

Authorizing Electronic Ballots

Sponsor Statement for CSSB 258

"An Act relating to the use of electronic ballots."

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[CS Senate Bill 258](#), The Frank Haas Act, removes the requirement that ballots be printed on paper, and allows the [Division of Elections](#) to purchase electronic, paperless balloting equipment. The bill also requires that electronic balloting equipment purchased by the Division after the effective date allow voters with disabilities, including those who are blind or visually impaired, to cast a secret, independent, and verifiable ballot.

An important aspect of this change in statute is that it will make it possible for blind or visually impaired voters to cast their ballots independently. Currently, those voters must depend on a sighted person to accompany them in the voting booth, read the ballot out loud, and assist them in casting their vote.

The passage of CSSB 258 begins the important process of phasing in new balloting equipment that will enable more Alaskans to vote privately.

Frank Haas was a long-time Alaskan advocate for the visually impaired. CSSB 258 has been named in his honor, and is a continuation of his efforts to allow the visually impaired to cast their ballots privately.