
OLR Bill Analysis

sHB 5311

AN ACT CONCERNING THE COUNTING OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS.

SUMMARY

Existing law allows a voter to request a new absentee ballot by returning the previous absentee ballot or, under penalty of false statement, by signing a statement as to why he or she cannot return the previous ballot. Voters may also be given additional ballots from another person or due to a clerical error or omission on the first ballot provided by the clerk.

In any case, if multiple valid absentee ballots are returned by the same voter, this bill would require the ballot last received by the town clerk to be counted on election day. Current law requires the ballot last issued by the town clerk (as determined by serial number) to be counted. Under the bill and existing law, any other absentee ballots must be marked as rejected and not counted.

The bill makes a conforming change by eliminating an exception for armed service members to require counting the absentee ballot received with the latest postmark.

Existing law also authorizes voters to drop off their absentee ballots in secure drop boxes, which are checked regularly by town clerks. The bill specifies that clerks must check the drop boxes at the close of the polls for every election, primary, or referendum and pick up the absentee ballots inside.

EFFECTIVE DATE: July 1, 2024

COMMITTEE ACTION

Government Administration and Elections Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute

Yea 19 Nay 0 (03/26/2024)