

18 October 2017 (updated and corrected)

SD64DFL Outreach Committee Report

I've been coordinating a new initiative related to voter registration with a group of interested SD64 DFLers. Most, but not all of us, live in the Highland Park area (SD64 B). The initiative, as we envision it so far, has several activities:

1. Legislative support for a bill that will be introduced during the 2018 session to restore voting status to those who have committed felonies and served their sentence but have NOT yet completed parole or probation. This is a renewed effort to Restore the Vote in collaboration with a coalition of other statewide organizations that could impact as many as 51,000 individuals currently not "off paper" and therefore, ineligible to vote. The incarceration demographics indicate those most impacted are lower-income people of color. The lead organization for the coalition will be the Minnesota ACLU.
2. Our working group is researching several questions with the Secretary of State's Office and through SD64 B House Representative Dave Pinto's office. **We will support the re-introduction of HF 951 for which Rep. Pinto is a co-author. Rep. Erin Murphy also is a co-author. Because the bill was introduced in 2017, it remains alive for the 2018 part of the legislative biennium.**
3. Once a companion bill has been introduced in the Senate, we will work to provide educational information throughout SD64 to support passage of the bill.
4. Another activity will be, using information from the SOS office about the current law, to become better educated about how those who are "off paper" might be informed about the voter registration process and to be newly registered to vote. We also are attempting to find out how many residents of SD64 might be potentially impacted by soliciting demographic ZIP Code data of incarcerated individuals based on previous residence, those still subject to probation or parole, as well as those now "off paper", to the extent these data are not protected under MN Data Practices law.
5. We anticipate this as an Outreach activity targeted primarily to rental properties in SD64 along West 7th Street and similar locations. We envision providing educational information via doorknocking or through owners/management companies to reach those "off paper" and, eventually, if legislation passes, information directly to the county probation offices or through the probation system to inform individuals how to restore their voting rights and to get them registered to vote.

I've hosted three meetings in the last month, with an attendance of 26 at the kick-off. A core group of ten will be contacting previous Outreach Committee members and the list of new SD64 DFLers that I've gathered during 2017 to determine how broad the support for this effort might be.

Anyone who is interested in being part of this Outreach initiative, or who knows someone who might be interested, should contact me at lburton612@aol.com

Lyn Burton

SD64DFL Outreach Committee