

HCS HB 1966 -- ELECTIONS AND CERTAIN VOTERS (Diehl)

COMMITTEE OF ORIGIN: Committee on Elections

This substitute changes the laws regarding absent uniform services and overseas voters and elections.

ABSENT UNIFORMED SERVICES AND OVERSEAS VOTERS

The Secretary of State is required to establish procedures for absent uniformed services voters and overseas voters to request voter registration applications and absentee ballot applications. At least one form of electronic communication for use by absent uniformed services and overseas voters must be designated for requesting voter registration applications and absentee ballots. These voters may request and designate a preferred method of electronic transmission of these applications and ballots or request receipt by mail. The Secretary of State must also develop, in coordination with local election authorities, a free access system by which these voters may determine whether an absentee ballot has been received by the appropriate election authority.

A sufficient quantity of paper ballots for federal elections must be printed and available for these voters within 45 days prior to the election. Registration applications and paper ballots cannot be rejected by an election authority because of any restriction on the paper or envelope type. Missouri is required to use the special write-in absentee ballot provided in Section 115.292, RSMo, for all elections for federal office as authorized by federal law.

ELECTIONS

The substitute:

(1) Requires each election authority to establish one advance voting center in each senatorial district in the state or at least one center in each county in a senatorial district if there is more than one county in a senatorial district. Any registered voter may vote by advance ballot in person at any election for federal or statewide offices. Advance voting will begin on the second Saturday prior to the election until the Wednesday immediately preceding the election, excluding Sundays, using absentee ballots and those procedures. No reason for voting an absentee ballot will be required as is currently required to vote by absentee ballot. All current procedures for casting and counting absentee ballots and the appointment of election judges and polling places will apply to advance voting. The Secretary of State and each local election authority must provide adequate

public notice of the advance voting centers and voting times including a posting in their respective offices or on each of their web sites. All costs associated with advance voting centers will be reimbursed by the state. If there is no appropriation, an election authority must not conduct advance voting;

(2) Specifies that a person seeking to vote in a public election must establish his or her qualifications as a United States citizen lawfully residing in this state by presenting a form of personal identification containing a photograph of the individual to election officials. All costs incurred by an election authority to implement the photo identification requirements will be reimbursed by the state. If there is no appropriation, the election authority must not enforce the photo identification requirement;

(3) Allows an individual to vote by casting a provisional ballot after signing an affidavit if he or she does not possess a required form of personal identification because of the inability to pay for a birth certificate or other documentation necessary to obtain the identification;

(4) Requires the state to provide at no cost at least one form of personal identification required to vote to a qualified citizen who does not already possess the required identification and desires the identification in order to vote; and

(5) Repeals the provision regarding disabled or elderly persons obtaining a nondriver's license photo identification through a mobile processing system operated by the Department of Revenue.

If any portion of the substitute is held invalid for any reason, the entire substitute will be invalidated.

The substitute will become effective upon voter approval of a constitutional amendment that authorizes the General Assembly to require the photo identification, advance voting, and voter registration requirements by general law.

FISCAL NOTE: Estimated Effect on General Revenue Fund of an income of \$0 or Unknown to a cost of Unknown greater than \$7,047,175 in FY 2011, an income of \$0 or Unknown to a cost of Unknown greater than \$6,612,699 in FY 2012, and an income of \$0 or Unknown to a cost of Unknown greater than \$8,432,091 in FY 2013. Estimated Income on Other State Funds of \$0 or Unknown in FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013.