HOUSE BILL 74

55TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2021

INTRODUCED BY

Gail Chasey

FOR THE COURTS, CORRECTIONS AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

AN ACT

RELATING TO ELECTIONS; REPEALING CANCELLATION OF VOTING
REGISTRATION AFTER FELONY CONVICTION; AMENDING, REPEALING AND
ENACTING SECTIONS OF LAW.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

SECTION 1. Section 1-4-24 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1969, Chapter 240, Section 80, as amended) is amended to read:

"1-4-24. CANCELLATION OF REGISTRATION--COUNTY CLERK--
GROUND.--The county clerk shall cancel certificates of registration for the following reasons:

A. death of the voter;

[B. a felony conviction of the voter;

C[⊥] B. at the request of the voter; or

[D⊥] C. at the direction of the board of registration."

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SECTION 2. Section 1-4-27.1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2001, Chapter 46, Section 1, as amended) is repealed and a new Section 1-4-27.1 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"1-4-27.1. [NEW MATERIAL] INMATES INELIGIBLE TO VOTE OR REGISTER TO VOTE--ELIGIBILITY TO VOTE AND REGISTER TO VOTE UPON RELEASE.--

A. A voter is ineligible to vote while imprisoned in a correctional facility as part of a sentence for a felony conviction. Except as provided in this section, a qualified elector is ineligible to register to vote while imprisoned in a correctional facility as part of a sentence for a felony conviction.

B. At the time an inmate is preparing for release from a state correctional facility, if the inmate is a voter or qualified elector, the inmate shall be given an opportunity to register to vote, or update an existing registration, by means of a transaction with the motor vehicle division of the taxation and revenue department prior to the inmate's release from custody. If the inmate does not conduct a transaction with the motor vehicle division of the taxation and revenue department prior to the inmate's release from custody, the corrections department shall provide the inmate an opportunity to register to vote or update an existing registration by means of an online portal provided by the secretary of state or, if such a portal is not available, by means of a paper .218447.1
registration form.

C. The voter registration of a voter who is an inmate may be canceled in any manner provided for in Chapter 1, Article 4 NMSA 1978. In addition to being ineligible to vote, a voter who is an inmate shall be considered to have changed the voter's address from the voter's precinct of registration, pursuant to Section 1-4-28 NMSA 1978, and shall follow the procedures of that section, provided that the secretary of state shall not send a confirmation mailing to a voter who is an inmate.

D. The corrections department shall deliver to the secretary of state information and data necessary to carry out the provisions of this section. The secretary of state shall maintain current information in the statewide voter registration electronic management system on the ineligibility status of an inmate to vote or register to vote pursuant to this section, as well as an inmate's eligibility status to vote upon release and to register to vote or update an existing voter registration while preparing for release.

Notwithstanding a person's status in the statewide voter registration electronic management system, a voter or a qualified elector who appears personally before a county clerk, the clerk's authorized representative or a precinct board member is presumed eligible to vote or register to vote pursuant to the provisions of this section."
SECTION 3. Section 31-13-1 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1963, Chapter 303, Section 29-14, as amended) is repealed and a new Section 31-13-1 NMSA 1978 is enacted to read:

"31-13-1. [NEW MATERIAL] FELONY CONVICTION--RESTORATION OF RIGHTS.--

A. A person who has been convicted of a felony shall not be permitted to hold an office of public trust for the state or any political subdivision of this state, unless the person's rights have been restored pursuant to this section.

B. The rights of a person who has been convicted of a felony in this state are restored if the person receives a pardon or, for purposes of this state only, if the governor of New Mexico issues the person a certificate of restoration of rights.

C. The rights of a person who has been convicted of a felony in another state are restored if the governor of that state issues the person a pardon or other restoration of rights or, for purposes of this state only, if the governor of New Mexico issues the person a certificate of restoration of rights.

D. The rights of a person who has been convicted of a felony in federal court are restored if the president of the United States issues the person a pardon or other restoration of rights or, for purposes of this state only, if the governor of New Mexico issues the person a certificate of restoration of rights.
rights."

- 5 -