



Colorado Legislative Council Staff
NO FISCAL IMPACT

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Prime Sponsor(s): Rep. Ragsdale
Sen. Johnson

Bill Status: House State, Veterans, and
Military Affairs

Fiscal Analyst: Chris Ward (303-866-5834)

TITLE: CONCERNING ABSENTEE BALLOTS.

Summary of Assessment

The bill changes three provisions in state law related to absentee ballots. First, it extends by 4 days the deadline for applying for an absentee ballot. Under current law, a person wishing to receive an absentee ballot by mail must file his or her application with the clerk conducting the election by the close of business on the 11th day before the election; the bill allows applications to be filed as late as the 7th day before the election.

Second, the bill clarifies when an absentee ballot will not be counted. Under current law, when the signature on an absentee ballot does not appear to match the signature on file for that voter in the clerk's office, the clerk is required to send a letter to the voter seeking confirmation that the person actually voted by the absentee ballot. In confirming his or her vote, and in order for the vote to be counted, the person must reply within 8 days with a statement that the person did cast the ballot and the signature is correct. The law also requires the voter to return a copy of his or her identification with the letter. This bill clarifies that if the voter does not return the required ID with the letter, the ballot will not count.

Third, the bill allows a voter who receives an emergency absentee ballot by electronic transfer to return the ballot in the same manner. It establishes procedures for handling ballots received by electronic transfer, including a requirement that certain steps be taken to maintain the confidentiality of ballots cast by electronic transfer as much as possible. However, the bill also requires that voters casting a ballot by electronic transfer be notified that their ballot will not be confidential.

The bill makes minor modifications and clarifies current law, but it will not affect state or local government revenues or expenditures. Therefore, it is assessed as having no fiscal impact. The bill would take effect July 1, 2006.

Departments Contacted

State