

State of Arkansas

76th General Assembly

Regular Session, 1987

HOUSE BILL 1080

By: Representative Mahony

"AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF VOLUNTEER DEPUTY  
VOTER REGISTRARS; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES."

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. The permanent voter registrar of each county shall seek to appoint no less than one volunteer deputy voter registrar for every 2,000 persons residing in each justice of the peace district in their county according to the latest federal census. The term of office of the volunteer deputy voter registrar shall be coterminate with the permanent voter registrar's term or one year, whichever is less. Except as provided in Section 2 of this Act, no permanent voter registrar shall be required to appoint more than three volunteer deputy voter registrars for every 2,000 persons in each justice of the peace district. Where a justice of the peace district contains parts of both an incorporated area and an unincorporated area, the permanent voter registrars shall seek to appoint no less than one volunteer deputy voter registrar in the incorporated area and no less than one volunteer deputy voter registrar in the unincorporated area.

SECTION 2. If, by January 1, 1988, less than eighty-five percent (85%) of the residents who are of voting age according to the latest federal census in any county are registered, the permanent voter registrar shall seek to appoint no less than two volunteer deputy voter registrars for every 2,000 persons residing in each justice of the peace district in their county according to the latest federal census.

SECTION 3. All persons appointed as volunteer deputy voter registrars must be registered to vote in the county in which they volunteer, able to read, write and comprehend their duties, and selected without regard to poli-

tical or other organizational affiliation of any kind.

SECTION 4. Subject to the limitations of Section 1 of this Act the permanent voter registrars shall not refuse any lawful request for appointment as a deputy voter registrar by a qualified person except a person of known mental incapacity, violent temperament or who has been convicted of a felony involving voter irregularities. A volunteer deputy voter registrar may be terminated for (1) failure to meet the qualifications set forth in this Act; (2) for unwillingness to continue as a volunteer deputy voter registrar; (3) for the violation of section 15 of Amendment 51 of the Arkansas Constitution; (4) failure to return voter registration forms in sufficient time for the registrant to qualify for an election; (5) participation in partisan political activity while soliciting voter registrants; (6) frequent inability to participate in voter registration activities as requested by the permanent voter registrar; (7) inability to fill out forms properly; (8) coercion or intimidation of potential registrants; or (9) reasons for which the person may be refused appointment. The permanent voter registrar shall not discriminate in the appointment or termination of volunteer deputy voter registrars on the basis of race, gender, religion or national origin, except to meet the requirements of this Act.

SECTION 5. If no qualified person requests appointment to serve as a volunteer deputy voter registrar, the permanent voter registrar shall use his or her best efforts to recruit qualified persons to serve as volunteer deputy voter registrars.

SECTION 6. The permanent voter registrar may, as a condition of appointment as volunteer deputy voter registrars, require prospective appointees to complete training in their duties, not normally to exceed two hours total. The permanent voter registrar shall conduct such training at the mutual convenience of the volunteer and the permanent voter registrar, whether during regular working hours, after working hours or on weekends. Such training shall be conducted within fourteen days after the volunteer requests to be appointed.

SECTION 7. The permanent voter registrars shall honor any lawful request to perform voter registration in any part of their county. Such requests may

be honored by the permanent voter registrar, or by delegating the task to a deputy clerk, a volunteer deputy voter registrar resident in the area of the request or a volunteer deputy voter registrar appointed for the limited purpose of honoring such a request. The volunteer deputy voter registrars appointed for this limited purpose shall not count against the maximum of three per 2,000 citizens in each justice of the peace district as provided in Section 1 of this Act.

SECTION 8. The permanent voter registrar, either personally or through a deputy appointed for a term prescribed by the permanent voter registrar, shall before each contested primary or general election takes place, conduct at least one voter registration drive in each town and unincorporated area where a contested primary or general election is to take place. The drive shall be at a time and place prescribed by the permanent voter registrar or a deputy to target times and places where unregistered, eligible residents are likely to be concentrated. A volunteer deputy voter registrar shall have authority to register any eligible, unregistered resident of the county.

SECTION 9. The volunteer deputy voter registrars shall have the full cooperation of the permanent voter registrar in the performance of the deputies' duties. Such cooperation shall include but not be limited to the provision of sufficient forms to the volunteer deputy voter registrars necessary to register voters. If a volunteer deputy voter registrar requests more than twenty-five official registration forms at any one time, the permanent voter registrar shall have seven days to obtain additional forms if the forms are not on hand. The permanent voter registrar shall also make available for inspection and copying the lists of persons purged, and the lists of persons registered. The permanent voter registrar may not limit the locations at which the volunteer deputy voter registrar may register voters, prohibit or prevent the use of mail or door-to-door canvassing as a means of encouraging voters to register.

SECTION 10. The permanent voter registrar shall notify the public of existing and future voter registration opportunities by means reasonably calculated to reach the eligible, unregistered residents in the county.

SECTION 11. The permanent voter registrar may require volunteer deputy voter registrars to comply with guidelines the purpose of which is properly to account for the official registration forms or to protect the integrity of the voter registration rolls in the county.

SECTION 12. Permanent voter registrars shall retain for seven years all documents relating to recruitment, selection, appointment, termination of, and administrative policies and procedures affecting volunteer deputy voter registrars.

SECTION 13. Permanent voter registrars shall use all reasonable means, including public service announcements through State and local newspapers, radio and television stations, to notify Arkansas residents of the provisions of this Act.

SECTION 14. All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are hereby repealed.

