



Alaska State Legislature

Senate Majority Web: www.akrepublicans.org

Sponsor: Senator Gene Therriault
Current Version: Free CC CSSB 36
Contact: Dave Stancliff, 465-4797

Fact Sheet for: Senate Bill 36

Short Title: ABSENTEE BALLOTS

Summary:

- Requires that requests for absentee ballots by mail be submitted directly by the absentee voter to the division of elections.
- Prohibits a person from encouraging or assisting in a violation of this requirement.
- Requires adoption of regulations to:
 - Restrict requested information to only that required by the Division of Elections on ballot applications sent out by other entities.
 - Ensure all information be concealed in transit.
 - Require the Director of the Division of Elections to approve ballot request forms not sent out by the Division.
- Establishes a penalty of Class C felony for repeat convictions of interfering with voting in the second degree, and a Class A misdemeanor for first offenses.

Benefits:

- Ensures the confidentiality and integrity of the by-mail absentee ballot application process.
- Accelerates the absentee ballot application process.
- Saves time for Division of Election staff.

Background:

- This bill addresses an issue that arose during the 2004 election in which the Alaska Democratic Party mailed out absentee ballot applications with the response card addressed to the Democratic Party, rather than the Division of Elections. The party would then forward the applications to the Division. Voters were not alerted that the application requested personal information that could be seen and used by others. This information normally is handled confidentially by the Division of Elections. Additionally, approximately 1,000 of the applications had been altered, possibly after they had been signed and mailed by the voter, requiring time-consuming verification by the Division.