

FINAL BILL REPORT

SB 5565

C 245 L 05

Synopsis as Enacted

Brief Description: Informing out-of-state, overseas, and service voters of rights and procedures.

Sponsors: Senators Schmidt, Kastama, Weinstein, Roach, Keiser, Sheldon, Shin, Rockefeller, Oke and Kohl-Welles.

Senate Committee on Government Operations & Elections

House Committee on State Government Operations & Accountability

Background: The Secretary of State provides county auditors with envelopes and instructions for out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and service voters.

Summary: The Secretary of State must provide the following information, at a minimum, to out-of-state voters, overseas voters, and service voters:

- return postage of the voted ballot is free;
- the date written on the return envelope by the voter is considered the date of mailing;
- the envelope must be signed by election day;
- the signed declaration on the envelope is the equivalent of voter registration;
- faxed voted ballots are allowed if the voter agrees to waive secrecy;
- faxed documents must be accompanied by an original signed ballot by the day of election certification, which is fifteen days after the election; and
- ballots by electronic mail are available under the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act, which is administered at the county level, and from the Secretary of State's website. Both services provide a ballot to voters by e-mail. The voter may print the ballot, complete it, and return it by mail.

The required information can be provided on the ballot envelope or on an instruction sheet. The return postage is free if the envelope is mailed through the United States postal service, the United States armed forces postal service, or the postal service of a United States foreign embassy.

Votes on Final Passage:

Senate	48	0	
House	96	0	(House amended)
Senate	39	0	(Senate concurred)

Effective: July 24, 2005