

# SENATE BILL REPORT

## SB 5443

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As of February 3, 2003

**Title:** An act relating to absentee ballots.

**Brief Description:** Revising the requirements for absentee ballots.

**Sponsors:** Senators Roach, Kastama and Schmidt.

**Brief History:**

**Committee Activity:** Government Operations & Elections: 2/5/03.

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### SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

**Staff:** Ronda Larson (786-7429)

**Background:** When voting, whether at the polls or by absentee, every voter must provide his or her signature. Election officers then verify that the signature matches the one on file with the auditor's office.

The procedure for voting absentee requires the voter to put the completed ballot in a security envelope, seal the security envelope, and put it inside a mailing envelope. The voter stamps the mailing envelope and puts it in the mail. The signature line that verifies the voter's qualifications is located on the mailing envelope. Consequently, the signature is visible to anyone handling the mail.

**Summary of Bill:** The location of the signature line that election officials use to verify an absentee voter's qualifications is moved from its current location on the outer mailing envelope to the inner security envelope. The voter's signature is no longer visible to those handling the mail.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.