

## Spotlight on AVR

H2091 (An Act automatically registering eligible voters and enhancing safeguards against fraud <https://malegislature.gov/Bills/190/H2091>) got favorably voted out of committee. The bill's text hasn't yet been posted, but here are the main points:

- Our opt-in model shifts to an opt-out one.
- Two agencies (RMV and MassHealth) will participate. MA's the first to add this second agency.
- The registration isn't exactly "automatic". People are alerted twice (at the agency, then by postcard) that if they do nothing, they'll be registered.
- The agencies have a far higher bar of documentation for citizenship than the voter registration forms. **So, skimming off their data and regularly sending it over to the Central Registry creates rolls that are far, far more accurate.** This protects both citizens, who want to ensure that only Americans are voting, and non-citizens, who don't want to accidentally end up on the rolls.
- More accurate rolls also cut down on the number of provisional ballots issued, which saves the State work.
- Because the rolls aren't static, but are continuously checked against these other databases, they are protected from manipulation and hacking.
- Voters stay registered when they move within the state
- **MA joins ERIC**, (Electronic Registration Information Center). ERIC is a highly accurate, double anonymized, double encrypted inter-state voter roll comparer. It was designed by the non-partisan, non-profit foundation, Pew Charitable Trust. Its 24 members include both "red" and "blue" states.
- **There are no implementation costs to taxpayers.** MA has \$43M in HAVA (Help America Vote Act) funds.
- AVR doesn't change who is eligible to vote, what the eligibility requirements are, what information the Central Registry of Voters collects; it doesn't add same-day registration; and it doesn't change how votes are recorded and counted. **It simply updates the Central Registry records far more often, with voter contact data that's far more accurate.**

Implementation date Jan 1, 2020.