

Military personnel and overseas civilians face a variety of challenges to their participation as voters in U.S. elections, despite repeated congressional and state efforts to facilitate their ability to vote. These include difficulty in registering abroad, frequent address changes, slow mail delivery or ballots and ballot applications that never arrive, difficulty in obtaining information about candidates or issues, the inability to comply with notarization or verification procedures, or the voter's failure to properly comply with non - essential requirements for absentee materials. The federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986 (UOCAVA) and Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act of 2009 (MOVE), as well as the various state efforts, have not been wholly effective in overcoming difficulties that these voters face. The federal laws do not encompass state and local elections. Further, American elections are conducted at the state and local levels under procedures that vary dramatically by jurisdiction, and many are conducted independent of the federal elections to which UOCAVA and the MOVE Act do apply. This lack of uniformity, and lack of application of the federal statutes to state and local elections, complicates efforts to more fully enfranchise these voters.

The new UMOVA uses and builds upon the key requirements of UOCAVA and MOVE, and extends the important protections and benefits of these acts to voting in applicable state and local elections. UMOVA will help to facilitate compliance with the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act of 1986 (UOCAVA) and Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment Act of 2009 (MOVE), and help to more fully and effectively enfranchise our military personnel and overseas civilians.

The Department supports the language presented in H5454 to adopt the Uniform Military and Overseas Voters Act in Connecticut.

Respectfully,

Harold Cooney

--

Harold E. Cooney  
Colonel, US Army (Retired)  
Regional Liaison - Northeast Region (CT, NH, NJ, NY, MA, ME, PA, RI, VT)  
Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense  
ODASD (Military Community and Family Policy)  
O: 610-442-5880  
[www.USA4MilitaryFamilies.org](http://www.USA4MilitaryFamilies.org)  
[harold.cooney@gmail.com](mailto:harold.cooney@gmail.com)