

Newsroom

[Printer Friendly](#) | [ShareThis](#)



Read:
[Voters Win with Election Day Registration](#)
Learn More:
[Election Day Registration](#) | [Voter Registration](#)

August 14, 2008

Ohio to Have Version of "Same Day Registration" for Early Voting

National Voting Rights Center Demos Responds

Columbus, OH--This week, election officials and voting rights advocates in the State of Ohio have been preparing for a new absentee voting period that will provide a version of "Same Day Voter Registration" (SDR) prior to the 2008 registration deadline. From September 30th through October 6th, after which registration closes, voters can register and cast an absentee ballot on the same day if they appear in person at their local board of elections. This provides a convenient one-stop option that will make voting easier for thousands of Ohioans.

In response to the announcement of the Same Day Registration option, Stuart Comstock-Gay, Director of the Democracy Program at Demos, a national public policy center, issued the following statement highlighting the importance of Same Day/Election Day Registration (EDR) as a critical election law reform.

"Ohio voters will be offered a sample of how Same Day Registration works this fall. Following a rule change in 2006, Ohio law provides a five-day window before the voter registration deadline, when they can both register to vote and cast an absentee ballot. We urge the local boards of elections in Ohio to follow the Secretary of State's new directive for assisting their voters in taking advantage of this opportunity.

"Same Day/Election Day Registration has allowed hundreds of thousands of people to cast their votes in the nine states where it is law, and this version of SDR in the absentee voting period is an interesting, positive development for Ohio voters. Many Ohioans can benefit from having access to this new policy, particularly young first-time voters, and the many thousands who can't afford multiple absences from a job or child care to register and vote at separate times.

"But Ohio voters really deserve the full effect of Same Day/Election Day Registration. In the states where it is currently law--Idaho, Iowa, Maine, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Wisconsin and Wyoming--voters have benefited greatly, and reports show that EDR/SDR can be administered efficiently, at low cost, and without threatening the integrity of elections. In fact, three of those states--Montana, Iowa and North Carolina--just implemented EDR in the last two years, joining a national trend in state legislatures to seriously consider this important reform.

"Evidence over the past 35 years has shown that SDR/EDR states show turnout rates 10 to 12 percentage points higher than non-SDR/EDR states, and studies have shown that a substantial part of this improved voter participation--anywhere from 3 to 6 percentage points--is directly related to this reform.

"This is typified by the high turnout North Carolina experienced during its early voting period this primary season. Over 261,505 people voted in advance of their May 6th primary and almost 9 percent of those (22,505) took advantage of the opportunity to register at the same time.

"While Ohioans will get a sample of the Same Day Registration process this year, they deserve to have access to voter registration all the way up to, and including, Election Day. Ohio Representative Tyrone Yates introduced legislation in 2007 proposing to amend the state constitution to allow for EDR, and Demos strongly encourages the Ohio legislature to take up EDR legislation in 2009. Ohio citizens deserve no less."

###

Media Inquiries and Interview Requests:

Timothy Rusch
 Director of Communications
 212.389.1407
trusch@demos.org

Gennady Kolker
 Online and Media Relations
 Associate
 212.389.1408
gkolker@demos.org

Events:Jinny Khanduja
 Events & Outreach Assistant
 212.389.1399
jkhanduja@demos.org

Demos

220 Fifth Ave., 5th Flr. New York, NY 10001 |
 212.633.1405 | info@demos.org

[Home](#) | [About](#) | [Contact](#) | [Newsroom](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Reprint Permission](#)