

to say that it was a pleasure to go with the voter registration bill before the Revenue Committee. It was sort of a unique experience. There were many proponents of the bill at the hearing and no opponents. There were a couple who came in in a neutral position, Jack Mills from the Association of County Officials, and the Department of Revenue for informational purposes, I think, the department was there. But what this legislation would do would be to require the State Revenue Department to include two mail-in registration postcards in all state income tax booklets, in every odd-numbered year. And, by that, I mean in the year in which you are doing the taxes for the odd-numbered year so that would be for this coming year, 1992, we'll be doing the 1991 taxes so that's when this registration card...or these registration cards will go out. The legislation is modeled after a similar bill in Minnesota. And, according to the publication, Election Administration Reports, Minnesota has enrolled a 100,000 voters since the program was first implemented for the tax year 1988. Joseph Manske, who is the Director of Elections in that state, for the Secretary of State, says it is one of the most efficient methods of registering voters and keeping registration addresses current. And I guess I want to stress that. Not only would this bill bring in, hopefully, new voter registrations but it would really help with the business of keeping registrations more current. And this bill does differ from the Minnesota bill in that the mail-in registration cards all are mailed directly to the county clerks or election commissioners in each county rather than having them mailed to the Secretary of State, as in Minnesota. And, as I explained before, if they happen to go back to the Department of Revenue, the department will then forward them to the Secretary of State. Mail-in postcards could be modeled after the generic Redfield voter registration cards now used by most counties in the state and that's the one I held up earlier and explained to you. All counties have to accept these cards even though several counties now have their own mail-in forms. There is a disturbing trend of fewer and fewer people voting nationwide. The last major obstacle to voting is registration. Studies have shown that the main reason people don't register is that they don't know where or how to register and that may seem a little ridiculous in this day and age when we try to make registration available, at shopping malls, at grocery stores, at just...at jails and bread lines, just everywhere. But, remember, that we are constantly having a new flow of voters, younger voters come into the system. So we're not always making the necessary efforts to educate our citizens.