -- you know I don't have numbers for the whole state. What I can tell you is -- so in Montana, voter -- regular -- what we call regular voter registration closes 30 days before the election.

16 So after that time, what that is, what regular registration really means is that's the last day that you could either mail in, fax, or email -- or basically submit a registration that's not in person. That's the last day.

17 And from then on, late registration begins.

18 And so what this bill is proposing is rolling it back to that Friday before. In my county I can tell you that that would have meant that about 200 people would not have voted in Ravalli County. We would have had to have told them no. That -- those were just new. We actually had 171 new late registrants on the Monday and Tuesday for this last election.

19 Now, if folks were already registered, they would have had the option to go vote on Election Day at their old polling place. That would maybe have meant a little more travel, so -- or in some counties, maybe a lot more travel, I guess it just depends on the size of the county. Does that answer your question?

20 REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: That's fine. Thank you Madam -- or Madam Chair, Ms. Plettenberg.

21 CHAIRWOMAN MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Plettenberg.

22 Next is Representative Custer.

23 REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: I have several, but I'll start with Mr. Corson.

24 CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Mr. Corson, please.

25 REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Madam Chair, Mr. Corson, was wondering when we -- when you give us the list that you were going to give us for the late registrants, could we have it from 2005 for both the primary and the general?

---

1 And if you can get it without too much problem, the ones that are actually registered on that Monday before the election because that would -- essentially doing this would be the amount of people that could potentially be disenfranchised or have to go to their old polling place or maybe be voting in the wrong district for the wrong legislator.

2 That would be potentially -- by doing this bill, that would be potentially what we're looking at here, of people that would maybe -- wouldn't get to vote or would be in the wrong district. Would that be possible?

3 MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, Representative Custer, yes. So the reports I've been -- we're familiar with are, you know, those registering, you know, the same day and previous to Election Day. And then, of course, the clarification on new versus precinct-to-precinct versus county-to-county moves. Do you think that that would be -- satisfy the request for you?

4 REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Mainly, Madam Chair, Mr. Corson, I was just thinking about the same day, separate those out. And then the -- and just the Monday morning, not worry about if they're new or just happened to transfer, because they're probably -- they've got an issue if they're in there, probably,
right before the election, and they didn't do it 30
days before, is what I'm thinking.
But those would be -- that -- I'm just
talking about the amount of people that would be
affected on that Monday morning and then the same day
that wouldn't get to -- get you -- their issue resolved
where they're supposed to be, or they're brand new.

MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, Representative
Custer, let me work with our vendor on that and see if
we can backstep that on the same day and previous day
and then prior to those two days.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: And if it's too much
work, even just a couple of elections would be good.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: The Chair, please.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Please. Thank you.
MR. CORSON: And thank you.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Corson.
Representative Walsh.
REPRESENTATIVE WALSH: Madam Chairman, a
question for Director Corson.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Director Corson.
REPRESENTATIVE WALSH: Madam Chair, Director
Corson, I have a couple of questions. So the first one
would be, what's the percentage of absentee voters in
the last election? Do we know that?

MR. CORSON: Madam Chair and Representative
Walsh, for the 2020 election? Madam Chair and
Representative Walsh, that's a difficult number. Most
of the counties ran -- every county ran what we call a
mail ballot election. So every voter who was active
received a ballot. It doesn't have that absentee flair
to it.

During the general election, I think there
were 11 counties who conducted what we call the polling
place election versus the mail ballot election. So the
polling place are the traditional elections that we've
seen over the years, supported by Montana law. I can
give you those numbers for those counties that
conducted the election like that.
But the other analysis that might be useful
for you, is to take a look at the absentee status for the
toters that were sent a ballot and conduct that
review that way. So like me in Yellowstone County, we
were a mail ballot election, but I'm not an absentee
voter.

So I can give you that blend of people who
did get a ballot and voted. Versus those that got a
ballot and were in the absentee status to get to that
number for you. Would that work for you?

REPRESENTATIVE WALSH: Yes.

A follow-up question, Madam Chair.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up, Representative Walsh.

REPRESENTATIVE WALSH: Explain maybe to
myself and -- how can I tell if I'm registered to vote?
I mean, where's the public information that -- so I
know that I'm registered and those type of things?

MR. CORSON: Madam Chair and Representative
Walsh, so one of the services the Secretary of State
offers is what we call the My Voter Page. And,
hopefully, you hear about that from your county
election administrators or in some of the materials
that you get in your ballot material.

So the idea behind that is, is you come onto
the service. It's a web service. You can type in your
name, first and last, and date of birth. And it finds
you, and it says, you know, who you are, your address
that you're presently at.

If there's an election coming up, it'll talk
about whether the ballot's been issued to you or not.
It'll tell you whether you are in an absentee status or
just a regular polling place voter. If you have
submitted your ballot back, it'll tell you when the
clerk accepted the ballot back.

And if there was trouble with it, if it was
rejected or accepted. And if it was rejected, the
reasons for it. And during federal elections, there,
we also show sample ballots for the voters as well so
you can see the ballot that you'll get for your
precinct and your county. We do these for all of the
even-year federal elections, both primary and general.

REPRESENTATIVE WALSH: Thank you.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Director
Corson.
REPRESENTATIVE KORTUM: Madam Chair.

REPRESENTATIVE KORTUM: Thank you, Madam
Chair.

My question is for Sam Forstag.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Mr. Forstag.
MR. FORSTAG: Pardon me, Madam Chair,
Representative -- I didn't catch who's asking the
question.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Kortum.

REPRESENTATIVE KORTUM: Thank you, Madam
Chair, Mr. Forstag, we heard some concerns early on in the
hearing about the integrity of our elections. Do you
have any data, statistics, or knowledge of court cases
on voter fraud?

MR. FORSTAG: Madam Chair, Representative
Kortum, as many of you, I'm sure, are aware and have
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: My question is for Mr. Corson.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Forstag.

MR. FORSTAG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Hayman.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Pletttenberg, if voter registration is closed at 5 p.m. on Friday, will clerks need to work through the weekend to process these voters' registration in time for the following week? Or will people who register to vote on that Friday be casting provisional ballots?

MS. PLETITENBERG: Madam Chair, Representative Hayman, no. Well, yeah, I mean, we usually work the weekend before the election. And normally, what we're doing that weekend is printing precinct registers. The Friday before -- the only day that if you cast a ballot, you know, with the late registration process that you have to vote it -- that you may have cast it provisionally is Election Day because we already have those registers and the supplements printed.

And so a voter could be in the register, like, maybe out here at one of my Precinct 5, but they've moved to Precinct 3. So if they come and late register on election day, I still have them in the register at Precinct 5.

And so to ensure that they don't get to vote twice, we have them cast a provisional ballot when they late register until we can confirm that they did not vote in their old precinct at the polling place.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Pletttenberg.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Hayman.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ms. Pletttenberg, please.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Madam Chair, Ms. Pletttenberg, if voter registration is closed at 5 p.m. on Friday, clerks will need to work through the weekend to process these voters' registration in time for the following week? Or will people who register to vote on that Friday be casting provisional ballots?

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Hayman.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Kortum.

MR. FORSTAG: Thank you, Mr. Corson.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Weatherwax.

REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERWAX: Thank you, Madam Chair.

Mr. Corson, I have a question for these -- I guess the question is for 18-year-olds -- 17-year-olds, I mean. I just saw in here it says 30 days before election.

Okay. No matter what area, no matter what county, no matter where you are in the state of Montana, every 18-year-old -- not every 18-year-old, most 18-year-olds are excited to be able to vote.

So in that 30 days, if they're not 18 before that 30 days, they lose that milestone, I guess. And I mean, I'm not talking just about tribal communities. I'm talking about every community in the state. And we say that all votes matter, and in 30 days, how many 18-year-olds -- how many 17-year-olds are going to turn 18 and be able to vote? So can you address that?

MR. CORSON: Yes, Madam Chair and Representative Weatherwax, so the -- we see registrations in the voter system for people younger than 18 years old. And, you know, some of that comes from your driver's license. Some of it comes just from the voter-initiated activity to the election office to get registered in time. It's a proactive thing.

So the trick on the law is, and the law isn't 100 percent explicitly clear, but the idea is the ballot for the voter wouldn't count until he's 18. So the clerks have a variety of processes. We talked about his last week with one of the technical committees for our -- with our clerks, the METAC (phonetic) Committee.

And we -- the opportunity exists for people to do that. The clerks will typically hold that ballot until they turn the age of majority, 18, and then allow that ballot to be counted. So there's a process for it now. I think you'll see some standardization in process come out across the counties to make it more uniform.

REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERWAX: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Corson.

And my apologies, again, Vice-Chair Weatherwax. I thought you were trying to draw my attention elsewhere.

And the next question from the committee will be Representative Bertoglio.

REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: Madam Chair, this is for Director Corson.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Director Corson, please.

REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: Thank you for taking so many questions. So I registered a long, long time ago, I think it's important to me as a 2020 voter that the 2022 primary election was essentially a general election in that meaning of the term. And I'm concerned that anyone who registered to vote in the past election, they're excused from having to vote in the primary election this year. The secretary of state, I believe, up in Helena, had a conversation with this committee, and she did not indicate any changes to that rule.

I'm not sure what changed from 2020 to now, but that certainly is a substantive concern. This past election confirming any evidence of widespread voter fraud. And from anything that has been reviewed by courts, it does not seem to be a substantive concern.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Mr. Forstag.

MR. FORSTAG: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Hayman.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ms. Pletttenberg, please.

REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Madam Chair, Ms. Pletttenberg, if voter registration is closed at 5 p.m. on Friday, clerks will need to work through the weekend to process these voters' registration in time for the following week? Or will people who register to vote on that Friday be casting provisional ballots?

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REPRESENTATIVE HAYMAN: Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Pletttenberg.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Hayman.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ms. Pletttenberg, Representative Hayman.

Further questions from the committee?

Representative -- oh, excuse me. I'm sorry. I thought you were pointing to somebody else. I'm very sorry, my error. Representative Weatherwax.

REPRESENTATIVE WEATHERWAX: Thank you, Madam Chair. Nice to be visible again.

My question is for Mr. Corson.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Director Corson,
1 time ago when I got --

2 CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Excuse me.

3 REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: So Madam Chair --

4 CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you.

5 REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: -- Director

6 Corson, so can you talk about the process for absentee

7 -- being an absentee voter getting an absentee ballot?

8 Because I was in the military, I've always done

9 absentee voting, getting that absentee ballot.

10 Would this address the traveling time for

11 those people that work long hours, and they can't go

12 somewhere twice? Would that be an answer? What is the

13 process to qualify for an absentee voter registration?

14 MR. CORSON: Madam Chair and Representative

15 Bertoglio --

16 REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: Bertoglio, thank

17 you.

18 MR. CORSON: Bertoglio, excuse me. So for

19 absentee voters, first of all, you need to become

20 registered, which you are. And then, you could make an

21 application to the Election Office to be an absentee

22 voter, to obtain that absentee status. And it's a

23 pretty convenient process. And you can even get it

24 narrowed for specifics of time.

25 So if you're a sunbird person and you're

going to be gone from November 1st to February 28th,
you can declare those times, and your ballot will
arrive to you at your remote location. Outside of
those time frames, it'll come to your present mailing
address.

So in terms of how this bill affects an
absentee voter, I don't see that because those absentee
ballots will be mailed out shortly after the close of
regular registration, or the start of late registration
anyway. So I don't see it as an impact to those
people. This bill would only impact people who are new
registrants, you know, new faces to the system. And
affect the ability to register up until that 5 o'clock
on Friday.

Most Montanans are aware of all the
deadlines. If you're a hunter or angler or things like
that, you're aware of specific dates in fish and
wildlife law. Voters are vulnerable for that too. I
think our office would be proactive in messaging to the
voting community in Montana about any changes when this
bill becomes passed.

REPRESENTATIVE BERTOGLIO: Madam Chair,
thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Director
Corson.

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<td>Representative Karjala.</td>
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<td>REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you, Madam</td>
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<td>Chair. Representative Running Wolf had a question, and</td>
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<td>his hand raise function on his Zoom isn't working</td>
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<td>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Oh, okay. Thank you.</td>
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<td>Representative Running Wolf.</td>
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<td>REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Thank you,</td>
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<td>Madam Chair.</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>And thank you, Representative Karjala, for</td>
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<td>picking up -- backing me up by trying to get the</td>
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<td>question out there.</td>
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<td>Ms. Chair, I have a question for -- I think</td>
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<td>his name's Doug Ellis.</td>
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<td>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ellis, I believe.</td>
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<td>REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Okay. Ellis.</td>
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<td>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Mr. Ellis, please.</td>
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<td>REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Yes.</td>
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<td>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Mr. Ellis, are you</td>
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<td>He is outside the room right now,</td>
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<td>Representative Running Wolf. We are trying to summon</td>
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<td>him to the room.</td>
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<td>REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Well, Madam</td>
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<td>Chair, I think I can ask Ms. Plettenberg the question,</td>
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into the Montana Votes System and check the signatures
as we have time. And register anyone that comes in to
vote. I'm not sure how much detail you want.

It's -- we do four different jobs in my
office. So we have motor vehicles, we have driver's
licenses, we have clerk and recording, and we have
election administrating. I do superintendent of
schools so whatever comes across my desk is what I do.

As far as the elections, a couple of days
before the election, we really are busy inputting the
ballots into Montana Votes and putting late registrants
into Montana Votes and checking their signatures. We
also have registration cards that are sent in by mail.
We have registration cards that come in online. We
have registration cards that come in through the
driver's license system. So we have to input those
into Montana Votes. Does that answer your question?

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Follow-up,
Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up,
Representative Running Wolf.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: So is them days
usually like a 9 to 5 or does it -- and just on the
election, is it during that time and the time frame
from that Friday to say that Wednesday, is it 9 to 5

days? Or is it longer days? Or how many --
MR. ELLIS: No. They're longer --
REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF:
(Indiscernible).

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Excuse me, to the
Chair, please.

MR. ELLIS: I'm sorry. Representative
Running Wolf and Madam Chair, I think the presidential
election this year, for 2020, it would be the Friday
before the election; my day started at seven o'clock.
I just went in an hour early, started putting ballots
in the computer and checking signatures.

I worked through my lunch. I worked until
seven o'clock that night having a training, so I could
get election judges to keep my polls open. I finally
got home at about 7:30. I took about three phone calls
while I was at home about -- regarding elections. We
did not work Saturday or Sunday. We kind of rested up
for the Monday that was to come.

And on Monday, we started at 8 o'clock and
worked until about 8 o'clock that evening to count
ballots -- not count ballots the way you think but
count the ballots that come in, enter them into a poll
book, and verify the signatures. When I say count
ballots, what I mean is we are -- we separate our
ballots in packages of 25; it just kind of helps us
keep a little more organized.

Once they're in 25, batches of 25, we check
their signatures and make sure the signature matches.
If the signatures don't match, then we try to contact
the voter. If we have a current phone number, we'll
call them, email them, whatever way that we can contact
the voter.

That's another reason for registering to
vote. I don't know if people realize how important
that registration is. If you change your phone number,
it would be a good idea to re-register to vote, so the
election administrator has a current number in case
there's a problem with your ballot.

You know, we hand out voter registration. I
heard a few questions about out-of-state people wanting
to register to vote, people who've moved in from out-
of-state. When we do their motor vehicle, we ask them
if they're registered to vote, and at that time, we'll
hand them a voter registration card that they can fill
out right then and hand back to us or mail back in at
their own convenience.

And Tuesday, the day of the election, like I
stated before, my day started at five o'clock, getting
the voting equipment ready. We have to do an Election
Day test on a certain amount of our machines to make
sure the machines are still reading the ballots
correctly, load the ballots, load the machines and the
ballots up and take them to the polling places. Set up
the polling place, swear in the election judges. We
worked until, I think, it was almost midnight on
Election Day.

Our last voter came in to register at 7:58
p.m. That's about the time when all the ballots are
coming in from the polls, and you're trying to count
the ballot, count the actual votes on the ballots, and
see who won the election. It's a little late in the
last few elections because we're still registering
voters and handing out a ballot and waiting for them to
vote.

If they're in the office by eight o'clock on
Election Day, they still get to register and vote even
though we're trying to count the ballots and get the
numbers to the state so the candidates can know who won
the election.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Running
Wolf.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Can I have one
more follow-up?
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: A follow-up?
REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: And that will be it.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you.
REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Miss -- Madam Chair, Mr. Ellis, thank you for your service of what you do for the elections. It's a lot of hard work, it sounds like. But back again to the questions I'm asking. This doesn't last for the whole entire year of your job, as during the elections it happens every two years, and it sounds like you put in a lot of work. But that ain't how your day goes every day throughout your work session, is it?
MR. ELLIS: No. The -- no, you're correct, Madam Chair and Representative Running Wolf, the elections don't last the entire year. However, we do have people that register throughout the year. I believe this year for my report to the Secretary of State, I think, I just sent the last one in about three weeks ago for the presidential election.
But, no, my typical day throughout the year starts at 8 and usually ends at 5. And, like I said, we do motor vehicle, we do driver's licenses, we do clerk and recording, we do -- I take care of the home school people in my county. We do the commissioner minutes.
We -- just the various things that come in but elections, even though there's not an election every year, on the off years, you have what is called an NVRA process where you're checking the voters and making sure that they're -- if they're not registered, you send them -- if they've fallen off and become a voter that's in the -- I can't think of the terminology right now if they're -- if they've fallen off to where they're not registered, we send them a letter letting them know that their registration has lapsed and ask them to re-register. And give them a chance to sign up for an absentee ballot at the same time.
There's various things throughout the year you can do for an election to keep things running smoothly. That's one of the problems with getting election judges and getting help for elections. It's not every day of the year. So when election day comes, and you're trying to run an election and register voters, the extra help that you need is hard to come by because, as you said, it's not a daily thing.
There's not a lot of people that want a job for one week or two weeks. It's hard to find people that will come in and just fill in. It's hard to find trained people that will come and fill in to do things with elections. They have to be trained for -- to be an election judge. It takes two hours each year. So, yeah, it just makes the job a little bit more difficult to find the help you need on the -- at the crunch time when you really need it.
REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF: Thank you, Madam Chair.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: And thank you, Mr. Ellis.
And thank you, Representative Running Wolf. Representative Karjala, please.
And then we have some of the committee on-site too.
REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you, Madam Chair. My question is for Ms. Plettenberg.
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ms. Plettenberg.
MS. PLETTENBERG: Madam Chair and Representative Karjala.
REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Thank you, Madam Chair and Ms. Plettenberg. I think we just heard someone say that this bill will only impact folks new to the system. I think that was how they put it.
In the event that would create some confusion about how this bill would work, would you please describe to us the types of voters who utilize Election Day registration please? Or the reasons that they would, I guess, would be a better way to ask it.
MS. PLETTENBERG: Yes, Madam Chair and Representative Karjala, so what we see is there's usually about three types of voters. There is, of course, those that are new to the state and to your county. And then there are those that are just new to your county that maybe they're moving from -- we get it a lot here in my county between Ravalli and Missoula. There's a lot of moves that way.
And I think that Director Corson was kind of explaining that the system, when we're registering them, the system does, like, almost automatically it verifies their driver's license or those last four of the Social Security. But it's also looking to see if they have a ballot out in that prior county.
So we're doing that. So what we have to do is void that ballot if they have -- of course, if it's been accepted, then we won't let them vote in our county for this election. But if it's not been accepted in the prior county, we'll get it voided, and then we can get them registered and issue them a ballot in the correct, you know, in their correct county.
The same thing for a precinct, what we call
REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Thank you, Madam committee.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Madam Chair, members of the
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Ms. Beveridge. We'll Ms. Beveridge.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Madam Chair for
CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms.

REPRESENTATIVE KARJALA: Madam Chair and Ms. Plettenberg and Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Working the line. People were

Chair, Ms. Beveridge. And thank you for being a poll worker trainer. And you mentioned in your testimony that there was chaos. I was wondering, were you at a polling place, or were you, if it was this past election, were you working at a polling place where you mentioned chaos? Or was -- were you at the, maybe, at the county courthouse because it was a mail ballot and you saw the line? I was just trying to clarify that.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Chairman and Representative Custer.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Uh-huh.

MS. BEVERIDGE: We didn't do the polling this election. This was in past elections that I had trained poll-watchers. And they were out in ten different counties. So and it -- and when they were done, they sent me all of their observations. They noted everything that they had seen.

And we saw things like, I don't know if I could describe them as poll-watchers, but they were people that were at the counties that were talking to voters when they were coming in, asking them if they had been registered before or if they'd voted before. And then they were making phone calls and doing something with the person, and we couldn't determine what that was.

And there was just a lot of chaos. There was a lot of people there running around. It was just difficult to tell exactly what was going on and especially since it went so late into the night. We had people that were stalked and followed in cars that -- because they dared to ask a question about things. So there was just a lot of -- the only way I can describe it is chaos going on and not really knowing. It was just difficult, even from watching, to figure out what was going on.

And it would seem that on Election Day, people -- you go to the regular polls where they're not doing same-day registration, and it's in very orderly fashion, people go in, vote, they leave. And this is not what we observed. And it had to do with the same-day registration and the lines. The people that were there that were just doing odd things. So that's pretty much all I can really describe what we saw.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Follow-up?

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up for Representative Custer.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: That was my point for clarification is this wasn't happening at a polling place. This was happening in the lines at the county courthouse or wherever the election office was where they could register on Election Day. People were working the line, is what you're saying.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Absolutely.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Working the line. Okay. Thank you.

MS. BEVERIDGE: I'm sorry I didn't clarify that.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: I just needed to know that because I was thinking if it was at the polling place, they don't register at the polling place.

MS. BEVERIDGE: No.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: So I was just trying to clarify that, and I thought possibly --

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Excuse me.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Madam Chair, please.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Madam Chair, and I thought maybe you were referring to, sometimes there's an exit poll at the polling place, so I wanted to just clarify that. Thank you.

MS. BEVERIDGE: Is that it?

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Beveridge, Representative Custer.

Further questions?

Representative Putnam, please. Oh, excuse
Ms. Stutz, did you have a question before that?

Representative Whitman: That's okay.

Chairperson McKamey: No. Excuse me. No.

Representative Whitman: I'll take it next.

Chairperson McKamey: Representative Whitman, please.

Representative Whitman: Thank you. Madam Chair, this would be for the representative from MontPIRG, please.

Chairperson McKamey: Representative from?

Representative Whitman: Representative from MontPIRG.

Chairperson McKamey: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Stutz: Madam Chair, Representative Whitman.

Chairperson McKamey: Thank you.

Representative Whitman: Representative Putnam, questions?

Chairperson McKamey: Representative Putnam: Madam Chair, this is for Director Corson.

Chairperson McKamey: Director Corson.

Mr. Corson: Madam Chair, Representative Putnam.

Representative Putnam: Madam Chair, Director Corson, my question is if you do move from one precinct or one district to another, is it okay to -- is it legal to vote in your former district and not your current district?

Mr. Corson: Representative -- Madam Chair and Representative Putnam, my understanding is yes on those precinct-to-precinct, the voter's got a choice to make in that they can vote in their prior or register new to -- or change their designation to the next precinct within the county.

Representative Putnam: Thank you.

Chairperson McKamey: Thank you, Director Representative Custer.

Representative Custer: Madam Chair, for Mr. Corson while he's up there if he would.

Chairperson McKamey: Mr. Corson, please.

Mr. Corson: Madam Chair and Representative Custer.

Representative Custer: Madam Chair and Mr. Corson, when you go to your directors' meetings with all the Secretary of States, how many states...
I'm sorry, Madam Chair and Representative, the regular registration deadline.

MS. PLETTENBERG: Correct. That's up until mentioned were mail-in, fax, and email. Is that the ways to register. And the three ways you had me, the regular 30-day registration you talked about previously you'd talked about in the normal -- excuse Representative Hill.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Madam Chair, please.

MS. PLETTENBERG: All right. Madam Chair, Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: Ms. Plettenberg, please.

MS. PLETLENBERG: All right. Madam Chair, Representative.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: Ms. Plettenberg, previously you'd talked about in the normal -- excuse me, the regular 30-day registration you talked about the ways to register. And the three ways you had mentioned were mail-in, fax, and email. Is that correct?

MS. PLETLENBERG: Correct. That's up until the regular registration deadline.

I'm sorry, Madam Chair and Representative,

yes. Up until that 30-day, you have those other options. Once that 30-day has passed, it's just in person.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: Madam Chair --

MS. PLETLENBERG: We don't have online in Montana.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: Madam Chair, follow-up.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up for Representative Hill.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: So Ms. Plettenberg, the advantage of the registration, 30-day that I see, and correct me if I'm wrong, would this help to eliminate errors and mistakes?

MS. PLETLENBERG: I -- as has been talked about, there is a lot going on in our offices on that Monday and Tuesday before the election and the Tuesday of the election. However, I do think that -- I don't think we've had errors, but, you know, I do understand what, you know, my colleague is saying, you know, that there is -- there's a lot that we're juggling on that day.

And I think that is the concern, but I also understand the other concern, which is there's a lot of people that do show up on those days. And I worked elections before late registration went into effect,

and, you know, you also have to tell people they can't vote. So you know, there is two sides to this, and those are just the things to be aware of.

Because we are going to then have to deal -- you know, have to address those folks that, and like I was saying, in my county, that would be about 200 people that I would have to tell they couldn't vote on Election Day, so just for the committee to be aware.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL: Madam Chair,

Ms. Plettenberg, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Ms. Plettenberg.

Further questions from the committee?

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Madam Chair, Ms. Plettenberg, in response to his question, I'm thinking, maybe to clarify, could you tell him how the cards are vetted, whether the 30 days before or on -- between 30 days and the Election Day or on Election Day that all cards as are entered are vetted? And how they're verified, and maybe that would alleviate his question, maybe.

MS. PLETLENBERG: Madam Chair, Representative Custer, of course. Yes. So just like any cards that we get up to the close of registration, any that come in person, we're also doing that. All the same checks and balances are going to be done for any registrants that we do.

And, of course, you know, as was -- as someone said before ballots go out, you know, in that late registration period, 25 days before the election. And so we're also verifying that you know, we're not letting, you know, an accepted ballot -- once it's been accepted whether it's in our county or a prior county that, you know, we're not letting someone vote twice.

Is that what you were wondering, Representative Custer?

Ms. Plettenberg.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Follow-up for Representative Custer.

Ms. Plettenberg, what I was really getting at is when we get a registered voter in the -- either the Montana driver's license or Social Security number, I was going to have you tell him how that's run against something
to make sure they're a citizen.

MS. PLETtenberg: Absolutely. Madam Chair, Representative Custer, what the system -- the Montana Votes System, our current system is doing -- it's running, if we enter a driver's license or a state ID it's running against the DOJ system to make sure that we verify that with the voter's name and the date of birth.

If it's the last four of the Social Security, we're running that against the Social Security system, again, to make sure that that information is verified.

And if it is, they are registered, and we give them a ballot. If it is not, then they are what we consider provisionally registered.

And I know that kind of gets people confused with the provisional ballot. But it just means we didn't get the ID. So when we send the ballot, we will also send a card to get that information. And if we do get it back, we can verify it and count the voter's ballot. If we do not get it back, then we cannot count that ballot. We must verify that information first.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Thank you. Could I have one more follow-up?

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Follow-up for Representative Custer.
SENATOR CUFFE:  I didn't say that it was a train wreck?  I said that I have been in conversations previously with several clerk and recorders, and that was a term that they used. That we are headed for a train wreck if we continue to load all this work onto these same people the same day.

And as he said, they're down there late. They're trying to get it done. Here comes registrations at eight o'clock. And certainly, there are places that are -- I've been told that there have been populated areas where they're still recording people to vote much later than eight o'clock, and returns are not -- you know, they're still trying to verify signatures and things, like, midnight and later.

So that was the -- this was -- and this came to me -- back a couple of years ago I considered carrying a bill like this. And that's when those conversations came to me. And there were at least three. And I -- and when I decided not to carry the bill, I received some harsh questions as to why not if there were these people that felt it was needed. Thank you, Representative Custer, Madam Chair.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER:  Thank you for clarifying that.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL:  Madam Chair and Representative Greef, my question is in reference to registration as voting. Is that correct?

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF:  Yes. It is.

REPRESENTATIVE HILL:  What I am leading to, it seems to me that we have got our state, a very large state, seven reservations. Is there any correlation to the other states and reservations?

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF:  I have not looked into that. No.

Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Yes.

SENATOR CUFFE:  That's all right.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER:  A question for the sponsor.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Any further questions from the committee?

Representative Hill.

SENATOR CUFFE:  Any further questions from the committee?

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Thank you.

MADAM CHAIR:  Senator Cuffe, please.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Thank you, Senator.

I see a hand from a Ms. Street, but it may be for Mister -- for Representative Running Wolf.

Representative Running Wolf, you have the floor.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF:  Thank you, Madam Chair. This question is for Mrs. Plettenberg.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Ms. Plettenberg, please.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF:  Okay. Kind of following over the last couple that Custer asked, but, you know, during this past election, was the election successfully sued or challenged on the process in your county due to the process for errors from in-person registration?

MS. PLETTENBERG:  Madam Chair, Representative Running Wolf, no. We didn't have any challenges in my county or in any county that I'm aware of around the state.

REPRESENTATIVE RUNNING WOLF:  Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Thank you.

Are there further questions from the committee?

If not, I do have a couple of questions for

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Madam Chair, Representative Greef, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Thank you, Representative.

And are there further questions from the committee?

Representative Custer.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY:  Senator Cuffe, please.

SENATOR CUFFE:  Representative and Madam Chair.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER:  Madam Chair, Senator Cuffe, you mentioned in your testimony errors and a train wreck. And I know you to be a journalist, so I was wanting specifics because I read the papers, and I didn't read of any errors in Montana and haven't for years. So I was wondering if you could give us a specific on that and then which was -- where was the train wreck?

SENATOR CUFFE:  I didn't say that it was a train wreck.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER:  It was what?

SENATOR CUFFE:  I -- excuse me.
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<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you. Director</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Corson, referring, again, to the bill, if you could.</strong></td>
<td><strong>5 p.m. on the day before the election.” And if you</strong></td>
<td><strong>5 p.m. on the day before the election.” And if you</strong></td>
<td><strong>5 p.m. on the day before the election.” And if you</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Thank you, Representative.</strong></td>
<td><strong>could have -- I would request, respectfully, Director</strong></td>
<td><strong>could have -- I would request, respectfully, Director</strong></td>
<td><strong>could have -- I would request, respectfully, Director</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>And, again, on Page 4, Line 22, it says an</strong></td>
<td><strong>Corson, that we make sure that we are not violating</strong></td>
<td><strong>Corson, that we make sure that we are not violating</strong></td>
<td><strong>Corson, that we make sure that we are not violating</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>elector who registers pursuant to 13-2-304 must receive</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute at this point or in a conflict in some way with</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute at this point or in a conflict in some way with</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute at this point or in a conflict in some way with</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the ballot and vote it at the election administrator's</strong></td>
<td><strong>13-2-304.</strong></td>
<td><strong>13-2-304.</strong></td>
<td><strong>13-2-304.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>office, correct?</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, yeah, so that's</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, yeah, so that's</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, yeah, so that's</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, correct.</strong></td>
<td><strong>been around for a long time. So that's when the --</strong></td>
<td><strong>been around for a long time. So that's when the --</strong></td>
<td><strong>been around for a long time. So that's when the --</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay. My question then</strong></td>
<td><strong>we've stopped those activities. The clerks all around</strong></td>
<td><strong>we've stopped those activities. The clerks all around</strong></td>
<td><strong>we've stopped those activities. The clerks all around</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>is, regarding 13-2-304, which reads, “Late registration</strong></td>
<td><strong>the state start preparing their precinct reports and</strong></td>
<td><strong>the state start preparing their precinct reports and</strong></td>
<td><strong>the state start preparing their precinct reports and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>and late changes, except as provided in Subsection 2,</strong></td>
<td><strong>rolls for the next day's activities.</strong></td>
<td><strong>rolls for the next day's activities.</strong></td>
<td><strong>rolls for the next day's activities.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the following provisions apply.” So I'm going to go to</strong></td>
<td><strong>So it causes a stopping point and a pause so</strong></td>
<td><strong>So it causes a stopping point and a pause so</strong></td>
<td><strong>So it causes a stopping point and a pause so</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subsection 2 and ask you a question regarding that if</strong></td>
<td><strong>that when people print, they've got the most accurate</strong></td>
<td><strong>that when people print, they've got the most accurate</strong></td>
<td><strong>that when people print, they've got the most accurate</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>you don't mind?</strong></td>
<td><strong>list for our polling places. And that was mentioned</strong></td>
<td><strong>list for our polling places. And that was mentioned</strong></td>
<td><strong>list for our polling places. And that was mentioned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Please.</strong></td>
<td><strong>earlier in testimony, I believe. It may be possibly</strong></td>
<td><strong>earlier in testimony, I believe. It may be possibly</strong></td>
<td><strong>earlier in testimony, I believe. It may be possibly</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you. Subsection</strong></td>
<td><strong>Regina who said that.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Regina who said that.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Regina who said that.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 reads,</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Right. But I think</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Right. But I think</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Right. But I think</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;If an elector has already been issued a</strong></td>
<td><strong>that it would be good to -- it seems to me that if it</strong></td>
<td><strong>that it would be good to -- it seems to me that if it</strong></td>
<td><strong>that it would be good to -- it seems to me that if it</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ballot for the election, the elector may</strong></td>
<td><strong>is in statute listed as late registration is closed the</strong></td>
<td><strong>is in statute listed as late registration is closed the</strong></td>
<td><strong>is in statute listed as late registration is closed the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>change the elector's voter registration</strong></td>
<td><strong>day -- closed on the day before the election, and we're</strong></td>
<td><strong>day -- closed on the day before the election, and we're</strong></td>
<td><strong>day -- closed on the day before the election, and we're</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>information only if the original ballot,</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to close on Friday, is there -- I -- are we</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to close on Friday, is there -- I -- are we</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to close on Friday, is there -- I -- are we</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>voted ballot, has not been received at the</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to -- we're obviously trying to change the</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to -- we're obviously trying to change the</strong></td>
<td><strong>trying to -- we're obviously trying to change the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>county election office or received by the</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute. But isn't there a way that we're supposed to</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute. But isn't there a way that we're supposed to</strong></td>
<td><strong>statute. But isn't there a way that we're supposed to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>school district if the district is</strong></td>
<td><strong>be listing it in the bill?</strong></td>
<td><strong>be listing it in the bill?</strong></td>
<td><strong>be listing it in the bill?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>administering the election.</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Possibly, we'll have to consult</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Possibly, we'll have to consult</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Possibly, we'll have to consult</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>&quot;And if the original ballot that was issued</strong></td>
<td><strong>with the drafter on that too, and sponsor, legal. And</strong></td>
<td><strong>with the drafter on that too, and sponsor, legal. And</strong></td>
<td><strong>with the drafter on that too, and sponsor, legal. And</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>is marked by the issuing county as void in</strong></td>
<td><strong>we can get you the best answer for that.</strong></td>
<td><strong>we can get you the best answer for that.</strong></td>
<td><strong>we can get you the best answer for that.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the statewide voter registration system or</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the school district, if the district is</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: I'll just add it to my list here</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: I'll just add it to my list here</strong></td>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: I'll just add it to my list here</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>administering the election, prior to the</strong></td>
<td><strong>of things we'll submit to the committee.</strong></td>
<td><strong>of things we'll submit to the committee.</strong></td>
<td><strong>of things we'll submit to the committee.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>change.&quot;</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay. Yes. I had</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay. Yes. I had</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Okay. Yes. I had</strong></td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>So this is, I don't know; it seems like it's</strong></td>
<td><strong>heard it a couple of times, and I do appreciate you</strong></td>
<td><strong>heard it a couple of times, and I do appreciate you</strong></td>
<td><strong>heard it a couple of times, and I do appreciate you</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>a little bit of a conflict. Is it -- is -- do you see</strong></td>
<td><strong>addressing that directly, Director Corson.</strong></td>
<td><strong>addressing that directly, Director Corson.</strong></td>
<td><strong>addressing that directly, Director Corson.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the conflict with that, Director Corson?</strong></td>
<td><strong>Are there any further questions from the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Are there any further questions from the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Are there any further questions from the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MR. CORSON: Madam Chair, yeah. I'd like to</strong></td>
<td><strong>committee?</strong></td>
<td><strong>committee?</strong></td>
<td><strong>committee?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>study that piece of law on it, but it does point out</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Yes, Madam Chair.</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Yes, Madam Chair.</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Yes, Madam Chair.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>one of the additional struggles with the clerks when</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Custer.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Custer.</strong></td>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Representative Custer.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>the ballot's in play somewhere. The competition of</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: So, Madam Chair and</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: So, Madam Chair and</strong></td>
<td><strong>REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: So, Madam Chair and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>time for the other county, sometimes, they see the</strong></td>
<td><strong>Director Corson, is it the intent of this law then to</strong></td>
<td><strong>Director Corson, is it the intent of this law then to</strong></td>
<td><strong>Director Corson, is it the intent of this law then to</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>ballot out in the wild.</strong></td>
<td><strong>change that they cannot take the ballot with them the</strong></td>
<td><strong>change that they cannot take the ballot with them the</strong></td>
<td><strong>change that they cannot take the ballot with them the</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>They can't verify that it's been received or</strong></td>
<td><strong>whole 30 days before so -- is it if I come in and</strong></td>
<td><strong>whole 30 days before so -- is it if I come in and</strong></td>
<td><strong>whole 30 days before so -- is it if I come in and</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>canceled. You know, getting a hold of that other</strong></td>
<td><strong>register to vote, say, day 31 and I'm late. I've got</strong></td>
<td><strong>register to vote, say, day 31 and I'm late. I've got</strong></td>
<td><strong>register to vote, say, day 31 and I'm late. I've got</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>election administrator does take some time, too,</strong></td>
<td><strong>to register, and I've got to vote my ballot right</strong></td>
<td><strong>to register, and I've got to vote my ballot right</strong></td>
<td><strong>to register, and I've got to vote my ballot right</strong></td>
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<td><strong>costing two time components from two different offices.</strong></td>
<td><strong>there.</strong></td>
<td><strong>there.</strong></td>
<td><strong>there.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>But if you wouldn't mind, I would like to read up on</strong></td>
<td><strong>I cannot take it home, even though I could</strong></td>
<td><strong>I cannot take it home, even though I could</strong></td>
<td><strong>I cannot take it home, even though I could</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>that and maybe refer to legal to get a best definition</strong></td>
<td><strong>possibly walk it back or mail it back. So I'm thinking</strong></td>
<td><strong>possibly walk it back or mail it back. So I'm thinking</strong></td>
<td><strong>possibly walk it back or mail it back. So I'm thinking</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of that for what the conflict is.</strong></td>
<td><strong>of an election, say when we have all the ballot issues,</strong></td>
<td><strong>of an election, say when we have all the ballot issues,</strong></td>
<td><strong>of an election, say when we have all the ballot issues,</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you. And I would</strong></td>
<td><strong>and if I -- at that point, I may not even have, if I</strong></td>
<td><strong>and if I -- at that point, I may not even have, if I</strong></td>
<td><strong>and if I -- at that point, I may not even have, if I</strong></td>
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</table>
was on day 31, I probably wouldn't have my voter information pamphlet at that point because they don't -- they're not mailed out that far.

If that's not what you intended, we need to clean that up. Just because we struck something, then it doesn't make that -- it's not making it flow like it should; if this is your intent, then great. But if it's not, then we should maybe change that.

MR. CORSON: Madam Chair and Representative Custer, good points and all that, so let's do the background work on that for you. And get the read on that with what the drafter had come up with. We'll work with the sponsor and check cross-statute for you to get you a clear read on that.

REPRESENTATIVE CUSTER: Thanks.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Director Corson.

Are there any further questions from the committee?

All right. Representative Dooling.

REPRESENTATIVE DOOLING: Madam Chair, this is just a quick comment or appreciation for Mr. Ellis. He is the elections administrator of Broadwater County, which is one of the districts I represent. And I appreciate him coming in today. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: And thank you for even reminding me that I thank everyone. The committee thanks everyone for participation of both proponents and opponents, informational witnesses. It was a long hearing, I realize, but it was very thorough, and I appreciate folks understanding that we needed to allow this kind of testimony to occur to have a thorough understanding of this issue and have a thorough vetting.

I also thank our staff, Ms. Coleen Street (phonetic). Our substitute staff, Mr. Joel Coleman (phonetic), and our able committee clerk and secretary, John Bergoffen. And at this time, I also need to tell you that Ms. Scurr is, unfortunately, out with -- due to an illness right now or -- and I think that will suffice right now.

But we are being well taken care of with our substitute staff. And we certainly miss Ms. Scurr, and we wish her all the best and a quick recovery. It is not COVID. I will say that. But I will say, also, that in that regard, if there is anyone who is ill at all, I want you to take the precautions of taking care of yourself because safety is as important as anything. And I have forgotten to let the -- you're hiding behind there. I'm sorry, I didn't -- it's kind of like the invisible vice-chairs today. I -- it just is. Representative, would you like to close on your bill?

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF: You owe me one. Yes, Madam Chair, I would.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Oh. I apologize.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF: No.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Let me apologize.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF: That is just fine.

Senator Cuffe, I thank you for being the co-sponsor of this bill, walking alongside me with this.

And I'm echoing what many of you feel. A huge thank you to Director Corson for sharing his election expertise.

I could not, I would not in good conscience, stand here before you today and ask for support on this bill if I believed that it would prevent one person from voting. I couldn't do that. So we are here today to do what we can do to assure fair elections. And if those of us who believe in fair elections and believe we have a responsibility to keep them fair showed up to testify today, we'd be here a whole lot longer.

I'd like to address just a few things that came up in the testimony. And I, again, thank Doug Ellis for sharing his experiences, all of his job titles, treasurer, clerk and recorder, superintendent of schools. My goodness.

But he shared the stress and the headaches, and I think as our state grows and the population increases, the passage of this bill is even more important. I was thinking of one thing as I sat here. And this seems like a hard thing for people to wrap their head around to accept this change.

But what if I moved to England? How long would it take me to accept the change that I'd better pay attention and drive on the other side of the road? This is a pretty simple thing. And I don't think it will take long for people to get used to it.

I would not ever want to limit the ability to vote for those in nursing homes or other facilities. But I think it would, perhaps, relieve the stress to register these people ahead of time. And so the day of the election they could be handed -- or the day that they are going to vote, handed a ballot. The
Mr. Forstag of the ACLU mentioned that he thought that all elections should be free and open. I absolutely agree. Voting for this bill will keep them free and open. Lauren Caldwell gave statistics of late registrations, but does that mean that those wouldn't have voted if they couldn't wait until the last minute?

And that sort of goes along with what my friend from Ravalli County, and the excellent clerk and recorder Regina said, that 200 people would not have been able to vote. But that is just this time because we didn't have the -- what --

SENATOR CUFFE: The earlier deadline.

REPRESENTATIVE GREEF: -- the earlier deadline.

Thank you, Mike.

And so, if these people knew that they had to be registered the Friday before, we wouldn't have had 200 people that whose vote wouldn't have been counted. That just would not have been acceptable. So I think it's really a change of our mindset and it will produce wonderful results.

So why are we registering to vote in the first place? There's been so much talk about that. It is to assure, like I said before, that legitimate voters cast legitimate votes. Let's make our election system the safest, most fraud-free in the country. We can do it.

Madam Chair, members of the committee, I ask for a do pass on House Bill 176. And I thank you.

CHAIRPERSON MCKAMEY: Thank you, Representative Greef.

This closes the hearing on House Bill 176.

Okay. Is there any further business that needs to come before the committee other than what was already spoken today? Any at all?

With that then, I will adjourn the committee of House State Administration, January -- what are we?

UNIDENTIFIED: 21st.


(End of Recording)