2017 SENATE BILL 629

December 7, 2017 - Introduced by Senators L. TAYLOR, CARPENTER, LARSON and VINEHOUT, cosponsored by Representatives SHANKLAND, ANDERSON, BERCEAU, CONSIDINE, CROWLEY, HEBL, POPE, SARGENT, SINICKI, SPREITZER, SUBECK and C. TAYLOR. Referred to Committee on Elections and Utilities.

1 AN ACT to amend 5.35 (6) (a) 2., 6.15 (2) (bm), 6.29 (2) (a), 6.33 (1), 6.33 (2) (b), 6.55 (2) (b), 6.55 (2) (c) 1., 6.55 (2) (c) 2., 6.79 (4) and 6.86 (3) (a) 2.; and to create 6.56 (5) and 12.13 (3) (v) of the statutes; relating to: use of corroborating witness to establish elector proof of residence.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Under current law, a U.S. citizen age 18 or older who has resided in a ward or election district in this state for ten consecutive days may register to vote in an election in this state only if the individual provides proof of residence. An individual may establish his or her residence by presenting one of a variety of specified documents, including a current and valid Wisconsin operator’s license or identification card, a real property tax bill or receipt for the current year or the year preceding the date of the election, a paycheck or bank statement, or a utility bill for the period commencing not earlier than 90 days before the day registration is made.

This bill permits an individual who cannot provide proof of residence through one of the specified documents to register if another elector who lives with the individual and who can provide proof of residence through one of the specified documents corroborates the residence of the individual.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:
SECTION 1. 5.35 (6) (a) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

5.35 (6) (a) 2. A copy of the election fraud laws provided in s. 12.13 (1) and (3) (intro), (d), (f), (g), (k), (L), (o), (q), (r), (u), (v), and (x), together with the applicable penalties provided in s. 12.60 (1).

SECTION 2. 6.15 (2) (bm) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.15 (2) (bm) Except as authorized in s. 6.79 (7), when making application in person at the office of the municipal clerk, each applicant shall present proof of identification. If any document presented by the applicant is not proof of residence under s. 6.34, the applicant shall also present proof of residence under s. 6.34. If the elector cannot provide proof of residence, the elector may have his or her residence corroborated in a statement signed by another elector who resides at the same residence as the elector who is casting a ballot. If the residence is corroborated by another elector, that elector shall then present proof of residence under s. 6.34. The clerk shall verify that the name on the proof of identification presented by the elector conforms to the name on the elector’s application, shall verify that any photograph appearing on that document reasonably resembles the elector, and shall enter the type of identifying document submitted by the elector as proof of residence, the name of the entity or institution that issued the identifying document, and, if the identifying document includes a number that applies only to the individual holding that document, the last 4 digits of that number on the application form. If the number on the identifying document submitted by the elector has 6 or fewer digits, the clerk shall enter only the last 2 digits of that number.

SECTION 3. 6.29 (2) (a) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.29 (2) (a) Any qualified elector of a municipality who has not previously filed a registration form or whose name does not appear on the registration list of the
municipality may register after the close of registration but not later than 5 p.m. or
the close of business, whichever is later, on the Friday before an election at the office
of the municipal clerk and at the office of the clerk’s agent if the clerk delegates
responsibility for electronic maintenance of the registration list to an agent under
s. 6.33 (5) (b). The elector shall complete, in the manner provided under s. 6.33 (2),
a registration form containing all information required under s. 6.33 (1). The
registration form shall also contain the following certification: “I, ..., hereby certify
that, to the best of my knowledge, I am a qualified elector, having resided at ... for
at least 28 10 consecutive days immediately preceding this election, and I have not
voted at this election”. The elector shall also provide proof of residence under s. 6.34.
Alternatively, if the elector is unable to provide proof of residence under s. 6.34, the
elector may have his or her residence corroborated in a statement that is signed by
another elector who resides at the same residence as the registering elector. The
corroborating elector shall then provide proof of residence under s. 6.34.

SECTION 4. 6.33 (1) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.33 (1) The commission shall prescribe the format, size, and shape of
registration forms. All nonelectronic forms shall be printed and each item of
information shall be of uniform font size, as prescribed by the commission. Except
as otherwise provided in this subsection, electronic forms shall contain the same
information as nonelectronic forms. The municipal clerk shall supply sufficient
forms to meet voter registration needs. The commission shall design the form to
obtain from each elector information as to name; date; residence location; location of
previous residence immediately before moving to current residence location;
citizenship; date of birth; age; the number of a current and valid operator’s license
issued to the elector under ch. 343 or the last 4 digits of the elector’s social security
account number; whether the elector has resided within the ward or election district
for the number of consecutive days specified in s. 6.02 (1); whether the elector has
been convicted of a felony for which he or she has not been pardoned, and if so,
whether the elector is incarcerated, or on parole, probation, or extended supervision;
whether the elector is disqualified on any other ground from voting; and whether the
elector is currently registered to vote at any other location. The commission shall
include on the nonelectronic form a space for the elector’s signature and the
signature of any corroborating elector when required under s. 6.29 (2) (a), 6.55 (2),
6.86 (3) (a) 2. The commission shall include on the electronic form the authorization
specified under s. 6.30 (5). Below the space for the signature or authorization,
respectively, the commission shall include the following statement: “Falsification of
information on this form is punishable under Wisconsin law as a Class I felony.” The
commission shall include on the form a space to enter the name of any inspector,
municipal clerk, or deputy clerk under s. 6.55 (2) who obtains the form and a space
for the inspector, clerk, or deputy clerk to sign his or her name, affirming that the
inspector, clerk, or deputy clerk has accepted the form. The commission shall include
on the form a space for entry of the ward and aldermanic district, if any, where the
elector resides and any other information required to determine the offices and
referenda for which the elector is certified to vote. The commission shall also include
on the form a space where the clerk may record an indication of whether the form is
received by mail or by electronic application, a space where the clerk shall record an
indication of the type of identifying document submitted by the elector as proof of
residence under s. 6.34 or an indication that the elector’s information in lieu of proof
of residence was verified under s. 6.34 (2m), the name of the entity or institution that
issued the identifying document, and, if the identifying document includes a number
that applies only to the individual holding that document, that number. The
commission shall also include on the form a space where the clerk, for any elector who
possesses a valid voting identification card issued to the person under s. 6.47 (3), may
record the identification serial number appearing on the voting identification card.
Each county clerk shall obtain sufficient registration forms for completion by an
elector who desires to register to vote at the office of the county clerk under s. 6.28
(4).

SECTION 5. 6.33 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.33 (2) (b) Except as provided in s. 6.86 (3) (a) 2., the registration form shall
be signed by the registering elector and any corroborating elector under s. 6.29 (2)
(a) or 6.55 (2) before the clerk, issuing officer, or election registration official. The
form shall contain a certification by the registering elector that all statements are
true and correct.

SECTION 6. 6.55 (2) (b) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.55 (2) (b) Upon executing the registration form under par. (a), the elector
shall provide proof of residence under s. 6.34. If the elector cannot provide proof of
residence, the elector may have his or her residence corroborated in a statement that
is signed by another elector who resides at the same residence as the registering
elector. The corroborator shall then provide proof of residence under s. 6.34. The
signing by the elector executing and any corroborating elector who signs the
registration form shall be sign the form in the presence of the election registration
official or inspector. Upon receipt of the registration form, the official or inspector
shall enter both the type of identifying document submitted by the elector as proof
of residence and the name of the entity or institution that issued the identifying
document, and, if the identifying document includes a number that applies only to
the individual holding that document, that number in the space provided on the
form. The official or inspector shall then print his or her name on and sign the form,
indicating that the official or inspector has accepted the form. Upon compliance with
this procedure, the elector shall be permitted to cast his or her vote, if the elector
complies with all other requirements for voting at the polling place.

**SECTION 7.** 6.55 (2) (c) 1. of the statutes is amended to read:
6.55 (2) (c) 1. As an alternative to registration at the polling place under pars.
(a) and (b), the board of election commissioners, or the governing body of any
municipality, may by resolution require a person who qualifies as an elector and who
is not registered and desires to register on the day of an election to do so at another
readily accessible location in the same building as the polling place serving the
elector’s residence or at an alternate polling place assigned under s. 5.25 (5) (b),
instead of at the polling place serving the elector’s residence. In such case, the
municipal clerk shall prominently post a notice of the registration location at the
polling place. An eligible elector who desires to register shall execute a registration
form as prescribed under par. (a) and provide proof of residence as provided under
s. 6.34. If the elector cannot provide proof of residence, the elector may have his or
her residence corroborated in the same manner as provided in par. (b). The signing
by the person executing and any corroborating elector who signs the registration
form shall be sign the form in the presence of the municipal clerk, deputy clerk, or
election registration official. Upon receipt of the registration form, the municipal
clerk, deputy clerk, or election registration official shall enter the type of identifying
document submitted by the elector as proof of residence, the name of the entity or
institution that issued the identifying document, and, if the identifying document
includes a number that applies only to the individual holding that document, the last
4 digits of that number in the space provided on the form. If the number on the
identifying document submitted by the elector has 6 or fewer digits, the clerk shall
enter only the last 2 digits of that number. The municipal clerk, the deputy clerk,
or the election registration official shall then print his or her name and sign the form,
indicating that the clerk, deputy clerk, or official has accepted the form. Upon proper
completion of registration, the municipal clerk, deputy clerk, or election registration
official shall serially number the registration and give one copy to the person for
presentation at the polling place serving the person’s residence or an alternate
polling place assigned under s. 5.25 (5) (b).

**SECTION 8.** 6.55 (2) (c) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

6.55 (2) (c) 2. Upon compliance with the procedures under subd. 1., the
municipal clerk or deputy clerk shall issue a certificate addressed to the inspectors
of the proper polling place directing that the elector be permitted to cast his or her
vote if the elector complies with all requirements for voting at the polling place. The
clerk shall enter the name and address of the elector on the face of the certificate.
If the elector’s registration is corroborated under this subsection or on election day
under s. 6.86 (3) (a) 2., the clerk shall also enter the name and address of the
corroborator on the face of the certificate. The certificate shall be numbered serially
and prepared in duplicate. The municipal clerk shall preserve one copy in his or her
office.

**SECTION 9.** 6.56 (5) of the statutes is created to read:

6.56 (5) Whenever any letter or postcard mailed under this section is returned
undelivered, or whenever the U.S. postal service notifies the clerk of an incorrect
address that was apparently incorrect on the day of the election, or whenever it
otherwise appears that an individual who has voted is not qualified or has voted more
than once in an election, and the individual was permitted to vote after corroboration was made under s. 6.55 (2) or 6.86 (3) (a) 2., the municipal clerk shall provide the name of the corroborating elector to the district attorney for the county where the individual resides and the commission.

**SECTION 10.** 6.79 (4) of the statutes is amended to read:

6.79 (4) SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION. When any elector provides proof of residence under s. 6.15, 6.29 or 6.55 (2), the election officials shall enter both the type of identifying document provided and the name of the entity or institution that issued the identifying document on the poll list, or separate list maintained under sub. (2) (c). When any elector corroborates the residence of any person offering to vote under s. 6.55 (2) (b) or (c), or the residence of any person registering on election day under s. 6.86 (3) (a) 2., the election officials shall also enter the name and address of the corroborator next to the name of the elector whose residence is corroborated on the poll list or the separate list maintained under sub. (2) (c). When any person offering to vote has been challenged and taken the oath, following the person's name on the poll list, the officials shall enter the word “Sworn”.

**SECTION 11.** 6.86 (3) (a) 2. of the statutes is amended to read:

6.86 (3) (a) 2. If a hospitalized elector is not registered, the elector may register by agent under this subdivision at the same time that the elector applies for an official ballot by agent under subd. 1. To register the elector under this subdivision, the agent shall present a completed registration form that contains the required information supplied by the elector and the elector’s signature, unless the elector is unable to sign due to physical disability. In this case, the elector may authorize another elector to sign on his or her behalf. Any elector signing a form on another elector’s behalf shall attest to a statement that the application is made on request
and by authorization of the named elector, who is unable to sign the form due to physical disability. The agent shall present this statement along with all other information required under this subdivision. The agent shall provide proof of the elector’s residence under s. 6.34. If the agent cannot present proof of residence, the agent shall ensure that the registration form is signed and substantiated by another elector who resides in the same residence as the hospitalized elector, corroborating the residence of the hospitalized elector. The form shall contain the full name of the corroborating elector. The agent shall then present proof of the corroborating elector’s residence under s. 6.34.

**SECTION 12.** 12.13 (3) (v) of the statutes is created to read:

12.13 (3) (v) Corroborate any information offered by a proposed elector for the purpose of permitting the person the register to vote or to vote, knowing such information to be false.