

# Rep. Genrich: Legislators unveil the ‘Strengthening Democracy Act’ for National Voter Registration Day

Posted on Tuesday, Sep 26, 2017

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MADISON – Today, in honor of National Voter Registration Day, Representatives Eric Genrich and Terese Berceau unveiled legislation which enables automatic universal voter registration in Wisconsin. The legislators were joined by Common Cause Wisconsin Executive Director, Jay Heck, and members of the League of Women Voters, who lent their support to the effort.

The new automatic voter registration system, outlined in the legislation, represents a tremendous step forward for free, open, and fair elections across the state. Using already existing technology and the integration of DOT records, an electronic voter registration system would provide an accountable, secure, and modern method to register voters.

“Our democracy is being undermined internally and externally in a variety of ways. It’s up to us to defend it, enrich it, strengthen it,” said Genrich. “The democratic process is most vibrant when all participate and representative government is truest to its name when all eligible citizens are enabled and encouraged to vote.”

The bill implements the recommendation of the bipartisan Presidential Commission on Election Administration that concluded, “States should seamlessly integrate voter data acquired through Departments of Motor Vehicles with their statewide voter registration lists.”

“Automatic registration will put more of the burden on the state to facilitate the

registration process,” said Berceau. “We should be making it easier and more convenient for citizens to participate in our democracy, not erecting more and more barriers to keep them from voting.”

As a part of the creation of a modern electronic registration system, voters will also now be able to register online up to 20 days before an election if they were not previously registered by the automatic system. By streamlining and modernizing the registration process, municipal clerks, the elections commission, and the DOT can increase the efficiency and accuracy of voter registrations.

The Strengthening Democracy Act will now be circulated among members of the Legislature for co-sponsorship. The authors hope that a strong bipartisan group of legislators will choose to celebrate National Voter Registration Day by backing this effort.