
Pre-lesson Homework Assignment

Read U.S. Code: Title 42 and answer the questions that follow the reading. Be prepared to share your responses in class.


1973gg. Findings and purposes
(a) Findings
The Congress finds that—
(1) the right of citizens of the United States to vote is a fundamental right;
(2) it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right; and
(3) discriminatory and unfair registration laws and procedures can have a direct and damaging effect on voter participation in elections for Federal office and disproportionately harm voter participation by various groups, including racial minorities.

Subchapter I-A Enforcement of Voting Rights
1973b. Suspension of the use of tests or devices in determining eligibility to vote.
(c) “Test or device” defined
1 The phrase “test or device” shall mean any requirement that a person as a prerequisite for voting or registration for voting
(1) demonstrate the ability to read, write, understand, or interpret any matter,
(2) demonstrate any educational achievement or his knowledge of any particular subject,
(3) possess good moral character, or
(4) prove his qualifications by the voucher of registered voters or members of any other class.
(f) Congressional findings of voting discrimination against language minorities; prohibition of English-only elections; other remedial measures

1973gg-3. Simultaneous application for voter registration and application for motor vehicle driver’s license
(a) In general
   (1) Each State motor vehicle driver’s license application (including any renewal application) submitted to the appropriate State motor vehicle authority under State law shall serve as an application for voter registration with respect to elections for Federal office unless the applicant fails to sign the voter registration application.

1973gg-6. Requirements with respect to administration of voter registration
(a) In general
   In the administration of voter registration for elections for Federal office, each State shall—
      (1) ensure that any eligible applicant is registered to vote in an election—
         (A) in the case of registration with a motor vehicle application under section 1973gg-3 of this title, if the valid voter registration form of the applicant is submitted to the appropriate State motor vehicle authority not later than the lesser of 30 days, or the period provided by State law, before the date of the election;
         (B) in the case of registration by mail under section 1973gg-4 of this title, if the valid voter registration form of the applicant is postmarked not later than the lesser of 30 days, or the period provided by State law, before the date of the election;
         (C) in the case of registration at a voter registration agency, if the valid voter registration form of the applicant is accepted at the voter registration agency not later than the lesser of 30 days, or the period provided by State law, before the date of the election; and
         (D) in any other case, if the valid voter registration form of the applicant is received by the appropriate State election official not later than the lesser of 30 days, or the period provided by State law, before the date of the election;

Source: Cornell University Law School, Legal Information Institute

Voter registration activists believed that government implementation of more aggressive registration proposals would increase voter turnout, which had been steadily declining over the previous decades.

Questions

1. In 1997, why do you think the U.S. Congress deemed the passage of U.S. Code: Title 42 as a necessary extension to the National Voter Registration Act?
2. Did you notice any differences between U.S. Code: Title 42 and the Motor Voter Act?
3. What additional purposes were addressed by U.S. Code: Title 42?
4. Locate and name three places in your area where qualified citizens can register to vote.