



STATE BOARD OF ELECTIONS
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GARY O. BARTLETT
Executive Director

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October 8, 2009

Honorable Secretary Robert M. Gates
Office of the Secretary
Department Of Defense
1400 Defense Pentagon,
Washington DC 20301-1400

Re: NVRA Designation

Dear Secretary Gates,

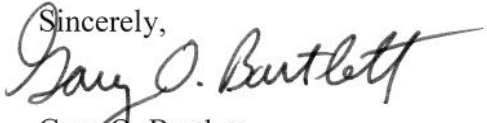
As the chief elections official of North Carolina, it is my obligation to ensure that all eligible citizens are afforded the opportunity to register and vote. My office has undertaken great efforts recently to fulfill that duty, but there are still eligible citizens not being offered the opportunity to vote. In order to expand the opportunities for persons to register, I request that the Department of Defense, in its operation of military pay/personnel offices in North Carolina, agree to be designated as a voter registration agency. This designation would allow military citizens helped by your agency to be offered the same voter registration services given by state and county public services agencies to the persons they serve.

Section 7 of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) directs that "[e]ach State shall designate agencies for the registration of voters in elections for Federal office." 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5(a)(1). Federal offices may be so designated, with their agreement. 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5(a)(3)(B)(ii). The law also directs that all federal departments "shall, to the greatest extent practicable, cooperate with the states in carrying out [agency-based voter registration]." 42 U.S.C. § 1973gg-5(b). In addition, Executive Order 12926, promulgated by President Clinton in 1994, directs federal departments to agree to any request to be designated as a voter registration agency, provided that such a designation is consistent with the department's legal authority and availability of funds. Exec. Order No. 12,926, 59 Fed. Reg. 47,227 (Sept. 12, 1994).

Agreeing to designation of your department in its operation of military pay/personnel offices located in North Carolina as voter registration agencies would be entirely consistent with your Department's mission of serving the needs of military personnel. These voter registration

opportunities can be extended at minimal cost and the North Carolina State Board of Elections would support your department by providing NVRA voter registration supplies, training, and advice.

I look forward to hearing from you on your requested NVRA designation.

Sincerely,

Gary O. Bartlett
Executive Director
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