



September 15, 2015

The Honorable Jerry Brown
Governor
Capitol Building
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 1461 (Gonzalez) New Motor Voter Act

Dear Governor Brown:

We support AB 1461, the California New Motor Voter Program. This bill expands voting access to eligible Californians by combining registration to vote with application for an identification card or driver's license.

Your administration has done an admirable job expanding voting rights in this state. Despite this, California has recently ranked 38th in voter registration, with 6.6 million people eligible, but unregistered. These unregistered voters predominately consist of historically underrepresented communities of color and young Californians. The state is better served when policymaking is reflective of the entire population. It makes us stronger to have an opt-out voting system, allowing easier exercise of the fundamental right to vote.

The New Motor Act will make California more democratic by creating an opt-out voter registration system. This bill allows for citizens to attest to voting eligibility when applying or renewing a driver's license or identification card, thus making registration automatic and easier. Protections are in place to prevent ineligible people from accidentally voting.

The Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) can easily capture and provide voter information as it already collects the same information when providing driver's licenses and identification cards. Recent technology upgrades will make this process simple for the agency. Additionally, the process will be similar to what the DMV already does when creating jury pools. This bill is prospective only, so the DMV will not have to reach back into records to provide data. This is preferred over Oregon's path, which requires follow up mailings, where we may lose information about political party preference or fail to provide preferred language access.

The New Motor Voter Act represents a step forward for California's democratic institutions. Making it easier for people to exercise their fundamental right to vote is a worthy cause that this bill makes simple.

We support AB 1461 and urge your signature on this important piece of legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kyle Jones".

Kyle Jones
Policy Advocate

. CC: Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez