

January 10, 2013

House State Administration Committee
Capitol Station
Helena, Mt. 59601

Dear Chairwoman Ingraham and Members of the Committee:

I would encourage you to pass HB 30, rolling back late registration to the Friday before Election Day. I am a 34 year veteran Clerk and Recorder, and I can assure you it would make my job as Election Administrator a lot less stressful on Election Day. It would give me time to make sure the Central Count Board is set up properly and running smoothly, it would also make it easier to give the attention I need to the poll workers and the problems they encounter at the polling sites, when they call in to get them rectified. This past election, I made a mistake up loading results to the Secretary of State website, and it was from total exhaustion and stress. I ran one of my M 100 cards twice through my card reader. I did not notice that I had done that, until I went to close the program for the night, and I had more voters than registered voters, so I immediately knew what I had done, and had to manually correct it in the wee hours of the morning. This past election we had 84 people register on election day, with just two of us in the office to do this long drawn out process, while trying to run the central count and the polls. It was steady at the counter all day long. The registration and absentee voting process is just not something that a temp or anyone can take on without adequate training either, as there is a lot to know, so errors are not made, especially with getting the elector verified through the system or pulling an elector from another county.

I would very happy if you could move this very important piece of legislation out of committee with a do pass. Thank you for all you do for Montana and the legislative process.

Sincerely,

Geraldine Custer
Rosebud County Clerk and Recorder