

# **HB 115**

## **An Act establishing a permanent absentee voting option for qualified voters**

HB 115 will streamline the absentee voting process for Alaskans by giving voters the option to register for permanent absentee voting status for state elections. Once a voter is on the permanent absentee voter roll, they won't have to fill out an absentee request form for each election cycle. Instead, an absentee ballot will be automatically sent to them by the Division of Elections.

HB 115 does not change anyone's voting rights. Voters can still request a one-time absentee ballot, just as they can now. Voters can still vote at their regular voting places if they so choose. HB 115 makes voting more convenient for voters. It also streamlines the administrative process for the Division of Elections.

HB 115 does not change any of the security or evaluation procedures that are already in place in Alaska statutes for handling absentee ballots; all of the provisions currently in place for absentee ballots would apply to permanent absentee ballots. HB 115 includes a provision for removal from the permanent absentee roll if the Division of Elections receives notice that mail sent to the voter's address is undeliverable.

HB 115 does not apply to local elections. It only applies only to primary, general and special elections, and any election for which the state has the responsibility for the conduct of the election.

HB 115 has an effective date of January 1, 2010 due to the implementation of a new voter registration system in May of 2010. The new system will be able to handle permanent absentee voting, according to the director of the Division of Elections.

Thank you for your consideration.

Representative Bob Buch