

2025 HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS

HB 1616

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1616
2/6/2025

Relating to availability of voter lists.

2:11 p.m. Chairman Schauer opened the hearing.

Members present: Chairman Schauer, Vice Chairman Satrom, Representatives Bahl, Brown, Grindberg, Karls, McLeod, Rohr, Schneider, Steiner, VanWinkle, Vetter, Wolff

Members absent: Representative Christy

Discussion Topics:

- Transparency
- Fraud protection
- Deterrence of voter fraud
- Voting history
- Legitimacy

2:12 p.m. Representative Marschall, District 16, introduced the bill.

2:18 p.m. Micheal Bowman, State Solutions LLC, testified in favor and submitted testimony, #35764.

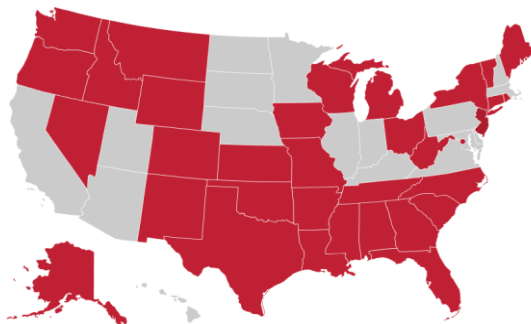
2:24 p.m. Micheal Howe, North Dakota Secretary of State, testified on behalf of Erika White, State Election Director of the North Dakota Secretary of State, in opposition and submitted testimony, #35952.

2:32 p.m. Chairman Schauer closed the hearing.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

Support HB 1616

Voter Protection and Election Transparency



VoteRef.com is dedicated to ensuring transparent, accurate and fair elections in the United States of America.

Values:

- The Secretary of State needs to retain voter registration and election data. This information is currently made public to the political parties of North Dakota. This bill would allow non-commercial entities and the general public to publish and post. Files need to be provided in a commonly useable format including but not limited to CSV format.
- Voter information should be available to the public while protecting Personally Identifiable Information (PII). The Secretary of State must ensure that Social Security and driver's license numbers and state, military, and government IDs, as well as phone numbers and email addresses are protected.

Results:

Transparency: Voting histories are available on the internet.

Protection: Citizens or organizations can notify authorities if they detect fraudulent voting.

Deterrence: Transparency deters voting fraud.

Convenience: Provides ease of access to voting histories.

Legitimacy: Voters can focus on the policy and direction of their state.

Enquire:

Contact: Michael Bowman at 209-909-7869 or at michael@state-solutions.com

HOUSE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
REPRESENTATIVE AUSTEN SCHAUER, CHAIR

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BY

ERIKA WHITE, STATE ELECTIONS DIRECTOR

Chairman Schauer and members of the committee, I'm Erika White, elections director for the North Dakota Office of the Secretary of State.

I am here in opposition to HB 1616. This bill seeks to make voter lists available to anyone, **quite literally anyone**, who requests them under the guise of an election-related purpose, all while providing the requester complete anonymity in the process. My testimony seeks to summarize the challenges we see in this bill as we believe it opens a door for misinformation and misuse of North Dakota voter information, eroding voter trust in our election processes.

Under current statute, candidates, political parties and political committees can request and purchase a voter list from the Office of the Secretary of State for a political purpose. These lists are used by candidates, committees, and political parties to reach voters within their jurisdiction through communications and marketing. The lists include the voter's name, residential address, district in which they reside, and whether or not they have voted in the last four years.

The language struck and added in subsection 1 of NDCC 16.1-02-15 removes the restriction on who can request voter lists and broadly opens the statute to allow anyone "within or outside the state" to request North Dakota voter information for an election-related purpose. An election-related purpose is a broad category and allows voter information to be used in a manner that isn't easily regulated by our office. Let's take that a step further, in line 13 you'll notice that the information gained from such a request "may not be sold or distributed for a purpose that is not-election related." This does however mean that North Dakota voter information could be **monetized for election-related purposes** by the requester – posted on a website or made available for sale to anyone seeking to reach North Dakota voters on any global or national agenda topic.

The new language in subsection 3 completely exempts the individual requesting information in an open records request to find out who may have requested information about North Dakota voters. This means if any voter feels

their information is being used inappropriately or for a purpose that is not-election related, they could not receive any information about who has requested and/or purchased a voter list including their individual information from our office. This language creates an open records exemption and seeks to protect the anonymity of the “requester” and not North Dakota citizens.

The added language in subsection 2 seeks to open protected “secured active” voter records by requiring certain information – namely their name and address – to be included in voter lists. Secured active voters are individuals such as law enforcement and judges, whose names and addresses are protected for safety reasons related to their work. The changes suggested in this section would require their names and addresses to be included in any voter list requested which completely defeats the purpose behind subsection 2.

We believe this bill will create misinformation and erode the trust we’ve been working to build around North Dakota’s election processes. It creates broad openness to North Dakota voter information, placing protections around the individuals gaining access to the information while leaving our citizens exposed. Placing our citizen’s information in the hands of potential bad actors or organizations who could profit from their information is simply bad form and in opposition to the many election integrity reforms the legislature has put in place.

I strongly urge a **DO NOT PASS** recommendation on this bill.

NDCC Code Related to Voter Information for Reference:

16.1-02-12. Information contained and maintained in the central voter file.

The central voter file must contain the following information for each individual included in the file:

1. The complete legal name of the individual.
2. The complete residential address of the individual.
3. The complete mailing address of the individual, if different from the individual's residential address.
4. The unique identifier generated and assigned to the individual.
5. A status designation of the individual's eligibility to vote in a precinct.
6. The county, legislative district, city or township, school district, county commissioner district, if applicable, precinct name, and precinct number in which the individual resides.
7. Beginning in 2008, four years of an individual's voting history, if applicable.
8. Date of birth.
9. The individual's driver's license or nondriver identification card number issued by the department of transportation, or the unique identifier from an official form of identification issued by a tribal government to a tribal member residing in this state.
10. Any other information requested of and obtained from the individual deemed necessary by the secretary of state for the proper administration of the central voter file.

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee Pioneer Room, State Capitol

HB 1616
2/13/2025

Relating to availability of voter lists.

9:51 a.m. Chairman Schauer opened the meeting.

Members present: Chairman Schauer, Vice Chairman Satrom, Representatives Brown, Grindberg, Karls, Rohr, Schneider, Steiner, VanWinkle, Vetter, Wolff

Members absent: Representatives Bahl, Christy, McLeod

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

9:53 a.m. Vice-Chairman Satrom moved a Do Not Pass.

9:53 a.m. Representative Karls seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Austen Schauer	Y
Representative Bernie Satrom	Y
Representative Landon Bahl	AB
Representative Collette Brown	Y
Representative Josh Christy	AB
Representative Karen Grindberg	Y
Representative Karen Karls	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	AB
Representative Karen Rohr	Y
Representative Mary Schneider	Y
Representative Vicky Steiner	N
Representative Lori VanWinkle	N
Representative Steve Vetter	Y
Representative Christina Wolff	Y

9:54 a.m. Motion passed 9-2-3.

Representative Karls will carry the bill.

9:54 a.m. Chairman Schauer closed the meeting.

Jackson Toman, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
HB 1616 ([25.1321.01000](#))

Government and Veterans Affairs Committee (Rep. Schauer, Chairman) recommends **DO NOT PASS** (9 YEAS, 2 NAYS, 3 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). HB 1616 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar.