

March 18, 1981

LB 446

CLERK: Senator Clark voting aye.

SENATOR CLARK: Record the vote.

CLERK: 29 ayes, 0 nays on adoption of Senator Kahle's amendment, Mr. President.

SENATOR CLARK: The amendment passed.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment I have is offered by Senator Burrows. (See pages 994-995 of the Journal.)

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Burrows.

SENATOR BURROWS: Mr. Chairman, members of the body, this amendment has been passed around the floor. Everyone should have a copy of it and the amendment would provide for registration of voters on election day but not for their voting on that same election day. They would have to wait for the next election. I think this year we have a special reason for going with this because with the rising energy costs and the national energy crisis I think it is extremely important that we move to a most efficient energy system in making the ballot available to the people. Registration of voters was never meant, at least philosophically, to prevent people from voting but merely to keep the system honest. Now any cost that would go with this measure would be related to the participation. I think they would be very small and insignificant because much of it would be just keeping the people busy at the polls, giving them a few additional duties to take care of where they probably would be standing around anyhow. And in those cases where it would add any stress to the polls the cost would be in direct proportion with the additional voters we have registered. It does not allow them to vote on that particular day but it would provide registration out across the counties, in the townships and in the polling places with really a minimum of cost. When they have to send people out to shopping centers it costs gas, it costs people's time to sit there during the time and this sort of move would not be nearly as productive for the cost of it as just providing it on election day. If they get behind on election day what they can do and the bill does not prohibit them from allowing a person to make out a card, fill it out and then follow up on the detail and the problems that are involved there in the county clerk's office after the election. So when you get down to it, the issue is whether you believe in having election laws that provide a maximum participation of the electorate or whether you want to see them used to a degree to stifle the number of voters and we have argued always that the registration of people was merely to keep