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Governor Scott Walker Signs Senate Bill 295 Into Law

Madison – Governor Scott Walker signed Senate Bill 295 into law today at the Wisconsin State Capitol.

“Senate Bill 295 makes it easier for Wisconsin veterans and seniors to vote and empowers our citizens to assist their communities in registering to vote,” Governor Walker said. “The new online registration also ensures this process is more effective and brings Wisconsin elections into the 21st century. We remain focused on protecting the integrity of our state’s election process and this bill helps us accomplish that goal.”

Senate Bill 295 – allows anyone with a current Wisconsin driver’s license or free state ID to register to vote securely online and adds a veterans identification card to the list of specified documents that can be used as Voter ID. The bill also allows occupants of residential care facilities to use contract or intake documents that specify the occupant resides in the facility as proof of residence for registering to vote. The bill additionally enrolls the state of Wisconsin into the Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC), a non-profit organization that shares voter data securely and will provide the state with information to help identify duplicate registrations as well as voters who have moved, passed away, or are registered in neighboring states. Senate Bill 295 also eliminates Special Registration Deputies, the volunteer election officials deputized by local clerks. This bill further requires municipalities to report voter returns, by ward or reporting unit, to the county clerk no later than two hours after the votes are tabulated and county clerks to post all voter returns, by ward or reporting unit, on the county’s Internet site no later than two hours after receiving the returns. Authored by Senator Devin LeMahieu (R – Oostburg) and Representative Kathleen Bernier (R – Chippewa Falls), the bill passed the Senate on a vote of 19-13 and was concurred in as amended in the Assembly on a vote of 56 – 38. The Senate later concurred in Assembly Amendment 2 to Senate Bill 295 on a voice vote. It is Act 261.

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