

COWKILLER OWENS - FORD

Whereas, the most precious right of every citizen is the right to vote, since it enables him to protect all his other rights, and

Whereas, the denial of this right to most university students who reside in the city is a problem which has plagued Cambridge in the past, and

Whereas, recent actions of the Cambridge Election Commission have brought this problem to the fore again, and

Whereas, House bill 3279 would provide a satisfactory solution to this problem by providing for a system of uniform registration by affidavit,

Therefore be it

Resolved, that the Cambridge City Council declares itself in favor of House bill 3279, An Act providing for uniform procedures for voter registration, and calls upon the Massachusetts General Court speedily to enact it, and that the City Clerk is instructed to transmit notice of this endorsement to all members of the Cambridge legislative delegation and to all members of the Joint Committee on Election Laws.

SUMMARY OF PROVISIONS OF H. 3279

H. 3279, An Act providing for uniform procedures for voter registration, was filed by Representative John A. Businger (D-Brookline) and is co-sponsored by Americans for Democratic Action, Senator Joseph Timilty (D-Boston), and Representatives Ronald Pina (D-New Bedford) and Charles Flaherty (D-Cambridge). As redrafted, the bill provides that except in cases of physical disability, a person seeking to register must appear in person before a registrar or assistant registrar and make an affidavit of registration, which includes his name, address of residence, length of residence, place and date of birth, and last previous place of residence. The affiant signs the affidavit under the pains and penalties of perjury.

The affiant becomes registered if it appears to the registrars that he is qualified on the basis of the facts set forth in the affidavit. Otherwise, after giving him an opportunity to remedy any defects in the affidavit, they may decline to permit his registration, informing the affiant of the reason. If the registrars have probable cause to believe that the affiant has made a false statement, they may set forth the reasons for their belief in a complaint and summon the affiant to a formal hearing, where he may be represented by counsel and cross-examine witnesses.

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The Harvard Crimson

VOLUME CLVIII. No. 9

CAMBRIDGE, MASS., FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1973

Officials Attend Student Appeal To City Election Commissioners

By LEO F.J. WILKING

Under the watchful eyes of several state and city officials, the Cambridge Board of Elections held appeal hearing yesterday for two people—one of them a student—who had been rejected in previous attempts to register to vote.

Among those present at the hearing were Rep. John Businger (D-Brookline), a member of the Legislature's Committee on Election Laws; James McDaniel, an assistant in the Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's office; James Caragianes, chairman of the Democratic City Committee; and David E. Sullivan, coordinator of the Cambridge Committee for Voter Registration.

All four members of the Board of Elections were in attendance, but Election Commissioner Edward J. Samp Jr. conducted most of the questioning at both hearings.

The first case was that of Zachary H. Levine, an MIT sophomore, who was told when he first tried to register this summer that he had insufficient proof of legal domicile in Cambridge.

Probing questions

Samp probed Levine on such matters as his driver's license, draft card, income tax returns, back accounts, and future plans. The following are excerpts from their conversation:

Q. "When did you decide that you wanted to make Cambridge your home, apart from being a student here?"

A. "I would say in September 1972—that would be the best answer."

Q. "What did you do at that time to make yourself a resident, that you would not have done if you were just a student?"

A. "I find that distinction hard to make."

Q. "To what extent did you move to Cambridge?"

A. "Most of my personal belongings, uh, bank accounts, my driver's license."

Later, Samp queried Levine on his ties to his parents' home in Buffalo, N.Y.:

Q. "Do your parents still live in Buffalo?"

A. "Yes."

Q. "Do you have a place reserved for you in the home there?"

A. "Yes. I'd like to point out that we have an extremely large house, about 14 rooms."

Q. "To what extent are you self-supporting?"

A. (After some figuring with pad and pencil). "About one-eighth."

At the end of the hearing Samp advised Levine that he would be notified by mail of the Board's decision in his case.

The second hearing involved Allegra
(continued on page 6)

Voters

(continued from page 1)

Printz, whose earlier attempt to register had failed because all the bills relating to her apartment and thus proving her physical presence in Cambridge are in her roommate's name.

Samp told Printz that all she needs is a notarized statement to that effect from her roommate.

Asked for his comment on the hearings after their conclusion, Businger answered "Ridiculous." He added that he has a bill presently under consideration by the House that would establish a uniform set of questions for potential registrants throughout the state.

Businger said his bill would require the person seeking to register to swear "under the pains and penalties of perjury" that he was actually living at a given residence. This would satisfy all requirements of domicile, according to Businger.

McDaniel said the Attorney General's office would "certainly be interested in his report on the Board's procedures, but declined to speculate on what action, if any, Attorney General Robert H. Quinn might take.

Sullivan told Businger and McDaniel that about 50 students have been rejected by the Board of Elections since June and that in his opinion Levine would also fail to satisfy the election commissioners' strict residency requirements.

"It's about time the Cambridge Election Commission stopped discriminating against students and register anyone living in Cambridge," Sullivan said.

Dean Epps reportedly has requested the Board of Elections to schedule registration sessions at Lehman Hall and Harkness Commons between October 8 and 12.

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Book

Woburn copies

Send to Comd delegation
and Joint Comm on
Electron Force



City of Cambridge

10.

IN CITY COUNCIL

October 1, 1973

Councillors Graham and Owens

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In City Council, October 1, 1973.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 7 members.

Attest:- Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

A true copy,

ATTEST:-

CITY CLERK.

Paul E. Healy,
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City of Cambridge

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In City Council, October 1, 1973.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.
Attest:- Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

A true copy,

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Paul E. Healy
CITY CLERK

Paul E. Healy,
City Clerk.

Order # 10

389

C. Graham and Owens City Council favors
House Bill 3279 re: Voter registration
by Affidavit.

In City Council
October 1, 1973

*Copies sent to the
Massachusetts Legislative
Delegation & the Joint
Committee on Election
Law.*