

AN ACT relating to simulated voting by minors.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Illinois,
represented in the General Assembly:

Section 1. Short title. This Act may be cited as the
Voting by Minors Act.

Section 5. Development of program.

(a) The State Board of Elections and the State Board of
Education shall develop a pilot program under which
elementary and secondary school students in kindergarten
through grade 12 in participating school districts and
counties may participate in a simulated election held on the
date of the general election in 2004.

(b) The program shall be designed for implementation
only in those counties in which the election authority elects
to participate in the program. Each school district located
in those counties may elect to participate in the program.

(c) In each county and school district electing to
participate in the program, the program shall be implemented
in accordance with standards jointly developed for that
purpose by the State Board of Elections and State Board of
Education.

Section 10. Funding.

(a) Implementation of the program is contingent upon
receipt of the necessary funding from private sources.

(b) The program as developed by the State Board of
Elections and State Board of Education: (i) shall require the
formation of a nonprofit, volunteer administrative board in
each participating county and a coordinating statewide board
that is also nonprofit and volunteer; (ii) shall prescribe
the manner in which those boards shall be formed; (iii) shall

prescribe the responsibilities of those boards, including securing the necessary private funding and volunteer assistance required to implement the program; and (iv) shall prescribe measures designed to assure fiscal integrity in the use of donated funds and equitable distribution of those funds for program purposes in the participating counties and school districts.

Section 15. Volunteer assistance. State funds shall not be used for implementation of the program. The program shall be conducted and operated with volunteer assistance and private funds. The State Board of Elections and State Board of Education, however, shall develop the program as required by this Act and may make their personnel available on a reasonable basis for consulting purposes.

Section 20. Educational curriculum. A component of the program as developed by the State Board of Education and State Board of Elections shall include a reasonable amount of classroom instruction, as part of existing courses offered by a participating school district, concerning voting history and laws, voting procedures, election campaigns, media influence, and the importance of voter participation. The suggested curriculum shall be developed by the State Board of Education and State Board of Elections by January 1, 2004 and shall be made available to school districts that may later elect to participate in the program. The suggested curriculum shall be based upon 6 to 12 hours of classroom instruction and shall include homework assignments that necessitate dialogue between children and their parents or guardians concerning the voting process and specifically the candidates and propositions to be voted upon at the general election.

Section 25. Basic program requirements. The program standards jointly developed under subsection (c) of Section 5 shall require: (i) that children register to vote in the simulated election; (ii) that on the day of the 2004 general election the children accompany their parents to the polls and vote on separate ballots in voting booths adjacent to the adult booths; (iii) that the children vote on the same races and propositions as the adult voters, except that the number of races or propositions on which the younger children vote may be reduced as necessary based on their grade level; (iv) that the ballots be designed, using pictures and symbols as necessary, so that all children may vote their choice even though they are unable to read; (v) that simulated election judges participate at the polls as part of the simulated election; (vi) that the results of the simulated election be tabulated beginning after the closing of the polls and the results announced on the following day; and (vii) other standards that the State Board of Elections and State Board of Education determine will contribute to the voting experience of the children.

Section 30. Report. The State Board of Elections and State Board of Education shall develop the voting by minors pilot program and distribute it to all county election authorities and school districts in January of 2004. In addition, before January 1, 2004, the State Board of Elections and State Board of Education shall jointly file with the Governor and the General Assembly a copy of the program together with a written report recommending any additional legislation necessary before actual implementation of the program at the 2004 general election.

Section 35. Timetable. The State Board of Elections and State Board of Education shall adopt rules under which (i)

counties and school districts that chose to participate in the voting by minors program are determined beginning no later than March 1, 2004, (ii) the county and statewide boards described in subsection (b) of Section 10 are established no later than July 1, 2004, and (iii) the availability of sufficient private funding is determined by August 1, 2004, along with those counties and school districts that will be actual program participants.

Section 99. Effective date. This Act takes effect upon becoming law.