



Group urges legislators to approve vote day registration

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By [O.Kay Henderson](#)

The leader of a national group is urging Iowa legislators to allow Iowans to walk into the polls and vote, without registering days in advance. Stuart Comstock-Gay, director of the Demos' Democracy Program, says it's a reform that encourages more people to vote.

"We've had reduced turn-out over the years," Comstock-Gay says. "This is a way to get more people to show up." The neighboring states of Minnesota and Wisconsin allow voters to register at the polls on Election Day. "On average, Election Day-registration states have a turn-out that's 10 to 12 points higher than in non Election Day-registration states," he says. "They find that young people find it easier vote, that people who've moved since the last election find it easier to vote and that they've had almost no problems."

But critics say allowing folks to walk into their polling place and register on the day of the election puts added pressure on poll workers and would make it easier for people to cast votes in contests in which they should not be voting. Comstock-Gay says the evidence runs counter to that. He argues there's no more voter fraud in states that have Election Day registration than in states that don't. "Maine, for instance, has had Election Day registration since 1973 and has not had a single case of voter fraud that's tied to Election Day registration," Comstock-Gay says.

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