

Stuart Relay

From: Karen Miernyk [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:48 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Improve Alaska elections

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I fully support same day voter registration as long as residency and the person's identification can be verified.

I am also supportive of any and all efforts to expand absentee and early voting opportunities, especially as they relate to military personnel residing out of the country.

Thank you,
Karen
99502

Stuart Relay

From: Peg Tileston [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 12:55 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: HB 43 - Election Reform Bill

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Thank you for this opportunity to speak up for election reform.

Alaska has come a long way in helping our citizens to make their voices heard through the ballot box but there is more that needs to be done.

HB - 43 is a step in the right direction and I urge you support it.

With respect.

Peg Tileston
[REDACTED]

Stuart Relay

From: Destiny Ropati [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:02 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Support for HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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My name is Destiny Ropati and I am a resident of the U-Med District in Anchorage, Alaska. I fully support HB 43 as it seeks to eliminate barriers during the voting process. I wish that all my neighbors not be burdened with the stress and anxiety of trying to figure out how to vote or whether their ballot was valid or not. The introduction of prepaid postage for absentee and mail-in ballots, elimination of the signature requirement for absentee and mail-in ballots, and a ballot cure process will increase the likelihood of votes being counted and corrected- imperative for our vast state. Transparency and accessibility are vital and will reduce barriers many people face in their voting experience.

Best wishes,
Destiny Ropati

Stuart Relay

From: Judy Stanek [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:22 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I support this bill.

Thanks,

Judy Stanek
[REDACTED]

Stuart Relay

From: Stephanie Rice [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:45 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Please approve HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear members of the Alaska Legislature,

My name is Stephanie Rice and I am a resident of East Anchorage. I strongly urge you to pass HB43 to allow reforms to elections that will make it easier for citizens to vote AND have their vote be counted in Alaska elections. Citizens who are eligible to vote should not be prevented from doing so by unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles that do not contribute to an election's security or integrity.

Same day registration, voting by mail, and automatic voter registration for people who apply for a PFD will increase eligible voters' ability to cast lawful votes for the candidate of their choice, which should be a bipartisan goal of all elected representatives

Stuart Relay

From: Montana Murphy [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 1:49 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Support for HB 43!

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

To the Committee Members,

My name is Montana Murphy and I live in south Anchorage. I am writing to express my wholehearted support for HB 43 as it seeks to eliminate barriers during the voting process. The introduction of prepaid postage for absentee and mail-in ballots, elimination of the signature requirement for absentee and mail-in ballots, and a ballot cure process will increase the likelihood of votes being counted and corrected- imperative for our vast state. Transparency and accessibility are vital and will reduce barriers many people face in their voting experience.

Quyana,
Montana

Stuart Relay

From: Christy Everett [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:10 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Please vote to advance HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Members of the House State Affairs Committee:

As a 38 year resident of Alaska, as well as as a mother and grandmother of Alaskans, I urge you to support HB 43. Our democracy only works if citizens vote, and this bill makes it easier for them to cast their vote, without sacrificing the ability to verify their eligibility. As the courts have repeatedly held, there is very little election fraud, but low voter participation is an actual problem. In this century there is no reason not to adopt the measures in this bill, and eliminate some of the barriers to voter participation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter,

Christine Everett
[REDACTED]

Stuart Relay

From: Susan A [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:18 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Public Testimony on HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Opposition to HB 43 Due to Barriers to Voting for Alaskan Natives, Low-Income Families, Working Families, Women, Minorities, Seniors, and Military Personnel, as written, suggestion to correct below

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

Introduction

I am submitting this testimony to express deep concerns regarding House Bill 43, which proposes significant changes to voter registration and election procedures in Alaska. While election security is important, HB 43 creates unnecessary barriers that disproportionately impact vulnerable communities, including Alaskan Natives, low-income families, working families, women, minorities, seniors, and active-duty military personnel and overseas residents. Additionally, this bill shifts more control to the executive branch, undermining legislative and judicial oversight, and introduces loopholes, constitutional conflicts, and policy concerns that threaten the integrity of our democratic process.

1. Impact on Alaskan Natives

Alaska Native communities, particularly those in rural areas, will be disproportionately affected due to:

Limited access to voter registration services: Many Alaska Natives rely on in-person registration, which HB 43 restricts by requiring last-minute registrants to use absentee, special needs, or questioned ballots.

Lack of physical addresses: Many tribal members use P.O. boxes instead of residential addresses, which may not meet HB 43's stricter residency requirements.

Reliance on traditional hunting and fishing schedules: The 30-day residency documentation requirement may disqualify subsistence hunters and fishers who travel seasonally.

Suggested Fixes:

Allow tribal enrollment records, subsistence permits, or affidavits from tribal leaders as proof of residency.

Expand in-person voter registration opportunities in rural communities.

2. Impact on Low-Income and Working Families

Stricter residency verification requirements create obstacles for homeless and transient populations who lack consistent documentation.

Working-class Alaskans juggling multiple jobs may struggle to take time off work to obtain proper documentation or navigate new voting procedures. If the SAVE Act passes this will cause ripples throughout our communities.

Many low-income voters lack reliable internet or transportation, making electronic verification or traveling to a voter registration center difficult.

Suggested Fixes:

Allow pay stubs, shelter records, or social service documents as proof of residency.

Provide free voter ID cards to those who cannot afford traditional identification.

3. Impact on Women and Minorities

Women, particularly survivors of domestic violence, may be deterred from voting if forced to provide publicly accessible residency documents.

Language barriers and bureaucratic challenges disproportionately affect immigrant and minority voters, who may struggle with new paperwork and verification requirements.

Mothers and caretakers may face additional burdens in obtaining documents for themselves while managing family responsibilities. If the SAVE Act passes they may never have the right again.

Suggested Fixes:

Strengthen voter confidentiality protections for survivors of domestic violence.

Expand voter outreach and translation services for non-English speakers.

4. Impact on Seniors

HB 43 introduces stricter requirements that make it harder for elderly Alaskans to vote, especially those in assisted living or with mobility limitations:

Residency documentation requirements disproportionately harm seniors who have moved into assisted living or with family members and no longer receive mail in their name.

Seniors who rely on absentee voting face an increased risk of ballot rejection due to new procedural hurdles.

Homebound seniors or those in hospice care may struggle to meet documentation and deadline requirements. If the SAVE Act passes they may have not been issued a birth certificates upon their births.

Suggested Fixes:

Accept Medicare/Medicaid statements, social security letters, or care facility records as proof of residency.

Establish a senior voter assistance program to help with ballot verification.

5. Impact on Active-Duty Military and Overseas Residents

HB 43 creates new obstacles for Alaskan military personnel, their families, and other residents serving overseas:

Stricter residency verification requirements may create confusion and delay for service members who maintain Alaska residency but are stationed in another state or country.

Delays in ballot processing due to last-minute questioned or absentee ballots could disenfranchise overseas voters, particularly those in combat zones with limited mail access.

Potential increase in ballot rejections if documentation requirements do not account for military address formats (APO/FPO).

Suggested Fixes:

Maintain military-friendly registration policies that allow service members and overseas voters to cast ballots without unnecessary bureaucratic barriers or remove the time restraints based on our own mail delivery services.

Ensure that absentee ballots from military and overseas voters are counted without additional scrutiny due to address discrepancies.

6. Executive Overreach and Lack of Checks and Balances

HB 43 increases the authority of the executive branch (Lieutenant Governor's office and Division of Elections) over voter registration, ballot counting, and election disputes.

By limiting access to in-person voting and favoring absentee ballots, the bill allows the executive branch more discretion over ballot rejection, reducing legislative oversight.

This shift weakens the role of the judiciary in resolving voter disputes, as executive election rules may not be subject to sufficient judicial review.

Suggested Fixes:

Establish legislative oversight of executive election rule changes.

Require transparent review processes for absentee and questioned ballot rejections.

7. Legal, Constitutional, and Policy Issues

Loopholes and Conflicts:

Voter disenfranchisement risk: The bill creates barriers that could result in legal challenges under the U.S. Constitution's Equal Protection Clause by disproportionately impacting marginalized groups.

Vague and inconsistent language: The bill lacks clarity on how late registrants' ballots will be counted, leaving it open to inconsistent implementation that could lead to voter suppression. The very opposite of what voting is intended to allow.

Potential violations of the Voting Rights Act: Given Alaska's history of voter discrimination against Indigenous communities, HB 43 could face federal scrutiny under the Voting Rights Act.

Suggested Fixes:

Ensure compliance with federal voting rights protections by conducting a legal review before implementation.

Clarify language regarding ballot verification and counting processes to prevent inconsistent enforcement.

Conclusion

House Bill 43, as written, creates unnecessary barriers to voting that disproportionately impact Alaskan Natives, low-income families, working families, women, minorities, seniors, and military personnel serving overseas. These restrictions do not meaningfully improve election security but instead risk voter disenfranchisement and executive overreach.

I have one more ask of the entire body. Please use your voice to express to the U.S. Congressional body that the SAVE Act will also disenfranchise many of our voters in a similar manner at the federal level. I urge you to assist in helping us stop it from passing into law. It would truly be a great national stain forever on the Republican party.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the legislature to reject HB 43 in its current form or significantly amend it to address the serious concerns outlined above. Alaska's elections must be accessible, fair, and inclusive for all eligible voters. I am more than willing to support fair voting reform including ways to cure our ballots, just as long as it we do not disenfranchise the Alaskan people along the trail. Just not add steps to make it harder and eliminate voters just to be cruel and unusual.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Susan Allmeroth
Two Rivers
Myself

You will have to forgive me at this point, I grow weary from this administrations toll. I have rewritten this public testimony so many times, I can't even seem to see my own overlaps now. There may or may not be

some additional information you may find helpful below. It could be just a very close duplicate. I apologize for my confusion.

Public Testimony on HB 43

Before the Alaska State Legislature

Regarding House Bill 43: An Act Relating to Elections; Relating to Voters; Relating to the Crime of Unlawful Interference with Voting; and Providing for an Effective Date

Introduction

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on House Bill 43 (HB 43). This legislation makes significant changes to Alaska's election laws, impacting voter registration, ballot access, and election oversight. While the stated intent may be to improve election integrity, the bill as written raises serious legal, constitutional, and policy concerns—including limiting voter access, expanding executive branch control over elections, and disproportionately impacting Alaska Natives, low-income families, working families, women, and minorities.

This testimony outlines the constitutional issues, loopholes, unintended consequences, and necessary amendments to ensure elections remain free, fair, and accessible while maintaining the appropriate balance of power among the three branches of government.

1. Legal and Constitutional Concerns

A. Violation of Voting Rights Protections

The 30-day residency requirement could violate the U.S. Constitution's 14th Amendment and the Voting Rights Act by disproportionately restricting access to voting for transient individuals, rural Alaskans, and Indigenous communities.

The burden of additional documentation within 30 days of an election may result in voter disenfranchisement, raising concerns under the Equal Protection Clause.

B. Due Process and Lack of Judicial Review

HB 43 does not provide a clear appeals process for voters who are denied registration due to documentation issues. This violates due process protections, as voters could be wrongfully disenfranchised with no legal recourse before Election Day.

C. Potential Conflict with the Alaska Constitution

Article V, Section 1 of the Alaska Constitution guarantees the right to vote for qualified residents. Restricting last-minute registrants to absentee, special needs, or questioned ballots creates two classes of voters, potentially violating the equal protection provisions of the state constitution.

2. Expansion of Executive Branch Control and Reduction of Legislative & Judicial Oversight

A. Administrative Discretion Over Voter Registration

Election officials gain discretionary power to decide whether proof-of-residency documents are valid, which could lead to subjective enforcement or politically motivated decisions.

Fix: The bill should clearly define what documents are accepted and require legislative oversight of election rule changes.

B. Limits on Legislative Authority Over Elections

HB 43 imposes new election procedures without clear legislative approval, granting more authority to the Lieutenant Governor and Division of Elections.

Fix: Require legislative approval for changes to voter registration and ballot procedures, and establish a bipartisan oversight committee.

C. Reduction of Judicial Oversight

The bill does not provide judicial review for denied registrations, limiting the courts' ability to intervene in wrongful voter exclusions.

Fix: Establish an appeals process for rejected voters that allows courts to resolve disputes before elections.

3. Impacts on Alaskan Natives, Low-Income Families, Working Families, Women, and Minorities

A. Barriers for Rural and Alaska Native Voters

Many Alaska Native communities lack consistent access to state-issued IDs or utility bills, making proof-of-residency requirements disproportionately difficult.

In-person voter registration in remote villages is limited, and these new restrictions may prevent residents from voting altogether.

B. Disenfranchisement of Low-Income and Working Families

Many low-income individuals move frequently, often lacking documentation that meets HB 43's new requirements.

Working-class Alaskans who register late due to demanding schedules would be forced to use absentee or questioned ballots, which have a higher rejection rate.

C. Disproportionate Impact on Women and Minorities

Women, particularly those fleeing domestic violence, may have trouble providing proof-of-residency documentation under their legal name.

Communities of color, especially immigrants and Indigenous populations, are more likely to experience document verification challenges.

Fix:

Accept tribal IDs, hunting/fishing licenses, and other locally recognized documents as proof of residency. Perhaps even signed affidavits or court documents could even to be use in proving names or residency.

Increase voter registration access in rural and underserved areas through mobile registration units.

4. Policy Issues, Overlaps, and Loopholes

A. Absentee and Questioned Ballots Under Executive Control

HB 43 increases reliance on absentee, special needs, and questioned ballots but does not provide safeguards against rejections due to minor errors.

The Division of Elections (under the executive branch) determines which ballots are counted, creating potential for discretionary disenfranchisement.

Fix:

Ensure independent oversight of absentee and questioned ballot verification.

Allow in-person voting for all registrants regardless of when they registered.

B. Potential for Voter Suppression via Bureaucratic Delays

HB 43 could encourage administrative delays in processing new registrations, leading to more voters being forced into the absentee/questioned ballot system, and add additional costs.

Fix:

Mandate timely processing of voter registrations to prevent delays.

Require statewide voter registration outreach programs to inform voters of changes.

5. Criminal Implications and Risks of Unlawful Interference with Voting

A. Increased Risk of Voter Disenfranchisement through Administrative Error

Voters denied registration due to documentation issues could be unlawfully prevented from voting, raising concerns about unintentional voter suppression.

This bill discusses no recourse for violations made by election officials or voters.

B. Ambiguities in Unlawful Interference with Voting

The bill expands penalties for unlawful interference with voting, but does not clarify what constitutes an offense—raising concerns about selective enforcement.

Fix:

Define clear guidelines for election officials to ensure fair and consistent application of the law.

Conclusion & Recommended Amendments

To ensure HB 43 protects voting rights while maintaining election integrity, the following amendments are recommended:

Clarify the voter registration verification process and limit executive discretion over documentation requirements.

Guarantee a judicial appeal process for voters denied registration.

Allow in-person voting for all registrants, even within 30 days of an election and up to election day.

Ensure legislative oversight of major election rule changes.

Expand acceptable proof-of-residency documents to include tribal IDs and other community-based records.

Increase voter education and outreach to inform Alaskans of new registration rules.

Establish independent oversight of absentee and questioned ballot verification.

HB 43, in its current form, risks disenfranchising vulnerable populations, over-centralizing election control within the executive branch, and reducing legislative and judicial oversight. If these issues are not addressed, the bill could face legal challenges and potential violations of voting rights protections

Thank you again for allowing to comment.

Stuart Relay

From: victory lavalle [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 2:51 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Please support HB 43

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I believe that the provisions of Hb 43 will serve both to protect the rights of Alaska voters and to reduce barriers to participation in elections for qualified Alaska citizens and mirrors the protections offered in SB 64, which I also support.

I believe 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.

Stuart Relay

From: Kathleen Easley BSN, RN, NCSN [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 3:01 PM
To: House State Affairs; Rep. Calvin Schrage; Rep. Julie Coulombe; Sen. James Kaufman
Subject: HB 43 Public testimony

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Please see the public testimony below.

February 13, 2025

Today I am writing my public testimony giving my support for HB 43- Elections Reform Bill. I believe that this brings positive changes and updates that reflect and protect the rights of Alaskan voters and reduces some of the barriers that prevent people from voting in our state.

Extending the early and absentee voting period from 15 to 30 days would be a significant way to include all voters in our state. Not only will this allow ballot curing prior to election day, it allows more options/days for people who travel or are busy! I have utilized early voting several times because of travel. This allows more time for busy Alaskans.

Having a ballot curing process like the Anchorage Municipality would allow people time to remedy errors and not miss out on their vote counting. I personally have had to cure my ballot in Anchorage the last two elections because they caught a signature match error-it allowed me to go in and verify/cure this with my identification. It was a great catch because over time my signature had changed from what was on file (state's signature). I was able to fix this simple error and then my signature was updated (on the 2nd try!), so I know my vote counted!

I am glad to see the elimination of the witness signature requirement for absentee and mail-in ballots. This has caused a lot of confusion with voters and seems needless. Having it signed doesn't legitimately verify anything; the person signing as witness is never identified, and it seems like just another spot for people to miss. How sad to not have your vote counted because you forgot this or didn't have someone to sign for you- it adds complexity that doesn't need to be there especially when it is not validating anything.

Another great part of this bill is the postage-paid return envelopes for the absentee and mail-in ballots. There has been confusion about postage requirements in the past, it requires additional work of getting postage, and costs someone to vote, all of that is additional burden, not making voting more accessible. This would absolutely ease return of a ballot. Many Alaskans utilize voting this way, and it seems like a minimal cost to the state to help secure the right for all Alaskans to be able to have their vote counted.

Thank you for your time, and I am happy to support this bill that makes voting better for Alaskans.

Kathleen Easley-Anchorage resident

Stuart Relay

From: CJ Koan [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 5:02 PM
To: House State Affairs
Cc: Rep. Sarah Vance; Rep. Kevin McCabe; Rep. Elexie Moore; Sen. Shelley Hughes; Sen. Mike Shower
Subject: Oppose HB 43 & HB 21 – Support SB 52 & SB 64 for Election Integrity

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Dear House State of Affairs Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 43 and HB 21, both of which introduce unnecessary risks to Alaska's election system. While these bills are presented as efforts to increase voter access, they actually weaken election security and public trust in the voting process. Instead, I urge you to support SB 52 and SB 64, which take meaningful steps to protect election integrity.

Concerns with HB 43 & HB 21:

- **Preregistration of Minors:** Both bills allow 16- and 17-year-olds to preregister to vote, creating potential inaccuracies in voter rolls and opening the door for errors or fraudulent registrations. Individuals should not be added to voter rolls until they are legally eligible to vote.
- **Expanding Absentee Voting (HB 43):** Weakening absentee ballot protections increases the risk of ballot harvesting and errors in the chain of custody. Nationwide, mail-in ballots have a higher rejection rate due to mistakes, leading to disenfranchisement.
- **Redefining “Unlawful Interference with Voting” (HB 43):** If vaguely written, this could be used to intimidate election observers and limit transparency. Oversight is essential for free and fair elections.

Both HB 43 and HB 21 are being pushed by left-leaning organizations that advocate for policies weakening election security nationwide. These bills should be rejected.

Instead, I Strongly Support SB 52 & SB 64

Rather than advancing legislation that compromises election security, I urge you to support **SB 52 and SB 64**, which take meaningful steps to restore public trust in Alaska's elections:

- **SB 52 eliminates Ranked Choice Voting (RCV)**, returning to a **one-person, one-vote system** that is simple, transparent, and fair. RCV has led to voter confusion, disenfranchisement, and candidates winning without true majority support.
- **SB 64 strengthens election integrity** by:

- **Cleaning voter registration rolls** by ensuring ineligible voters are removed efficiently.
- **Ensuring ballots are counted promptly**, expediting the election process while maintaining security.
- **Enhancing election transparency** with provisions that secure the voting process.

I urge you to **oppose HB 43 and HB 21** and instead support **SB 52 and SB 64** to protect the integrity of Alaska's elections. Voters must have confidence in the security, transparency, and fairness of our electoral system.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

CJ Koan


Wasilla

Stuart Relay

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, February 13, 2025 7:50 PM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Please support HB 43 - Election Reform Bill.

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Hello Legislators!

Please support HB 43 - Election Reform Bill.

Thank you,

Robin Dale Ford
[REDACTED]

Stuart Relay

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 10:27 AM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: HB 43: "An Act relating to elections; relating to voters; relating to the crime of unlawful interference with voting; and providing for an effective date."

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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I'm writing in support HB 43.

I'm confident that most, if not all, of the committee are familiar with the basic statistics of rejected ballots in the 2024 election. They were significantly lower than 2020, but still 1303 were rejected, of which only 9 were sent for criminal investigation. [https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://alaskapublic.org/news/politics/elections/2025-01-15/rejected-ballots-witness-signature-2024__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZnc8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sMbdOZL8\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://alaskapublic.org/news/politics/elections/2025-01-15/rejected-ballots-witness-signature-2024__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZnc8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sMbdOZL8$) There were also problems with early voting and absentee voting in some rural areas which made it likely people who wanted to vote did not vote. [https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://www.adn.com/politics/2024/10/31/early-voting-is-surg-ing-but-not-in-rural-alaska/__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZnc8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sKNKZDyI\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://www.adn.com/politics/2024/10/31/early-voting-is-surg-ing-but-not-in-rural-alaska/__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZnc8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sKNKZDyI$)

The values I see that need to be balanced here are 1. people's ability to vote versus 2. people fraudulently voting. While there has been lots of talk about fraudulent votes, I've seen very little evidence that this is a problem. But people's legitimate votes not being counted has been documented.

But I would also call attention to another election issue - redistricting.

I would highly recommend that committee members start looking at ways to make our process less political. Although we have moved from the Governor's office being in charge of redistricting to having a five member citizens board, the way the members are chosen still allows for heavy partisan influence.

The State Constitution says that appointments be made without regard to political affiliation, yet two very partisan Republicans were appointed by the Governor in 220. During Redistricting Board hearings, one of the Board members was asked how he came to be selected and he replied, "There aren't many Republicans in Southeast." We only had a relatively fair redistricting map because the Supreme Court overturned the Board's map, saying it was partisan gerrymandered.

I would urge legislators to begin to study two factors:

1. neutral, independent boards, that are not weighted towards one political party or the other
2. evaluation metrics that test how fair the redistricting is. Redistricting will begin again when the 2030 Census numbers are released to the states. So there are less than five years to pass any legislation that will insure the least partisan redistricting maps.

California has made the independence and balance of its commission less partisan:

"According to the state constitution, the first eight commissioners are selected by a panel of three independent officials from the state auditor's office. That panel narrows down applications to 120 — 40 Democrats, 40 Republicans and 40 registered with no party preference — and then down to 60 applicants, 20 from each subpool. Then, the Legislature gets to remove as many as 24 names from the list (eight from each subpool). Finally, the auditor randomly draws eight names.

These first eight commissioners then select the final six members by selecting two from each subpool." [https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://calmatters.org/politics/2021/11/california-redistricting-what-you-need-to-know/__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sE0_T8Pz\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://calmatters.org/politics/2021/11/california-redistricting-what-you-need-to-know/__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sE0_T8Pz$)

Here are two website that discuss ways to measure the fairness of a state's plan:

[https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://planscore.org/*!2022-statehouse__;!w!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sEftW7L_\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://planscore.org/*!2022-statehouse__;!w!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sEftW7L_$)
[https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://gking.harvard.edu/category/research-interests/applications/legislative-redistricting__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sOopPcUo\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://gking.harvard.edu/category/research-interests/applications/legislative-redistricting__;!!LdQKC6s!PnfxQb5x-PBH7Sybb2Tsp6yQcDGFZNC8zsFCuwTm05DjOqXCmmGwnetCYw0SGF6FICyBvrs3sOopPcUo$)

Thank you,

Steve Aufrecht
Anchorage

Stuart Relay

From: G Nelson [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, February 14, 2025 11:54 AM
To: House State Affairs
Subject: Support for HB 43 - it makes sense.

Good morning,

I am writing to support HB 43. It is imperative that our election system allow for more opportunities for voters to engage in our democratic process of representation and not restrict voters or make their choice more difficult.

Thank you for supporting voters,
Gretchen Nelson

[REDACTED]