



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.