



Senate Bill 70

Presentation to the Senate State Affairs Committee

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Division of Elections

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Division of Elections Mission

To ensure public confidence in the electoral process by administering voter registration and elections with the highest level of professional standards, integrity, security, accuracy, and fairness.

Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) Elections

- Regional Educational Attendance Area (REAA) – an educational area that is established in an unorganized borough of the state
- Each REAA is governed by a locally elected regional school board
- REAA elections are held annually
- DOE oversees the entire election process for REAAs, including candidate filings, voter information dissemination, and the conduct of the elections themselves
- SB 70 proposes to shift REAA elections to occur biennially in odd-numbered years and change board members' terms

Residence of Voter AS 15.05.020

- The residence of a person is that place in which the person's habitation is fixed, and to which, whenever absent, the person has the intention to return
- A change of residence is made only by the act of removal joined with the intent to remain in another place
- A person does not lose residence if the person leaves home and goes to another country, state, or place in this state for temporary purposes only and with the intent of returning
- A person does not gain residence in any place to which the person comes without the present intention to establish a permanent dwelling at that place
- SB 70 proposes to remove the "intent to return" language for purposes of determining a voter's residence

PFD Automatic Voter Registration

- Beginning in 2016, eligible PFD applicants who otherwise meet voter qualifications are automatically registered to vote
- The PFD division sends this information to DOE
- DOE sends notices to all applicants who will either become newly registered voters or will have their Alaska residence address updated from their PFD application
- Applicants must respond within 30 days to opt out; if not, they are automatically registered to vote
- Newly registered voters will be registered as undeclared
- All voters who are newly registered or have updated their address will receive a new voter card in the mail
- SB 70 proposes to eliminate PFD automatic voter registration

PFD Automatic Voter Registration

		Mailed Notices				Opt-Outs			Registered				
PFD Year	Valid Applications	Potential New Voters	Existing Voters ¹	Ambiguous Voters	Total	Potential New Voters	Existing Voters ²	Total	New Voters	Existing Voters ³	New Voters Who Voted ⁴	Print and Mail Costs	Total Annual Cost
2024	394,862	10,913	65,359	278	76,550	1,937	6,047	7,984	9,056	373,260	2,639	\$132,412.51	\$246,922.94
2023	394,872	11,007	68,272	263	79,542	1,974	5,633	7,607	9,138	376,361	2,256	\$101,494.36	\$228,220.62
2022	395,109	10,344	71,171	180	81,695	1,973	5,710	7,683	8,441	374,183	2,786	\$93,482.27	\$178,158.23
2021	388,030	9,133	67,418	497	77,048	2,148	6,298	8,446	7,005	368,832	1,572	\$83,116.26	\$195,448.37
2020	395,314	16,379	80,240	524	97,143	2,982	7,105	10,087	13,436	368,811	5,565	\$120,792.44	\$225,456.89
2019	404,793	22,369	78,881	534	101,784	4,989	10,100	15,089	17,507	330,781	6,203	\$117,062.49	\$280,730.53
2018	359,461	34,728	99,660	5,404	139,792	5,307	9,658	14,965	29,973	302,595	10,851	\$164,995.29	\$261,796.21
2017	76,171	25,238	50,768	166	76,172	9,783	21,500	31,283	14,906	10,880	4,486	\$61,148.71	\$140,931.88

Numbers generated as of 01/27/2025. <https://www.elections.alaska.gov/research/statistics/#pfdavrstats>

Voter Registration List Maintenance

FIRST NOTICE

- At least once a year, DOE reviews the statewide voter registration list and sends notices by non-forwardable mail requesting confirmation or correction to all voters:
 - ✓ Whose mail from the division has been returned to the division in the last two years
 - ✓ Who have not contacted the division in the last two years, or
 - ✓ Who have not voted or appeared to vote in the last two general elections

SECOND NOTICE

- DOE sends a second notice by forwardable mail to the voter's last known address if:
 - ✓ The first notice is returned as undeliverable, and the voter has not, within the preceding four years
 - ✓ Contacted DOE, or
 - ✓ Voted or appeared to vote in any election
- The second notice states that the voter's registration will be inactivated unless the voter responds to the notice within 45 days

Voter Registration List Maintenance

SB 70 proposes to:

- Eliminate the step of sending the first notice
- Add two additional conditions prompting notice to voters who, in the two years immediately preceding the review of the voter registration list
 - Became ineligible to receive a PFD, or
 - Received a driver's license in another state
- These changes will make the list maintenance process more efficient and timely

Early Voting Timeframes

- Currently:
 - Early Voting takes place 15 days before an election and on election day only at locations with a secure connection to the DOE Voter Registration & Election Management System
 - Early Votes are sequestered once the polling place registers are printed
 - Sequestered Early Votes are reviewed by election boards before they are counted
- SB 70 ends Early Voting five days before election day
 - This minimizes the possibility for a voter to double-vote
 - Voters may still vote absentee in person and special needs ballots during this timeframe

Ballot Receipt Timeframes

- Currently, all ballots returned by mail must be postmarked on or before the date of the election
 - ✓ Primary Election ballots must be received no later than the 10th day after the election
 - ✓ General Election ballots must be received no later than the 10th day after the election when mailed within the U.S. and its territories and no later than the 15th day after the election when mailed from outside the U.S.
- SB 70 proposes that all ballots be received on or before election day to allow for more immediate results, increase administrative efficiency, and bolster public confidence

By-Mail Voting

- SB 70 proposes to expand options for by-mail elections by allowing them to be held in communities with populations of 750 or less
- All registered voters in a by-mail community will receive a ballot, eliminating the requirement for registered voters to request an absentee ballot
- This can benefit communities where polling locations and poll workers are challenging to secure

Official Election Pamphlet (OEP)

- DOE prints and mails official election pamphlets to each registered voter household before:
 - ✓ Each state general election, and
 - ✓ Each state primary, special, or special primary election at which a ballot proposition is scheduled to appear on the ballot
- 2024 Costs: \$844,855 to print and mail the OEP
- SB 70 proposes to remove the requirement to mail the OEP to save costs and reduce waste

Additional Changes Proposed by SB 70

- Eliminates the size and number specifications for voting booths
- Removes the requirement that compensation for Election Board Members be set through administrative regulations
- Provides for postage-paid return envelopes
- Prohibits rejection of Special Needs ballots due to a mistake made by a representative
- Expands the definition of “mail service” to include delivery of materials by optical scanning and email
- Allows the Absentee Review Boards to begin reviewing absentee certificates (envelopes) sooner
- Removes the requirement to count late-arriving ballots during a recount

Thank You

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