

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



PO Box 101345
Anchorage, AK 99510-1345

February 3, 2025

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