

HB 1219 -- ABSENTEE BALLOTS

SPONSOR: Dugger

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Elections by a vote of 8 to 2.

This bill allows an election authority to utilize a voting machine to process the absentee ballot of a voter who has voted in person and waives the requirement that the ballot be placed in a sealed envelope. The bill also requires all ballots to be counted in a uniform manner by repealing language allowing the removal of ballots based on the death of the voter.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill allows immediate processing of absentee ballots using voting machines so that absentee votes are treated in the same manner as other votes. Currently, large cities do not remove any deceased voter ballots and count them, whereas many rural areas are able to remove deceased voter ballots prior to counting so that different standards are applied to vote counting.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dugger and Missouri Association of County Clerks.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that they are opposed to the counting of votes by voters who have died prior to the time when ballots are authorized to be counted.

Testifying against the bill was Office of the Secretary of State.