OLR Bill Analysis
sHB 5816

AN ACT CONCERNING ABSENTEE BALLOTS.

SUMMARY

This bill eliminates the two envelope system for returning voted absentee ballots and transfers the required information to one absentee ballot envelope. Currently, an absentee ballot must be placed in a sealable envelope (i.e., the inner envelope), which is then sealed and returned to the municipal clerk, with any other required documentation, in another envelope (i.e., the outer envelope).

Under the bill, the new single envelope must (1) contain the ballot and any required documentation and (2) have the same information currently required on the inner and outer envelopes.

The bill also makes minor, technical, and conforming changes related to eliminating the two envelope system.

EFFECTIVE DATE: Upon passage

REQUIRED INFORMATION

The bill requires the new envelope to have the same information that current law requires for both the inner and outer envelopes. As under current law for the outer envelope, the bill requires the (1) municipal clerk to inscribe his or her official address for the ballot’s return on the envelope before issuing the ballot and envelope and (2) envelope to be serially-numbered.

The envelope must be sealable and have printed on its face:

1. a form with the following statements:

   “I hereby state under the penalties of false statement in absentee
balloting that I am eligible to vote at the primary, election or referendum in the municipality in which this absentee ballot is to be cast and that I expect to be unable to appear at my polling place during the hours of voting at such primary, election or referendum for one or more of the following reasons: (A) My active service in the armed forces; (B) my absence from the town in which I am eligible to vote during all of the hours of voting; (C) my illness or physical disability; (D) the tenets of my religion which forbid secular activity on the day of the primary, election or referendum; or (E) my duties as a primary, election or referendum official.

Date ....

.... (Signature)”;

2. an endorsement with the words “OFFICIAL ABSENTEE BALLOT”;

3. blank spaces for the name; voting residence by street and number; voting district; the date of the primary, election, or referendum for the ballot to be cast; and, if the ballot is for a primary, the name of the party holding the primary; and

4. a notice, sufficient to warn anyone handling the ballot, of the restrictions on who may possess or return the ballot and the restrictions and penalties for completing or executing absentee ballots.

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable
Yea 16 Nay 0 (03/29/2019)