



PRESS STATEMENT: Tuesday, May 19, 2021

CONTACT: Morgan Keller, Communications Director, ACLU-DE, mkeller@aclu-de.org

Automatic Voter Registration Passed, Sent to Governor

The Delaware House has just passed [SB 5](#), with an overwhelming bipartisan majority (40-1). The bill will create an automatic voter registration system at the Delaware Division of Motor Vehicles, and potentially other state agencies. The bill, which was previously approved by the state Senate on March 30, now heads to the desk of Governor John Carney.

Statement from the Delaware Voting Rights Coalition:

The Delaware Voting Rights Coalition applauds the passage of the Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) bill, SB 5, by the General Assembly. Our broad, statewide coalition of voting rights advocates seeks to improve access to the ballot box and AVR advances that goal by establishing an opt-out system to register voters and a more efficient process for updating the voter file.

The bill is much needed because, according to [Census estimates](#), at least 10,000 Delawareans of voting age are not yet registered to vote. They also indicate that 12.6 percent of Delawareans have moved within the past year, and may not have updated their voter registration. AVR will address both those problems without requiring extra paperwork.

Other states that have implemented AVR have touted its benefits. For example, Georgia's Secretary of State credits its AVR system with registering [almost two-thirds](#) of the Peach State's voters. Oregon's Governor called AVR [a "phenomenal success"](#) that increased registration among minorities, and less urban and less wealthy voters. Connecticut's Secretary of State said AVR was "wildly successful" and credited it with adding 400,000 new voters and updating more than 550,000 previous registrations.

AVR has been adopted and implemented [in 19 states](#), and is part of the "For the People Act" now being debated in the US Senate. If [implemented nationwide](#), AVR could register up to 50 million new eligible voters while making voter registration rolls more accurate, saving money, and cutting down on confusion and other problems at the polls. We're proud that Delaware is ahead of the National curve on this front, and look forward to working with the General Assembly to move ahead with more voting rights legislation this session.