



Reform Vote Law: Ogilvie

BY JOHN ELMER

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—SPRINGFIELD, Ill., Sept. 12
—Gov. Ogilvie today renewed his demand for full scale election law reform, including a state board of elections to supervise local boards and prevent vote fraud.

Ogilvie also called for "prosecution to be leveled on a broad front against all persons responsible" for widespread vote fraud in Chicago which has been documented by the Chicago Tribune's Task Force.

The Republican governor criticized Democratic legislators for holding up major election reform bills, including his own, during the last session. He urged voters to remember when they go to the polls on Nov. 7 to elect senators and representatives that election reform will be a major subject of the 1973 legislative session.

Applauds Blair's Action

Ogilvie pledged that he will make election reform a "must" part of his legislative program for next year if re-elected in November.

The governor applauded House Speaker W. Robert Blair [R., Park Forest] for naming a special legislative committee to probe vote fraud, saying its hearings will lay the groundwork for corrective legislation.

Since the fall legislative session is expected to be a brief one and will not convene until after the November election, little legislative action is expected on the election reform issue until next year.

Ogilvie challenged Democrats to join him in a "top to bottom" restructuring of the state's election laws.

Presses for Own Proposal

He called for passage of his own election reform plan which was introduced in the legislature almost a year ago.

That proposal would implement the 1970 Illinois constitution's mandate that a state board of elections be established to supervise administration of the state's registration and election laws. The legislature has yet to act on that constitutional provision, altho it has been on the books since July 1, 1971.

Ogilvie's plan calls for a state elections board consisting of the governor, secretary

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of state, attorney general, treasurer, and Republican and Democratic party state chairmen. If that alignment gave one party a majority, the governor would appoint enough members from names suggested by the minority party to balance the board.

To prevent a political deadlock and assure representation for independents, the governor then would appoint an additional member—someone who had not voted in a party primary for the preceding six years.

Because a new board has not yet been established, the state electoral board established under the old constitu-

tion is still functioning as the official agency on election issues. Because some members of that group are candidates themselves, the validity of that board's decisions are being challenged in court.

Several other proposals to establish a state elections board still are pending, including a compromise Senate measure which would also streamline the state's election code.

Ogilvie praised the vote fraud probe conducted by The Tribune Task Force, saying it was "a public service, not only to Illinois politicians, but to the voters whose votes have been cancelled by vote stealing."