



# Senator Scott Jiu Wo Kawasaki

Alaska State Legislature

District P Fairbanks and Badger Road

## Senate Bill 19 Sectional Analysis

*"An Act relating to elections; and providing for an effective date."*

### Section 1. AS 15.20.030

Adds the words a **postage-paid return** envelope requiring the Division to pay for by-mail absentee ballot return envelopes.

### Section 2. AS 15.20.081

Adds a new subsection:

(m) Absentee ballot applications must include an option for qualified voters to choose to receive ballots by mail and the department may not require the voter to reapply unless the (1) voter has not voted absentee for four years or (2) a ballot was returned to the department as undeliverable.

### Section 3. AS 15.20.203(a)

Amends section requiring the local elections boards to determine if the signature on the ballot matches the voter's signature in their voter registration.

### Section 4. AS 15.20.203 (b)

Amends the section adding AS 15.20.203(b)(7) and deleting AS 15.20.203(b)(6)(B)(ii). Adding (7) requires the signature on the voter's ballot to be consistent with the signature on their voter registration. Deleting AS 15.20.203(b)(6)(B)(ii) removes the requirement that voters must provide a current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck, government check, or other government document to have their ballot counted.

### Section 5. AS 15.20.203

Adds new subsection:

(k) District absentee ballot counting boards shall determine whether a voter's signature on his ballot matches his signature in voter registration records using a verification process that includes signature comparison software.

### Section 6. AS 15.20

Adds two sections: **Sec. 15.20.221. Ballot tracking system** and **Sec. 15.20.222. Procedure for curing uncounted ballot.**

Sec. 15.20.221. Subsection (a) requires the Director to establish a free online system through which a voter may: confirm their ballot has been sent by the division, track the date of the ballots delivery to the voter, confirm the receipt of the ballot by the division, determine whether the



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voter's certificate has been reviewed, and determine whether the voter's ballot has been counted.

Subsection (b) requires the online system to indicate whether the signature on the ballot is missing or is not a match with the signature on the registration.

Subsection (c) requires the online system to allow elected officials to access the names and political affiliations of the names on the master register including a person whose registration has been inactivated.

Sec. 15.20.222. Subsection (a) requires the director to send a notification by non-forwardable first-class mail, email, or phone if the voter returns a ballot and that voter does not have a signature on file, the signature on the ballot does not match with the signature on file or their ballot does not have a signature.

Subsection (b) requires the notification under (a) to include an explanation of the need for signature verification, provide a form and instructions for the voter to confirm they returned their ballot to the division or provide a piece of identification accepted in AS 15.07.060(e) or provide a signature for verification.

Subsection (c) allows a ballot to be counted if the division receives the form provided for in the previous section within 14 days after election day, the voter provides a signature for verification, or the ballot is otherwise valid.

Subsection (d) does not allow a voter's ballot to be counted if they return the form in (b) and it indicates they did not return a ballot, or the voter did not return that form.

Subsection (e) does not allow elections officials to determine the signature on the returned ballot does not match the signature in the voter registration solely based on the use of initials or a common nickname.

Subsection (f) requires the director to provide training in signature comparison and use of signature comparison software to election officials who compare signatures.

Subsection (g) requires the division to update the voter's signature if the voter provides accepted identification like a state ID and a new signature or they cure an old signature.



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## **Section 7. AS 15.56.035(a)**

Amends AS 15.56.035(a) by allowing a family member, caregiver, an election official or worker, a postal service employee or private commercial delivery service employee, or a volunteer from a charitable or educational organization exempt under U.S.C 501(c)(3) can deliver ballots to designated locations on behalf of voters.

## **Section 8.**

Repeals 15.20.203(j), 15.20.207(k), and 15.20.211 (f). These sections related to the current online system which allowed voters to check the status of their ballot.

## **Section 9.**

Adds applicability language for AS 15.56.035(a) saying that offenses under this section apply to offenses on or after the effective date.

## **Section 10.**

The director of the division of elections may adopt regulations to implement this bill and they take effect after the effective date of this Act.

## **Section 11.**

Section 10 shall take effect immediately.

## **Section 12.**

This act shall take effect Jan 1, 2024.

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