



To: Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee
From: Joelle Hall, President of the Alaska AFL-CIO
Date: January 29, 2025
Subject: SB 64 - ELECTIONS

The Alaska AFL-CIO supports SB 64 on the following grounds:

Targeted Voter Roll Cleanup is Good Data Hygiene: Removing ineligible voters who have established residence in another state while making a greater effort to contact these voters before removing them is a best practice to ensure that no one is removed that should remain an eligible voter.

Secure, Modern, and Transparent Elections Increase Trust in Our System: This bill requires the Division of Elections to start scanning absentee ballots beginning seven days before the election so those results can be reported when the polls close and requires ranked-choice tabulation to be included when all unofficial results are released. Alaskans have asked for this and it is a common sense solution to the current delay in results. To keep up with current technology, requiring the Division of Elections to establish a cybersecurity program and requiring disclosures for deepfakes are both necessary reforms to protect our elections and our voters. Also, adding absentee ballot tracking keeps our system up to date and gives voters reassurances that their votes are on track to be counted.

Democracy Requires That Eligible Voters Can Vote and That Their Votes are Counted: Removing the burdensome witness signature requirement on absentee ballots will ensure that Alaskans' votes won't be thrown out. Additionally, the establishment of a ballot curing process will allow Alaskans to fix errors that shouldn't affect their ability to vote. The addition of rural liaisons and increased language access will ensure that Alaskans who live in remote Alaska will have their votes counted and that Alaskans can read the election materials and ballots in their own language. Postage paid envelopes for absentee ballots also ensures that there are even less barriers to voting.

Voter Registration Reforms Remove Barriers to Access: Allowing 16 and 17 year olds to pre-register to vote is a way to start engaging future voters and is key to increasing voter turnout. Allowing for electronic signatures for voter applications updates our system and makes it easier to register to vote. Allowing Alaskans to register to vote or change their registration up to Election Day removes an unnecessary barrier to voting and brings us in line with twenty-three other states and the District of Columbia.

In summary, the Alaska AFL-CIO supports SB 64 and we call on the Alaska Legislature to pass this bill and enact these changes to prepare for the 2026 election cycle.



February 21, 2025

Senator Scott Kawasaki
Chair, State Affairs Committee
Alaska State Capitol, Room 119
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Senate Bill 64: Elections

Dear Senator Kawasaki and Senate State Affairs Committee,

We are pleased to offer our support for Senate Bill 64, an act relating to elections, which includes important provisions for enhancing the elections process to ensure equal access to voting for all Alaskans.

The Alaska Federation of Natives (AFN), which is the largest statewide Native organization in Alaska including a membership of 177 federally recognized Tribes, 154 village corporations, 9 regional corporations, and 9 regional nonprofit and Tribal consortiums, has always been a strong supporter of ensuring every Alaskan has the same opportunities no matter where they live, including casting their ballot. While there are different obstacles to elections in a state with many rural areas, there are reforms and additional steps that can, and must, be taken to improve our elections system which will allow more people to cast their vote without impeding the security of our ballots.

To address the persistent barriers to voting, AFN advocates for the following reforms:

1. Rural Liaisons: Increased support is necessary for rural communities to ensure they have the resources and information needed to facilitate elections effectively.
2. Pre-Paid Postage: Implementing pre-paid postage for ballots is essential, as many rural locations lack adequate postal services. This measure would greatly enhance voter participation.
3. Ballot Curing: With over 30 states having successful ballot curing provisions, AFN supports this mechanism to allow voters to correct mistakes and ensure their votes are counted rather than discarded.



4. **Removing Witness Signature Requirement:** Given that the DOE does not verify witness signatures, yet many ballots are rejected based on this criterion, AFN calls for the elimination of this requirement. Voters already attest to their eligibility by signing their ballots.
5. **Electronic Signature Capability:** Extending the ability to use electronic signatures for voter registration would streamline the process for those without a state issued driver's license or ID. Many Alaskan communities lack access to DMV services, making this reform vital.
6. **Language Access:** With diverse populations across Alaska, AFN emphasizes the need for enhanced language assistance to ensure all voters, including significant Yupik speakers, can understand and engage in the voting process.
7. **Same-Day Voter Registration:** Enabling same-day registration will help ensure that all eligible voters can participate in elections.
8. **Permanent Absentee Voting:** This reform would streamline the voting process for those who regularly vote by mail and include safeguards to prevent voters from remaining on the absentee list if they are no longer voting.
9. **Ballot Drop Boxes:** Increased accessibility through the implementation of more ballot drop boxes throughout Alaska is crucial.

AFN urges legislators to exercise caution regarding measures that may inadvertently restrict voting access, especially in remote areas where mail delivery can be slow due to logistical challenges. Acknowledging the unique circumstances of rural Alaska is essential to upholding the constitutional right to vote.

AFN remains committed to supporting Automatic Voter Registration (AVR), as it has proven effective in expanding voter registration efforts. We must invest in initiatives that enhance voting accessibility, including additional poll worker training, targeted outreach to rural communities, and partnerships between the Division of Elections and Tribal organizations, along with opportunities for increased early voting.

AFN urges legislators to pass an election reform bill this session. We must not continue to allow Alaskans to be silenced by having their ballots cast out when there are clear solutions to ensuring more Alaskans have the opportunity to be a part of the important, constitutionally protected right to vote.



We stand ready to assist in any way possible and are always open to partnership with the Division of Elections to do our part in assisting our communities.

Gunalcheesh/Quyana/Mahsi/Thank you,

Ben Mallott
President

cc:

Senator Jesse Bjorkman, Vice-Chair
Senator Bill Wielechowski, Member
Senator Elvi Gray-Jackson, Member
Senator Robert Yundt, Member



Municipality of Anchorage

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Assembly Chair

March 20, 2025

Dear Honorable Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee,

In my role as Chair of the Anchorage Assembly, I am writing in support of SB 64, "An Act relating to elections." The Assembly has not taken an official position on SB 64, but the bill includes measures that support the Municipality's goals for election reform outlined in our 2025 Legislative Program.

Anchorage's request for election reform is for the state to amend Alaska Statute Title 15 to clean up voter rolls and simplify the process to initiate the cancelation of voter registration when a voter registers in another state. SB 64 accomplishes this goal through several means:

- Sec. 1. cleans up some language to clarify residency requirements.
- Sec. 12. AS 15.07.130(a)(3) adds provisions to set what qualifies as establishing residence in another state that would allow the Division to remove someone from the voter rolls.
- Sec. 13. AS 15.07.130(b) clarifies the process for the Division to put a voter on the inactive registration list.
- Sec. 15. AS 15.07.133 adds a new section to require the Division to develop a process to allow a voter to cancel their registration.

Alaska has a robust and successful registration process, however, it can currently take eight years to remove a voter from the rolls if voters are not proactive. And the rolls are over-inflated. Anchorage supports a process keeps the rolls more accurate. This is important because, while Anchorage maintains its own election system, like all communities in Alaska, it relies on the State for its voter registration list. As a result:

- Outdated voter rolls mean that Anchorage unnecessarily spends money to mail ballots to people who have long since left the state, which leads to artificially low voter turnout counts, ballots being sent to incorrect locations, and large numbers of returned ballots – **up from 15,812 in the 2022 regular election to 20,120 in 2024.**

- **Alaska's existing eight-year timeline is one of the longest in the country**, according to records kept by the National Conference of State Legislatures, and the six-year timeline is still longer than the four-year minimum in federal law.¹
- The Alaska Division of Elections listed 584,508 registered voters who were at least 20 years old at the start of July 2023. **That's 108% of the estimated 20-and-over population in July 2023** (the percentage estimate is based on people are 20 and older because people aged 18 and 19 are lumped together with younger teenagers in population estimates, making it impossible to easily include them in the calculation).²

I believe that SB 64 will make significant progress in attaining Anchorage's goal for more accurate voter lists. That being said, I offer one caveat that the language regarding same day voter registration in Sec. 42 may need to be tightened up to close gaps, such as voters with properties in multiple Alaskan jurisdictions changing their registration back and forth throughout the year to vote in multiple local elections that can be held in April, May, October, and November, as well as special elections. I suggest this area be explored further with election experts.

I thank the Senate Rules Committee for putting this bill forward and I thank the Senate State Affairs committee for taking the time to work on this bill and make improvements. It is very important that we all work together to ensure that Alaskans have full access to participate in elections and that our elections are transparent, accurate and secure.

I urge your support of this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher Constant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Anchorage Assembly Chair Christopher Constant

¹ <https://alaskabeacon.com/2024/02/03/alaska-house-votes-to-advance-bill-that-would-trim-state-voter-rolls-more-quickly/>

² <https://alaskabeacon.com/2024/02/03/alaska-house-votes-to-advance-bill-that-would-trim-state-voter-rolls-more-quickly/>



To the Senate State Affairs Committee,

The Alaska Center is committed to building a future that all Alaskans will thrive in. Renewable energy, a healthy climate, and clean air, water, and salmon are all a part of this vision. Critically, so is a government that is responsive to the needs of all Alaskans. As such, we write to voice our strong support for SB 64, which if passed, would reduce the barriers that still prevent many Alaskans from making their voices heard in our elections.

The many improvements to our election system that SB 64 would bring include:

- Enhancing voter access by allowing registration up until Election Day, helping more young and low-income Alaskans cast their ballots.
- Reducing the ballot rejection rate by establishing a process for ballot curing, ensuring that ballots are not discarded due to honest mistakes.
- Verifying ballots with signature matching, replacing the ineffective witness signature requirement that led to hundreds of ballots being discarded in the last election.
- Engaging young voters and fostering a more informed electorate by allowing Alaskans aged 16 and older to preregister to vote.
- Reducing administrative burdens by creating a recurring absentee voter list, eliminating the need to process mail ballot applications every election cycle.
- Expanding access in rural areas by appointing a rural community liaison and increasing early voting options.
- Making voting more equitable by sending prepaid envelopes with mail ballots, ensuring no Alaskan has to pay to vote.
- Protecting voters' rights by prohibiting special needs ballots from being discarded due to mistakes made by election officials.

Together, these provisions will enhance the security of our elections and make voting more accessible to Alaskans who have been pushed to the margins of our political process. We urge you to continue working toward these important reforms to ensure a more inclusive, fair, and effective electoral system in Alaska.

Thank you for your commitment to the future of our state.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jenny Marie Stryker".

Jenny-Marie Stryker
Political Director



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CITCI.org

January 30, 2025

The Honorable Scott Kawasaki
Chair, Senate State Affairs
Beltz 105
120 4th Street
Juneau, AK 99801
Via: Senate.State.Affairs@akleg.gov

Dear Chair Kawasaki,

Get Out the Native Vote (GOTNV) is a statewide non-partisan voter education program offered by Cook Inlet Tribal Council based in Anchorage. It was our honor to testify to the committee on our observations in voter access issues of the 2022 Mid-Term elections, and thank you for welcoming our comments again in the spirit of election reform.

SB64 ELECTIONS and SB70 SCHOOL & ELECTION BOARDS; VOTING; ELECTIONS cover many salient issues. Together, we could all see to effective measures to ease the barriers to voting for all Alaskans, and endeavor to ensure every vote cast is successfully counted and voter intent is fully reflected in the results.

In SB64, whenever acceptable forms of ID are mentioned, we urge the Legislature to be mindful that Tribal IDs fall under that recognition. There remain difficulties for rural residents in roadless areas to access a DMV, and it is not required until early adulthood. Tribal IDs are more accessible and ubiquitous.

A DMV derived form of ID presents an undue burden to many rural residents, and SB70s proposal to hold the DMV as the only functionary to enroll in the automatic voter registration process will create a highly effective barrier to registering to vote. Alaskan voters resoundingly directed the state to provide for automatic voter registration through the highly popular PFD application process in 2016, and we remain committed to that ideal along with the DMV route.

There have been instances in recent history where a rural precinct has successfully conducted an election, but their votes were not added to the final results because of postal issues. If, for example, Venetie or Holy Cross has had difficulty in being able to participate in any of the three statewide elections in 2022, as Newtok, Mertarvik, or Chignik has for the past dozen years or so, is it fair to remove their voters from the master list as being inactive? As for ballots that are postmarked after the election deadline, would those voters in some way be counted as active?

Same-day registration establishes a highly accommodating one-stop-shop to participate in the election. It minimizes drop-off rates of voter intent because it removes confusion over different dates, deadlines and precinct locations. In the way eligible voters are allowed to register and vote on election day in a presidential election, same day registration for all statewide races should increase overall voter turnout and lessen the need for questioned ballots, thus lowering the rate of partially accepted ballots.

Through CITC's GOTNV program, we fully support the creation of a rural community liaison in Section 16 to help facilitate access to early and absentee voting in rural areas of the state and ensure that precincts are fully staffed. More robust staffing in rural precincts will add to more awareness, preparation, and commitment to vote in upcoming elections. This investment would ease the load of the Region IV (R4) Supervisor which has suffered a troubling vacancy rate for the last few election cycles, and for other roadless rural areas. It would also free up resources GOTNV has dedicated to helping cover election staffing, retention, and registration needs on top of our demanding voter education mission.

We encourage language in the bill to include schools and school districts to the collaborative role of recruiting Youth at the Booth to help run elections and become active citizens. It would bolster election worker experience, and plant seeds for new generations of super voters. GOTNV helped 113 students sign up at Youth Ambassadors in 2024 but only 15 were pressed into service at a rate of 13.5%.

In order to more easily search our position on sections of interest, we are truncating our responses here:

SB64

Section 19 support efforts for language assistance to be posted at each polling place

Section 22 supports the expedition of early vote counts

Section 25 supports the postage-paid return envelope for absentee ballots

Section 25, 27 and Section 31 removes the witness signature requirement

In 2022's all VBM special primary, 7,500 ballots were rejected for the following reasons:

- No witness signature 2724
- Ballot postmarked after election day 1897
- No identifier provided 1556

HDs 19, 37, 38, 39, and 40 suffered the highest number of rejected ballots due to the witness provision at a rate of 14% In 2024's general election, 512 ballots were rejected due to missing signatures at a rate of 8%. Reform of this requirement is imperative.

Section 26 support the easing of the top causes for rejection rates of special needs ballots

Section 34 Support a ballot-tracking system

Section 15.20.222. Procedure for curing uncounted ballot is on point – line 05 on Page 20 asks for the voter to provide a **copy** of a form of identification, this presents a barrier for many residents in rural Alaska, as they likely do not have access to a copier or printer

Section 15.20.810 We fully support drop boxes for elections conducted by mail, and appreciate the potential for precincts with less than a 20,000 population to be eligible for drop box placement

Section 42 AS 29.26.050 Appreciate the intent of encouraging municipality voters to be recognized in statewide elections

Section 47 support any effort to expanding early voting in rural communities and low-income neighborhoods

SB70

Section 6. AS 15.07.050 line 01 (5) Urge the continuation of PFD automatic voter registration

Section 7. AS 15.07.060 (e) line 11 – 13, Tribal IDs should always be included

Section 9. AS 15.07.130 (a) concerned that a 45-day turnaround is difficult with R4 postal issues

Section 11. AS 15.15.060 (a) Support the ability to secure alternative polling sites as circumstances arise

Section 15.15.380. Support further compensation for election workers

Section 14 AS 15.20.030 Fully support postage prepaid and pre-addressed return envelope for absentee voters - lines 13 and 14 still require the outsized hindering witness signature requirement

Section 15 AS 15.20.064 Support the opportunity for early voting to start 15 days before an election, but object to closing 5 days before election day

Section 16 AS 15.20.072 Better accommodations for special needs voters and their representative

Section 17 AS 15.20.081 It is not possible for absentee ballots to return to base by election night

Section 19 AS 15.20.201 Earlier counts of absentee ballots is welcome

Section 22 AS.20.800 (a) An automatic all Vote By Mail for every special election is tricky for Rural Alaska and low-income community precincts. Designating communities of under 750 people to be subject to all VBM elections effectively sets R4, other small roadless, and low-income communities to suffer already untenable rates of rejection

CITC's GOTNV program is here to lessen barriers to voting for all Alaskans, and we feel this election reform is a chance to make voting a more equitable experience in the pursuit of a more representative government.

Quyana,



Michelle (Macuar) Sparck
Get Out the Native Vote
Director of Strategic Initiatives

p.s. Enclosed is our letter of support for HB246 from 2023 that would allow for minors at least 16 years of age to preregister to vote, a provision that is now absorbed into SB64



NATIVE MOVEMENT

Building Healthy & Sustainable Communities
www.nativemovement.org

January 28, 2025

To: Alaska State Senate Affairs
From: Enei Begaye Peter, Executive Director
Re: Support for SB-64

Dear Honorable Alaska Senators,

We are writing to express our support for SB-64, the elections omnibus bill, that expands voting rights and voting access for Alaskan voters. Native Movement is a statewide non-profit organization dedicated to building people power, rooted in an Indigenized worldview, toward healthy, sustainable, and just communities for all. Native Movement is a partner in a coalition of Alaska-based nonprofits and community groups working together to strengthen democracy through the collective power of voting. Through voter engagement and non-partisan education, we empower Alaskans in every community to participate in elections at every level. Our work aims to address any undue barriers facing Alaskans at the ballot box creating a voting system that is fully accessible to all Alaskan voters. We seek to ensure that all eligible Alaskans — whatever their political persuasion — can exercise their right to vote and that all valid votes are counted. We believe that if all eligible Alaskans are able to exercise their right to vote, the democratic process can flourish.

SB-64 makes improvements to Alaska's election system that will increase access to voters who have historically faced undue barriers to accessing their right to vote, and remedies to these known challenges are long overdue.

Native Movement, along with the Voter Hub Policy Working Group, has highlighted the following provisions as critically needed improvements to Alaska's election systems:

- **The removal of the witness signature requirement**

The witness signature requirement is an unnecessary element of absentee ballots. Given that the state does not verify signatures, this requirement is an unnecessary and outdated step that disempowers Alaskan voters. This was evident in the 2022 statewide primary election that was conducted by mail, when thousands of votes were not counted due to missing signatures, and again in the 2024 general election with over 500 ballots being rejected. Removing this requirement would simplify the process and allow eligible voters the opportunity to more seamlessly cast their ballots by mail, and to ensure that their valid vote is counted.

- **The addition of a ballot curing process**

Allowing voters the opportunity to fix honest mistakes made when casting their ballot by mail ensures that all Alaskans have equitable access to the voting process, regardless of where they

live. The 2022 vote-by-mail special primary election is evidence that the lack of a ballot curing process has disenfranchised Alaskan voters. In this election, nearly five percent of ballots were rejected, and rejection rates were higher in precincts with greater percentages of minority voters. Many of these ballots were rejected because the voter identifier did not match the voter record, no identifier was provided, or because a voter did not sign the ballot. Establishing a system that gives voters an opportunity to cure — most notably a system whose timeline and mechanics works for all Alaskan voters — gives these voters the opportunity to fully exercise their right to vote.

- **Establishing same-day voter registration**

Allowing voters to register on election day has been shown to increase voter turnout overall and is especially beneficial to transient populations and young and low-income voters. Allowing voters to register to vote and update their registration up-to and on election day, creates a voting system that is more accessible and more equitable to Alaskan Voters and modernizes the state's systems to be aligned with 23 other states and Washington DC. While Alaska allows for same day registration when casting a ballot for presidential candidates, expanding this opportunity to include statewide elections further empowers Alaskan voters.

- **Postal Service in Rural Alaska**

Working with our US delegation to remedy the poor and in some cases non-existent postal service in rural Alaska where absentee ballots are the only option for voting.

Thank you for your hard work making Alaska's elections work for everyone. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

With gratitude,



Enei M. Begaye Peter
Executive Director
Native Movement
enei@nativemovement.org

January 29, 2025

Dear Members of the Alaska State Senate Affairs Committee:

We provide this letter of support for SB 64 on behalf of the board, staff, and members of Alaska Community Action on Toxics (ACAT), a statewide environmental health and justice nonprofit organization dedicated to research and advocacy to protect public health in Alaska and the world. We respectfully request that you support the passage of this critical piece of legislation.

SB 64 is necessary legislation that would reform several key parts of our Alaska election system by expanding voting rights and voting access. People need a system that ensures that all votes are accurately tabulated. SB 64 would create a ballot-curing process to ensure this. Including a ballot-curing process will allow voters to correct honest mistakes on their mail-in ballots. In the first year implementing the vote-by-mail system (2022), 4.5% of ballots were rejected by election officials, with a large percentage of those ballots from four House districts with greater percentages of minority voters and off the state's road system.

Another important feature of the bill is that it will allow same-day voter registration. Currently, 23 states and the District of Columbia allow voter registration up to and including election day. One of the benefits of this provision is that it effectively results in increased turnout of voters among the ages of 18 to 24. One of the reasons for this provision is that it benefits people who move residences ahead of an election which occurs more frequently among younger and low-income individuals. Please ensure that the final bill includes this provision.

Lastly, the bill would remove an unnecessary feature of voting by mail, the witness signature provision. The state currently does not verify signatures and eliminated 7,500 ballots due to this provision. This deprives our Alaska voters of the fundamental right to have their voice heard at the ballot box.

In conclusion, ACAT strongly supports SB-64 for all the above reasons. We strongly encourage you to support this bill. Our information is included below, and we welcome further dialogue.

Thank you for your careful consideration

Sincerely,

Francisco "Cisco" Mercado
Policy Director
Alaska Community Action on Toxics
1225 East International Airport Road, Suite 220
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Pamela Miller

IPEN Co-Chair (www.ipen.org) and

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PO Box 101345
Anchorage, AK 99510-1345

February 3, 2025

Senate State Affairs Committee
Senator Scott Kawasaki, Chair
Via: senate.state.affairs@akieg.gov

Dear Chair Kawasaki and Committee Members:

The League of Women Voters of Alaska supports the passage of SB 64: Elections. The League is nonpartisan and does not support or oppose candidates or parties, but it does take positions on issues after reaching a consensus based on careful study. Our position on Election and Election Processes states: "The League of Women Voters of Alaska (LWVAK) believes voting is a fundamental citizen's right that must be guaranteed. LWVAK works to protect that right and to increase voter participation by all citizens." We believe that the provisions of SB 64 will serve both to protect the rights of Alaska voters and to reduce barriers to participation in elections for qualified Alaska citizens.

We highlight three provisions of the bill that will offer the State Division of Elections means of improving the likelihood that a citizen's vote will be counted at relatively low or no cost to the State:

1. **Prepaid postage for absentee and mail-in ballots.** The fact that some ballots require more postage than the standard stamp, that fewer people today communicate by traditional mail and may not have stamps on hand, and that postal service in many areas of the state is contracted and may have limited hours of service, while in other communities there may not be local sales of postage stamps at all, means that this proposal is a low-cost way to easily erase one obstacle in the voting process.
2. **Elimination of the signature requirement for absentee and mail-in ballots.** The Division of Elections should use its resources to verify voters' identities and should not rely on an often-illegible signature of a witness who is not identified in any other meaningful way on the cover envelope for mailed ballots. The requirement puts up an unnecessary barrier to some people who live by themselves or who may be out of state or country, and this requirement has in fact caused the rejection of the votes of otherwise eligible and qualified voters.
3. **A ballot cure process.** Such a process would ensure that the Division of Elections looks for problems with return envelope identification information before the election and, like 24 other states and the Municipality of Anchorage, allows voters the chance to provide missing information before their votes are discarded. Currently the work of the Division of Elections to identify problems is already established but takes place after the election with no recourse for the voters when they have been notified that their vote did not count.

These three provisions along with others in the bill will work to make voting more accessible to Alaskans who wish to vote in the elections that the Alaska Division of Elections works so diligently to ensure are safe and secure.

Sincerely,

Sue Sherif
On behalf of the League of Women Voters of Alaska Board

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2024 - 2025
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March 12, 2025
State of Alaska
Senate State Affairs Committee

Members of the Senate State Affairs Committees;

On behalf of the Alaska Broadcasters Association, we would request that language to protect broadcasters from any harm from broadcasting any AI generated political content be returned into the SB 64. If the language is unacceptable, we would like to submit the following language to be added to SB 64 to protect broadcasters in Alaska. We respectfully submit the following:

“Under Alaska law, any qualified political advertisement created, originally published, or originally distributed by a person, corporation, committee, or other entity must clearly and conspicuously state: “This message was generated in whole or substantially by artificial intelligence.” ”

“A candidate whose voice or likeness appears in synthetic media distributed without the required disclosure within 60 days of an election may seek to enjoin distribution of the media and bring an action for general or special damages against the party distributing the media. A federally licensed broadcast station subject to federal law prohibiting censorship of electioneering communications by a legally qualified candidate is exempt from liability.”

“Violators are guilty of a misdemeanor and must be imprisoned for not more than 90 days or fined not more than \$500, or both. For a second offense occurring within five years of a previous conviction, the violator is guilty of a felony and must be imprisoned not more than five years or fined not more than \$1,000, or both.”

Thank you for your consideration in the matter.

Matt Wilson
Alaska Broadcasters Association
Legislative Liaison



Testimony in Support of SB 64-H

March 25, 2025

Chair Kawasaki, Vice Chair Bjorkman, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this important bill. My name is Barbara Smith Warner and I am the executive director of the National Vote at Home Institute (NVAHI). NVAHI is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing voters' access to, use of, and confidence in voting at home with mailed-out ballots.

We appreciate the work you have done to bring many elements together in this bill to expand access to mail ballots and the systems that support voters' confidence in them.

Over the past few decades—and exponentially since 2020—voters across the country have embraced mailed-out ballots, also known as Vote at Home, vote by mail or absentee voting. Voting by mail is **popular, secure, and cost-effective**. It saves local governments millions in administrative costs each election while ensuring that voters—especially those in rural and Indigenous communities—have reliable access to the ballot.

Alaska has been a leader in democracy reform that increases voter enfranchisement, and this bill will add to that by expanding and strengthening your Vote at Home system. Anchorage and Juneau already benefit from the cost and administrative savings of running all Vote at Home local elections, and given Alaska's unique geography and population, expanding Vote at Home is a critical step toward ensuring that all eligible voters can participate in the democratic process.

I'd like to recognize some of the best practices for Vote at Home systems that SB 64 will provide:

- **Eliminating the witness requirement** for mail ballots (increases voter convenience and participation)
- Implementing a **ballot tracking program** and a **standardized curing system**, along with the **10-day post-election deadline** for ballot receipt (increases voter confidence and knowledge in system and provides ample time for election administrators)
- Providing **sufficient drop boxes and prepaid postage** on return ballots (increases voter convenience and participation)
- **Allowing pre-processing of ballots** before Election Day (faster reporting)

NVAHI also suggests as a best practice that voters be allowed the option of Single Sign Up, also known as permanent absentee, to Vote at Home. This maximizes voter convenience and decreases administrative costs for election administrators by allowing voters to automatically receive their mail ballot for every election, instead of having to reapply for each election.

Since 2018, NVAHI has worked with policymakers, election officials, and administrators to support the implementation of effective Vote at Home systems. We applaud the ongoing work of the Alaska legislature, and ask that the committee vote to advance SB 64 to continue making voting as accessible and secure as possible for all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Barbara Smith Warner

Executive Director, National Vote at Home Institute

bsw@voteathome.org



Secure Democracy USA

S.B. 64 Will Strengthen Security, Voter Freedom, and Confidence in Alaska's Elections

January 30, 2025

Dear Chairman Kawasaki and esteemed members of the Senate State Affairs Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 64. My name is Peter Skopec, and I am the Director of Advocacy for Secure Democracy USA. We are a national, nonpartisan nonprofit that works with state leaders, election administrators, and policy experts to strengthen election security and modernize election administration, with a goal of building greater confidence in our elections.

We believe strengthening election security and improving voter access are not mutually exclusive goals; rather, both are necessary to preserve and build public trust in our elections. Since 2022, we have worked with members of this committee and your colleagues on both sides of the aisle to pursue these shared goals in order to make it easy for eligible Alaskans to vote – and hard to cheat.

S.B. 64 is a strong package of commonsense proposals, built on years of bipartisan efforts to strengthen election administration in Alaska. We applaud this committee for taking up this important bill, which would improve voters' trust and confidence in future elections. We are happy to register our support.

S.B. 64 contains important provisions that strengthen election security, transparency, and accountability. As drafted, this bill would:

- **Update Alaska's voter list maintenance practices** to improve voter roll accuracy.
- **Improve absentee ballot processing and ballot tracking**, to speed up results reporting and allow voters to follow the progress of their ballot through the counting process.
- **Create a uniform statewide cure process** for absentee ballots, adding an important procedural layer of voter verification to bolster security and confidence.
- **Eliminate Alaska's burdensome and ineffective witness requirement** and replace it with signature verification.
- **Modernize voter registration and absentee voting** to allow eligible Alaskans to vote more securely and confidently.

Every eligible voter should have the freedom to cast their ballot securely and conveniently, the confidence in knowing their vote was counted, and the certainty that reported election results are accurate and trustworthy. S.B. 64 brings Alaska’s election system in line with several best practices for election security, transparency, and integrity, as outlined below.

Updating voter list maintenance practices

Maintaining accurate, up-to-date voter registration lists is critical to administering smooth and secure elections. S.B. 64 would improve voter roll accuracy, including by removing “intent to return” from voters’ residency determination and creating a process through which voters may cancel their registration.

Improving absentee ballot processing, ballot tracking, and results reporting

S.B. 64 would require the secure counting of reviewed and eligible absentee ballots to begin at least seven days before Election Day, which would help ensure faster results and provide officials with greater flexibility on Election Day.

S.B. 64 would also enhance transparency and voter confidence by establishing an online, mobile-friendly ballot tracking system. This system would allow voters to confirm that the Division of Elections mailed their absentee ballot, track its delivery, and confirm that the completed ballot was returned and counted.

Creating a uniform statewide cure process

Cure processes allow elections officials to contact voters to correct common, honest mistakes on their absentee ballot certificates, such as a missing signature. A strong cure process enables election officials who are uncertain about a ballot’s validity to directly contact the voter to verify their identity and confirm they cast the ballot in question. This process adds another layer of security to protect against or identify any cases of fraud or illegal voting.

In total, 32 states across the political spectrum – including large western and rural states like Montana, Utah, and North Dakota – notify and give voters the opportunity to cure ballots with minor mistakes.

Eliminating Alaska’s burdensome and ineffective witness requirement

Under S.B. 64, the Division of Elections would verify absentee ballots by matching a voter’s signature to the signature in their voter registration file – the most common way to verify absentee ballots nationwide. Thirty-one states use signature matching to verify returned absentee mail ballots, including Florida, Idaho, Montana, North Dakota, Texas, and Utah.

Current law requires an absentee voter’s ballot certificate to be notarized or witnessed. This process is unnecessarily burdensome – particularly for rural and senior voters – compared to

other, equally effective forms of ballot verification. Most states – including many western, rural states with high absentee participation rates – allow voters to return their absentee ballot by providing identifying information, such as a voter’s signature, address, and/or date of birth.

Modernizing the voter registration and absentee voting process

S.B. 64 proposes a number of other improvements that would make the state’s voter list more accurate and allow eligible Alaskans to exercise their freedom to vote with confidence. These changes include: allowing eligible Alaskans to register to vote (or update their existing registrations) through Election Day; creating an absentee voter list that allows voters who prefer to vote by mail or are unable to vote in person to apply once and automatically receive absentee ballots for future elections, without needing to reapply each time; and providing postage-paid return envelopes to absentee voters.

We thank you again for the opportunity to submit this written testimony and respectfully urge you to support S.B. 64. We would be happy to provide the committee with any additional information.

Sincerely,

Peter Skopec

Director of Advocacy

Secure Democracy USA

Secure Democracy USA is a nonpartisan, 501(c)(4) nonprofit organization building stronger elections, state by state. We advocate for practical election policy solutions guided by research and supported across the ideological spectrum.



215 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE • Washington, D.C. 20003 • 202/546-4996 • www.citizen.org

February 3rd, 2025

Senate
State of Alaska
Senate State Affairs
The Honorable, Scott Kawasaki, Chair
The Honorable, Matt Claman, Vice Chair

Dear Members of the Committee:

Public Citizen submits this testimony in strong support of SB 64.

On behalf of our nearly 1,600 members and activists in Alaska, Public Citizen encourages the Senate State Affairs to advance SB 64, a legislative proposal regulating deepfakes in election communications. Deepfakes are fabricated content (videos, images, or audio) created with the use of generative artificial intelligence (A.I.) that depict a person saying or doing things that they never actually said or did in real life. In an election context, a deceptive and fraudulent deepfake is synthetic media that depicts a candidate or political party with the intent to injure the reputation of the candidate or party or otherwise deceive a voter.

Recent advances in the realm of A.I. have made it such that tools needed to create deepfakes are now widely accessible. Meanwhile, the quality of deepfake technology is improving rapidly, making it harder for the average person to detect a deepfake. Audio deepfakes are already of extremely high quality and video deepfakes can easily convince a casual viewer. In the months ahead, this problem will grow much worse, with technologists expressing concern that soon they will also not be able to identify what is real content versus a deepfake.

The rapid advances in deepfake technology have deeply concerning implications for the elections in the United States. In 2024 we saw deepfakes being used around the world in attempts to undermine elections. Just two days before Slovakia's 2024 elections, an audio deepfake was disseminated on social media. The deepfake fraudulently represented a party leader discussing ways to rig the election¹. It is believed that this deepfake influenced the outcome of the Slovakian election. There was also rampant use of deepfakes in recent major elections in many other countries including Argentina, Turkey, the UK, Moldova, Bangladesh,

¹ Meaker, M. (2023, March 10). Slovakia's Election Deepfakes Show AI Is a Danger to Democracy. Retrieved from Wired: <https://www.wired.co.uk/article/slovakia-election-deepfakes>

and Indonesia^{2,3,4,5,6}. Candidates from both sides created deepfakes of both themselves and their opponents in order to enrich their own reputations and harm those of their opponents.

We saw the use of deepfakes in the United States elections as well last year. Voters in New Hampshire received a robocall from an A.I.- generated audio deepfake of President Joe Biden⁷. The Deepfake had President Biden encouraging voters to not vote in the Presidential Primary Election. Governor Ron DeSantis's presidential campaign disseminated deepfake images of former President Donald Trump hugging Dr. Anthony Fauci, which never happened⁸. A PAC circulated a deepfake of North Carolina candidate for Congress, former Representative Mark Walker, in which he purportedly said that he was "not qualified for the job in Congress"⁹.

Deepfake technology poses a major threat to our democracy and our elections. It is not hard to envision a nightmare scenario where a well-timed fraudulent deepfake swings the outcome of an election.

The rapid development of deepfake technology also threatens to weaken social trust. As deepfakes become more common, it will become more difficult for people to determine what is real and what is fabricated content. Additionally, it will become easier for bad actors to refute

² Nicas, J., & Cholakian Herrera, L. (2023, November 15). Is Argentina the First A.I. Election? Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/15/world/americas/argentina-election-ai-milei-massa.html?smid=nytcore-ios-share&referringSource=articleShare>

³ Wilks, A. (2023, May 25). Turkey Elections: Deepfakes, disinformation 'misdirect' voters ahead of runoff. Retrieved from AI-Monitor: <https://www.ai-monitor.com/originals/2023/05/turkey-elections-deepfakes-disinformation-misdirect-voters-ahead-runoff>

⁴ Verma, P., & Zakrzewski C. (2024, April 23). AI deepfakes threaten to upend global elections. No one can stop them. Retrieved from The Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/technology/2024/04/23/ai-deepfake-election-2024-us-india/>

⁵ De Nadal, L., & Jančárik, P. (2024, August 22). Beyond the deepfake hype: AI, democracy, and "the Slovak case". Retrieved from the Harvard Kennedy School Misinformation Review: <https://misinfoeview.hks.harvard.edu/article/beyond-the-deepfake-hype-ai-democracy-and-the-slovak-case/>

⁶ Bond, S. (2024, December 21). How AI deepfakes polluted elections in 2024. Retrieved from National Public Radio: <https://www.npr.org/2024/12/21/nx-s1-5220301/deepfakes-memes-artificial-intelligence-elections>

⁷ Seitz-Wald, A., & Memoli, M. (2024, January 22). Fake Joe Biden robocall tells New Hampshire Democrats not to vote Tuesday. Retrieved from NBC News: <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/2024-election/fake-joe-biden-robocall-tells-new-hampshire-democrats-not-vote-tuesday-rcna134984>

⁸ Nehamas, N. (2023, June 8). DeSantis Campaign Uses Apparently Fake Images to Attack Trump on Twitter. Retrieved from The New York Times: <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/06/08/us/politics/desantis-deepfakes-trump-fauci.html?auth=login-google1tap&login=google1tap>

⁹ Mikkelsen, E. (2024, March 1). North Carolina 6th District candidate Mark Walker calls video shared by PAC a 'deepfake'. Retrieved from Fox News: <https://myfox8.com/news/politics/your-local-election-hq/north-carolina-6th-district-candidate-mark-walker-calls-video-shared-by-pac-a-deepfake/>

real visual or audio evidence of their bad behavior, by claiming it is a deepfake. All of this will serve to undermine public trust in news, information, and our elections.

Deepfakes pose very real and present threats to our democracy. New legislation like SB 64, which regulates the use of deepfakes in election communications, is critical.

Texas, Minnesota, California, Washington, and 17 other states have already passed legislation regulating the use of deepfakes in elections, and 48 states and D.C. have introduced legislation on this issue across the country¹⁰. This legislation has had broad bipartisan support - with Republicans and Democrats alike introducing these bills to regulate political deepfakes in states across the country. This legislation is also overwhelmingly popular among voters. In a survey conducted by Data for Progress, 80% of voters expressed their concerns with the use of deepfakes of candidates in the upcoming election¹¹.

Public Citizen strongly urges the Senate State Affairs to move SB 64 forward in order to put in place much needed regulations to protect the voters, our elections, and our democracy from the harms of deepfakes.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of SB 64. I am happy to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,
Ilana Beller
Organizing Manager
Public Citizen
1600 20th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20009
(202) 588-1000

¹⁰ Public Citizen. (2023, November 20). Tracker: State Legislation on Deepfakes in Elections. Retrieved from Public Citizen: <https://www.citizen.org/article/tracker-legislation-on-deepfakes-in-elections/>

¹¹ Fairclough II, T., & Blank, L. (2024, February 8). Voters overwhelmingly believe in regulating deepfakes and the use of Artificial Intelligence. Retrieved from Data For Progress: <https://www.dataforprogress.org/blog/2024/2/8/voters-overwhelmingly-believe-in-regulating-deepfakes-and-the-use-of-artificial-intelligence>

Joe Hayes

From: Laura Bonner <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, January 31, 2025 8:33 AM
To: Senate State Affairs; Sen. Bill Wielechowski
Subject: Support SB64

Members of Senate State Affairs Committee
Senator Wielechowski

I support SB64 for the following reasons:

- It defines a better practice to clean up the voter data base so that ineligible voters are removed and that no one is removed that should remain an eligible voter
- It removes the witness verifier for absentee ballots
- It allows 16 and 17 year old to preregister to vote when they turn 18
- It requires a postage-paid return envelope for all absentee ballots
- It includes cybersecurity provisions
- It has ballot tracking provisions for absentee ballots and a quicker way for absentee ballots to be counted

Thank you for hearing SB64. I support it.

Laura Bonner
Anchorage, AK

Joe Hayes

From: Robert Lang [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 6:46 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Comment on SB 64

To the State Affairs Committee,

My name is Rob Lang and I live in Anchorage. I support SB 64 because I believe in free speech and the best way to speak our minds is through the ballot box. We can make our elections more secure by abandoning the ineffective witness signature requirement and replacing it with a simple signature matching system. Allowing for same-day registration would make it easier for voters to participate in our democracy. Thank you for your hard work to improve our election system.

Sincerely,

Rob Lang

Anchorage, AK

Joe Hayes

From: Connor Gerlach-Ryan <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 4:25 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: SB 64

My name is Connor Gerlach Ryan
My address is 6819 Cache Creek rd. Fairbanks Alaska 99709

I support SB64.

This is an important bill to expand access to voting for residents in rural Alaska, and speed up absentee ballot counting.

Please pass SB64.

-Connor Ryan

Joe Hayes

From: Amos _ <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 1:25 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Support for SB 64

Creating a recurring absentee voter list so that those who have voted by mail for years don't have to submit a new application every election cycle

To the Alaska Senate State Affairs Committee,

I am David Zimmer and live between Palmer and Wasilla, Alaska. I support SB 64 because it helps to make our democracy stronger by making voting easier. For many years I have voted using absentee ballots by mail. I would prefer not to have the extra step of filling out a form and mailing it in to renew my voting status every year. It would also save the state government some money by removing an unnecessary task and creating a recurring voter list. By making voting easier and less time consuming more people would participate in elections which is what we need in order to keep a democracy. Thank you for your effort to improve our government.

Sincerely,
David Zimmer
Wasilla, AK

Joe Hayes

From: Sandy Clark <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 11:19 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Senate bill 64

Hello,

My name is Sandra Clark. I am a 78 year old woman living in Fairbanks.
I support SB64 because I believe it is important to improve voting conditions for people in outlying areas of Alaska.
I urge you to pass this legislation.
Thank you,
Sandra Clark

Sent from my iPad

Joe Hayes

From: Lois Sch [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 3:17 PM
To: Senate State Affairs

Thanks I would vote to support senate bill 64
Instead of peoples votes getting thrown out I think they should have a chance to review the mistakes made if any an
then re-send the mail.

Joe Hayes

From: Meneka Thiru <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 4:15 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Testimony on SB 64

Hello to the Committee,

My name is Meneka Thiru and I am a resident of Anchorage. I am writing in to express my support for SB 64. SB 64 seems to me to be a common sense measure to make sure that Alaskans' votes are counted.

Giving Alaskans the opportunity to cure their ballots ensures that they get to fix what is likely a very trivial honest mistake so that they can participate fully in our elections. Eliminating the witness signature makes sense to me as well - often it feels like a silly exercise in finding someone (anyone!) who can sign your ballot before sending it in and I imagine that many people forget this step. Same day voter registration is another way that we can increase voter turnout and make sure that electoral results reflect our community's wishes.

Thank you,
Meneka Thiru
[REDACTED]

Joe Hayes

From: Amos _ [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 2:48 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Senate Bill 64

7155 E Shorewood Dr
Wasilla, AK 99654

March 11, 2025

Senate State Affairs Committee: senate.State.Affairs@akleg.gov

To the State Affairs Committee:

I wish to make two comments on Senate Bill #64: Elections.

First, I have voted by mail for many years, but each year I am required to fill out a new application and mail it in order to continue voting by mail. It would be more efficient and less costly for the government to create a recurring absentee voter list.

Second, I should not have to pay to vote, yet I am still required to pay for postage to send in my mail ballot. Ballots should be sent out to voters prepaid.

Sincerely yours,

David Zimmer

Wasilla, AK

Joe Hayes

From: Claire Pywell [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 9:12 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Support for SB 64

Dear Committee Members:

As a civically engaged Alaskan, I take pride in our state's democracy and believe we should be a leader in voter participation. That's why I strongly support SB 64. Ensuring every vote counts—by allowing ballot curing, protecting special needs ballots, and eliminating unnecessary barriers like the witness signature requirement—is a step toward a fairer system.

Please support SB 64 and help keep Alaska at the forefront of voter participation.

Best,

Claire Pywell

[REDACTED]

--
Claire Pywell

[REDACTED]

Joe Hayes

From: Mary Corcoran <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, March 12, 2025 3:14 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Cc: Senate Rules
Subject: Public Testimony SB64

To Senate State Affairs Committee Chair Kawasaki, Vice chair Bjorkman and Members,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SB64 "An Act relating to elections; relating to voters..."

I have cast many absentee by-mail ballots and urge you to support this bill. The right to vote is extremely important to Alaskans. This bill continues to define the rules around this right without restricting it.

Preregistration for minors to vote is a huge plus to increase the numbers and knowledge of voters. Actually it is a no-brainer if we want to boost the political competency of the public.

I also support the following and much more contained in this bill:

- ballot curing
- designated language in election materials
- same day voter registration under the conditions in the bill
- remove the witness signature requirement on absentee by-mail ballots
- prepaid envelopes accompanying absentee ballots
- recurring automatic absentee ballot until a voter removes that preference
- notice to absentee ballots voters that their votes have been counted

Thank you for your work and crafting this bill.

Sincerely,
Mary Corcoran
Delta Junction

Joe Hayes

From: Larri Spengler <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, March 10, 2025 2:14 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: yes on SB 64

Greetings:

Please support Alaskan voters and elections and pass SB 64!

Thank you.

Larri Spengler

--
Larri Irene Spengler
[REDACTED]
Juneau, Alaska [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Joe Hayes

From: Jeanie Cole <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, March 11, 2025 10:22 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: SB 64 Written Testimony

Please support this important voting bill. This bill will improve voting access, especially in rural areas. Some aspects I believe are important include:

- Establishing a process for "ballot curing" so that voters have the opportunity to fix honest mistakes made on mail ballots: I have voted by mail a couple of times, and it is really easy to make a simple mistake. I think I signed in the wrong place once and had to cross it out and sign in another place. I was very concerned that my ballot might be thrown out. People shouldn't lose their vote due to simple mistakes.
- Eliminating the witness signature requirement: This requirement has caused hundreds of ballots to be thrown out in past elections, despite the fact that these signatures are never verified. It can be difficult to get a witness if you live alone and since they are not verified, the signature is essentially meaningless.
- Appointing a rural community liaison: This seems like a good idea. Having a person in each community to provide help to residents and a conduit to election officials would help prevent voting errors and rejection of ballots.
- Sending prepaid envelopes out with mail ballots: This would probably help with turnout. Since you wouldn't have to hunt up a stamp. We have very low turnout on some of our elections. I think making it easier to vote is important.
- Allowing voters to register up until Election Day: I don't have strong feelings on this one since we are automatically registered through the PFD application. But there might be people who fall through the cracks so this would provide another avenue. I certainly trust the Department of Elections to do a good job registering people even on short notice.
- Preventing special needs ballots from being thrown out because of mistakes made by election officials: I am not aware of this issue. However, everyone's vote should be protected and count.

I believe we have very accurate and safe elections in Alaska and the rest of the US. I don't believe there had been any significant fraud. I also support the use of Dominion (or other companies) voting machines. The Fairbanks NSB recently voted not to renew the contract with Dominion. Had I known it was on the assembly agenda, I would have spoken in favor of keeping the contract. I also support early voting, please keep this option in place. I always vote early.

Also I LOVE ranked choice voting. Since I often vote for the minority candidate, this allows me to give them a vote of confidence, while still voting for a second choice for the other party candidate (of which there are usually more than one) who I feel would best represent my beliefs. Please quit trying to eliminate ranked choice.

Sincerely
Martha Cole
3190 Gabes Way
Fairbanks, AK 99712

Joe Hayes

From: Gwendalynn Macander 
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 10:09 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Cc: Sen. Scott Kawasaki; Sen. Jesse Bjorkman
Subject: SB 64 and SB70 Testimony

To the State Affairs Committee,

My name is Gwen Macander and I live in Fairbanks. I support SB 64 because I think it's important for all Alaskans to have the same accessibility to the polls. Having a state with so many rural communities makes this challenging, but I think SB 64 includes important measures to give all Alaskans equal access to vote including making absentee voting easier by eliminating the witness signature requirement and keeping a list so those who have gotten absentee ballots in the past don't have to fill out lengthy applications every year. Along with making voting more equitable for rural communities, I think eliminating some barriers for voting by mail would make lines shorter at the polls in large communities. I know people who have busy schedules and were deterred by long voting lines for the Presidential election this year. Making voting by mail an easier option could alleviate some of the lines and help people who live busy lives to be able to vote. Thank you for your hard work to improve our election system.

Sincerely,
Gwen Macander
Fairbanks, AK

Joe Hayes

From: Della Coburn <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 9:09 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Bills regarding voting

I'm not in favor of 16 year olds voting, but agree with the rest , except for the Governor's criteria. Voting needs to be easy and convenient, and as long as ballots are mailed in by the deadline, those should be counted. Mails from rural places are notoriously slow, so slow mail is no good reason to disallow those ballots!

Joe Hayes

From: Rebecca Bernard <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:35 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Support SB 64

Dear Chair Kawasaki and Members of the Senate State Affairs Committee,

I am delighted that the State Affairs Committee is taking testimony on SB 64, and I strongly support passage of this bill. The bill would make important changes to Alaska election laws that would facilitate our civic privilege and duty of voting. In particular, I strongly support the provision creating a process by which ballots can be cured, because humans sometimes make mistakes, and when these are easily fixed they should not be a reason to throw out a person's vote. I also strongly support the provision eliminating the signature witness requirement. This witness requirement is doing nothing to prevent voter fraud but instead is being used only to disenfranchise voters.

I appreciate the committee taking up SB 64 and urge the committee to pass it. Thank you.

Respectfully,
Rebecca Bernard

[REDACTED]

Joe Hayes

From: Dorothy Shockley <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 1:49 PM
To: Senate State Affairs; Sen. Scott Kawasaki
Subject: Fwd: [EXTERNAL] Postal Service in Rural Alaska
Attachments: 2023 USPS Postmaster Relief Vacancy Site onlys.docx

Good afternoon,

Please see list of Postal Service vacancies in 2023. As you discuss SB 64 please keep in mind our postal service needs fixing in order for people to vote!

I support SB 64 and will be testifying tomorrow.

Thank you.

Best,

Dorothy Shockley

Legislative Lead - Policy Justice

Native Movement
[REDACTED]

This is not updated, but it is likely an average rate of vacancy.

Joe Hayes

From: Jody Overstreet 
Sent: Wednesday, January 29, 2025 9:55 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Support for Senate Bill 64

To the State Affairs Committee,

As a lifelong Alaskan and current resident of Anchorage, I am writing to voice my support for SB 64. During my 60+ years in Alaska, I have lived in a variety of communities, from Metlakatla to Soldotna, and have seen firsthand the unique needs of Alaskans and the challenges our environment can present when it comes to voting.

The primary objective of any voter registration legislation should be to provide all eligible citizens with accessible and secure voting options.

SB 64 achieves this by ensuring that ballots submitted on time but delayed in the mail are not discarded, by implementing a ballot-curing process that allows voters to correct honest mistakes, and by eliminating the ineffective witness signature requirement in favor of a more reliable signature matching system. Additionally, allowing same-day voter registration and preregistration at age 16 would increase participation among younger and lower-income voters.

Thank you for your efforts to improve Alaska's elections.

Sincerely,

Jody Overstreet

Joe Hayes

From: Bridget Smith [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, February 4, 2025 7:56 AM
To: Senate State Affairs
Cc: Ayden Nichol
Subject: Support for SB 64

To the State Affairs Committee:

My name is Bridget Smith and I live in Juneau. I have lived in Alaska for 57 years and in that time I have been an election poll worker and a Voter Registrar. I support SB 64 because it makes the voting process easier for the voters, We the People. Our constitution promises self governance and voting is a major part of it. Eliminating unnecessary obstacles like the witness signature helps voters to exercise their rights as citizens. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Bridget Smith
bridgetannsmith49@gmail.com
Cell (907) 209-0025