

HB 29 -- ABSENTEE VOTING

SPONSOR: Stacy

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 4 to 3.

This bill requires the use of a copy of photographic identification for use with any application for an absentee ballot that is not made in person to the election authority. Only the election authority will process the application for an absentee ballot, of any type. Each election authority shall establish a numbering system for absentee ballots to ensure proper tracking and compliance.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that the bill will help to prevent some kinds of election fraud. Absentee ballots are often used in the kinds of election fraud discovered in Missouri.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Stacy.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that absentee ballots are used for many special purposes including allowing the disabled and elderly to vote so they should not be further restricted. Photographic identification rules and requirements are currently unsettled because of litigation so applying a uniform standard to absentee ballots would be difficult.

Testifying against the bill were Eric Fey, St. Louis County Election Board; American Civil Liberties Union Missouri; and Planned Parenthood Advocates in Missouri.