

SB 218- “revise provisions associated with residency for voting purposes”

My wife and I are residents of Minnehaha County. We support SB 218 because we believe there needs to be clear defining principles in our state law as to what "Resident" means especially for the purpose of voting in our elections.

This bill clearly states a “resident” means an individual who maintains an actual fixed permanent dwelling, establishment, or any other abode to which the person returns after a period of absence where the individual lives and usually sleeps, for at least thirty consecutive days. An individual who is a resident of this state remains a resident during an absence from this state, if the individual intends to return to this state after a period of absence. An individual may only be a resident of one place.”

This definition is reasonable, straightforward, unambiguous.

During our summer canvassing in Sioux Falls Senate Districts with current Voter Roll data, we talked to hotel Managers who told us, “People come stay a night at our hotel. They take an invoice, go to the DMV get their SD Driver’s licenses, license their vehicles in SD at a lower fee, register to vote. Then they go back to where they really live”.

From tracking the Absentee Mail-in/UOCAVA ballots in 2024 elections, we’ve identified many 1,000s of such non-residents registered using PMBs, campgrounds, hotels address voting in our state, county, municipalities affecting the elections results.

One such election was in D15. In D15 1/3 of the 23,000 registered voters claim on voter roll they live in one of those commercial business addresses. In that District 15 the state House race in the general election was separated by 7 votes. During the recount, several of us were there when the Election Judges verbally compared the original 417 UOCAVA mail-in ballots to the recreated ballots that run through the tabulators. Most of those UOCAVA voters are registered using PMB addresses. When the Judges call out the votes for that race, the UOCAVA votes were called 9 Democrat votes for every 1 Republican vote. Those votes changed that race outcome.

The current ambiguous definition of “resident” in our state facilitates such voter and candidates disenfranchisement.

We believe by passing SB 218 the definition of South Dakota “Resident” will be made clear. It will be a big step forward in securing our elections for bona fide South Dakotans.

We ask you please vote “Yes” to send SB 218 to the Senate floor with “Do Pass”.

Thank you

John & Mary Lou Kunnari

Minnehaha County / D11 / Sioux Falls, SD