

# NC's Pre-Registration Law



PowerPoint accompaniment for  
*Can You Hear Me Now? NC's Pre-Registration Law* lesson plan

(To view this PDF as a projectable presentation,  
save the file, click "View" in the top menu bar, and select "Full Screen Mode")

*\*To request an editable PPT version of this presentation, send a request to [cnorris@unc.edu](mailto:cnorris@unc.edu).*

- Adults, such as parents and teachers, often don't listen to teenagers.
- **Most teenagers don't care about political and social issues.**
- There are many ways I can participate in the political process, even though I'm not old enough to vote.

**AGREE**



**DISAGREE**



- Federal, state, and local government officials should consult people our age on the decisions they make.
- The voting age should be raised – most eighteen year olds don't know enough to be able to vote.
- Most politicians care very much whether young people (18-22 year olds) vote.

**AGREE**



**DISAGREE**







# NORTH CAROLINA VOTER REGISTRATION APPLICATION

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

Please use black or blue ink and print legibly.

01

Date Received

**1** Are you a citizen of the United States of America?  Yes  No

**IF YOU CHECKED "NO" IN RESPONSE TO THIS QUESTION, DO NOT SUBMIT THIS FORM.**

Will you be at least 18 years of age on or before election day?  Yes  No

Are you at least 16 years of age and understand that you must be 18 years of age on or before election day to vote?  Yes  No

**IF YOU CHECKED "NO" IN RESPONSE TO BOTH OF THESE QUESTIONS ABOVE, DO NOT SUBMIT THIS FORM.**

**2**

Last Name (Required)

First Name (Required)

Middle Name

If you know your NC Voter Registration Number, please provide it here.

**3**

Do you have a NC Driver's License or DMV issued ID card?

If you do not have a NC DMV-issued license or ID card, yes, provide the last 4 digits.

- What is this question asking?
- If you answer "yes" to this question, can you still submit this form?
- What does that mean? How does this form now affect each of you who are 16 years-old or soon to be 16?

## RESIDENTIAL ADDRESS INFORMATION (STREET ADDRESS)

**4**

Street Address where you live (Required)

City (Required)

N C

State

Zip Code

County

Have you lived here for 30 days or more?  Yes  No

If "No," date moved? MMDDYYYY

Phone (Optional)

## MAILING ADDRESS

**5**

Mailing Address (If different from your residential address)

City

State

Zip Code

## MAP/DIAGRAM

If you do not have a street address, draw a map of where you reside. Please include roads and landmarks.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA

SESSION 2009

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HOUSE BILL 1260

Short Title: Voter Preregistration and Education. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Bryant, Cotham, Burr, Burris-Floyd (Primary Sponsors); K. Alexander, M. Alexander, Blue, Brubaker, Cleveland, Farmer-Butterfield, Fisher, Glazier, Goodwin, Harrell, Harrison, Holliman, Jackson, Jeffus, Jones, Lucas, Luebke, Mackey, Martin, Mobley, Parmon, Sager, Stevens, Underhill, Weiss, Womble, and Yongue.

Referred to: Election Law and Campaign Finance Reform, if favorable, Education.

April 9, 2009

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR PREREGISTRATION OF QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS WHO ARE SIXTEEN OR SEVENTEEN YEARS OF AGE AND TO EXPAND INSTRUCTION ON THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING IN THE HIGH SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM AND TO ENCOURAGE LOCAL BOARDS OF EDUCATION TO PROMOTE REGISTRATION AND PREREGISTRATION OF STUDENTS.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

**SECTION 1.(a)** G.S. 163-82.1 is amended by adding a new subsection to read:

"(d) Preregistration. – A person who is at least 16 years of age but will not be 18 years of age by the date of the next election and who is otherwise qualified to register may preregister to vote and shall be automatically registered upon reaching the age of eligibility following verification of the person's qualifications and address in accordance with G.S. 163-82.7."

**SECTION 1.(b)** G.S. 163-82.3(a) reads as rewritten:

"(a) Form Developed by State Board of Elections. – The State Board of Elections shall

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- On August 10, 2009 a piece of landmark legislation was passed by the NC General Assembly.
- A bipartisan bill was adopted that allows 16 and 17 year olds to **pre-register to vote**.
- This means that when you apply for a driver's license, you can pre-register to vote!
- If you pre-register, you will be automatically registered to vote shortly before you turn 18 and will then be able to vote.
- The hope is that this law will add thousands of young people to the voter rolls and boost voter education and voter turnout in NC.
- The law is effective January 1, 2010.



# NC's Pre-Registration Law

- The law also requires county boards of elections to conduct registration drives at high schools each year, and it broadens existing requirements for civics teachers to teach students about voting and the registration process.
- North Carolina is only one of three states with a law like this. Only two other states – FL and HI – allow 16 and 17 year-olds to pre-register!

 *What does this say about our state's concern for youth voice?*





# NC's Pre-Registration Law

- “The preregistration program, adopted in 2009 with bipartisan support, was in effect from 2010 to the fall of September 2013.
- More than 150,000 teens participated in the program, according to state board of elections data. Of the 55,291 teens who preregistered in 2012, 41 percent chose to do so as unaffiliated. Thirty-three percent preregistered as Democrats and 25 percent as Republicans, marking the first year that Democratic preregistrations outnumbered Republican.
- Mecklenburg, Wake, Union, Guilford and Cumberland counties were the top five for preregistration in 2012.” – [\*The Charlotte Observer\*](#)

# NC's Pre-Registration Law

- In 2013, the NC Legislature passed the Voter Identification Verification Act (VIVA), which was signed into law by Governor Pat McCrory. Among other provisions, such as voter ID, this law **eliminated pre-registration.**
- After a lengthy court battle, the 4<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals struck down parts of VIVA and reinstated pre-registration in July 2016.



*Why do you think that the legislature eliminated pre-registration?*

# Voter Registration in NC

- Registration among youth is significantly lower than it is for other age groups.
  - More than 80% of adult citizens over 40 are registered to vote in North Carolina.
  - Less than 60% of eligible voters ages 18-24 are registered to vote in North Carolina.



*Why do you think so few young people register to vote?*

*In addition to the pre-registration law, what could be done to encourage youth to register?*



**Why Should**

**YOUTH**

**Pre-Register**

**& Vote?**

# ➔ The youth vote is sadly underestimated by party analysts.

- Yes, it is true, the trend analysts who tell party spin-doctors where to target their advertising dollars and public relations efforts traditionally overlook the youth market. *Why?*
- Because the sad reality is that election year after election year the percentage of eligible youth who actually register and vote is small when compared with other demographics (though this did change a bit in 2008!).
- This doesn't mean the youth market isn't a force, just that it isn't a main motivator in the drafting of campaign platforms and pre-election advertising.
- So, like any self-respecting rebellious young person the natural thing to do is go against the grain and do the unexpected. Keep them on their toes, shock them into the 21st century and get out, register, and vote!

# ➔ The biggest election issues often directly effect the youth of the nation

- What are some issues that you care about?
  - Your school? Education funding?
  - Whether you will have a job with you graduate?
  - Whether and where the US engages in war?
  - Homelessness?
  - Gang violence?
  - Funding for recreation centers and parks?
  - The environment?
- These are just a few of the current topics that directly effect the quality of your life RIGHT NOW. And these are all topics our government officials (that you ELECT) make decisions regarding.
- If you don't register and vote, you effectively kiss away your ability to have any influence as to how these issues play out in your world! (The world YOU will be in charge of sooner than later.)

# ➡ The only way democracy works is if citizens, young and old, are active participants.

- You've heard it before...you may think it's "hokie" ...but it's TRUE.
- A government by the people, for the people just can't work without the people. This is a simple fact. Like a car without an engine, or a computer without a hard drive, a democracy without voters is just a shell with no power.
- While it is easy to say "one vote doesn't make a difference" the reality is that every vote counts... have you heard of Florida?
- Also you have to remember that as an individual your vote may seem to be little more than a whisper - but when your vote is combined with the votes of others who share your views, it becomes a loud voice. The more like-voters there are the louder that voice yells.
- So get out there and make the youth vote be heard!

# ➡ If you don't vote you can't complain about government decisions you don't like.

- You're a teenager – admit it, you like to complain, right?
- If you don't register and vote, you really have no right complaining about anything the government does.
- Not voting is like saying you don't care how your country is run. If you don't care, where do you get the idea that you can whine when something happens that you don't like?
- Want the right to complain when TPTB (the powers that be) make a truly terrible decision? Then you must exercise your right to register and vote.
- Maybe your vote could keep someone who would make terrible decisions from being elected to being with!



## ➔ **Bottom line: you should vote because you can.**

- It's nearly impossible for us to imagine a time when people, based on their gender or race, were not allowed to vote. We are lucky that people who lived before us in the country fought (and many died) so that we all have the right to register and vote.
- Why did they fight for this right? Because people want to shape their future and not be powerless.
- Believe it or not, young people just like you in other countries actually fight and even die for this right; a right that so many youth in democratic nations take for granted.
- You should vote because you can, if you don't you may one day wake up in a country where you can't. It can (and has) happened. Enough said.

"Tired of your views being ignored? Voting is your chance to be heard and to make a difference. If everyone came out to vote on Election Day, it would mean that each person in this country is being heard, that everyone's opinion counts, regardless of age, whether he is 18 or 89. That's how change happens - express your views at the ballot box."

*Congressman George Miller, Committee Chairman on Education and Labor*