



# MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

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Maida Coleman  
5<sup>th</sup> Senate District

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## **Secretary of State Carnahan Testifies in Support of Sen. Coleman's Election Bill**

JEFFERSON CITY— Missouri Secretary of State Robin Carnahan today testified in support Senate Bill 1083, sponsored by Senate Minority Floor Leader Maida Coleman, D-St. Louis. Sen. Coleman presented SB 1083 to the Senate Financial, Governmental Organizations and Elections Committee in the Senate Lounge today.

Under the legislation, those who request 50 or more voter registration applications who are not deputy registration officials must be 18 and file their name, address and phone number with the Secretary of State's office. That individual also would have to state whether he or she is making the request on behalf of a group or organization and identify that group or organization.

SB 1083 increases the penalty for one who knowingly signs a name other than his or her own to a voter registration application to a Class B felony. A person who provides false identification to an election official in order to vote, or a person who falsely completes an absentee ballot also would be guilty of a Class B felony, which is punishable by 5 to 15 years in prison.

"This basically tightens up the voter registration process and increases the penalties," said Secretary Carnahan. "It will increase oversight on those who are paid to collect signatures, and that individual would have to inform our office who is paying them."

"I appreciate the support of our state's top election official," said Sen. Coleman. "Secretary Carnahan has done a great job of ensuring our elections are fair and free, and this bill targets one area where the potential to commit fraud still exists – voter registration drives. Most people who sign up voters have their hearts in the right place by trying to get more people involved in the democratic process. But every now and then we hear about someone conducting a voter registration

drive who is trying to game the system, and my bill will make them think twice about committing election fraud.”

Sen. Coleman notes there have been very few problems with the state’s election process since Secretary Carnahan was elected in 2004. The problems that have been reported involved voter registration drives.

“Sometimes out-of-state companies sign up people to conduct voter registration drives in Missouri, and those companies pay the canvassers based on how many people they sign up, so that creates an incentive to cheat,” Sen. Coleman said. “SB 1083 takes away that incentive to cheat by making it a felony to commit election fraud.”

SB 1083 must receive an affirmative committee vote before moving to the Senate floor for debate.

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