

As Introduced

**129th General Assembly
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S. B. No. 227

Senators Tavares, Turner

Cosponsors: Senators Skindell, Sawyer

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A B I L L

To amend section 3509.03 of the Revised Code to 1
restore local control to Ohio's election process 2
and increase voter participation by permitting an 3
individual who wishes to vote by absent voter's 4
ballots to request those ballots via electronic 5
mail, through the internet, if internet delivery 6
is offered by a board of elections or the 7
Secretary of State, by permitting a board of 8
elections to mail unsolicited applications for 9
absent voter's ballots, and by requiring the 10
General Assembly to appropriate funds, and 11
requiring the Secretary of State to reimburse 12
boards, for costs incurred in sending unsolicited 13
applications for general elections held in an 14
even-numbered year. 15

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:

Section 1. That section 3509.03 of the Revised Code be 16
amended to read as follows: 17

Sec. 3509.03. Except as provided in division (B) of section 18
3509.08 of the Revised Code, any qualified elector desiring to 19

vote absent voter's ballots at an election shall make written 20
application for those ballots to the board of elections of the 21
county in which the elector's voting residence is located. The 22
elector may personally deliver the application to the director, 23
may mail it to the director, send it to the director by electronic 24
mail, or send it to the director through internet delivery, if 25
internet delivery is offered by the board of elections or the 26
secretary of state. The application need not be in any particular 27
form but shall contain all of the following: 28

(A) The elector's name; 29

(B) The elector's signature; 30

(C) The address at which the elector is registered to vote; 31

(D) The elector's date of birth; 32

(E) One of the following: 33

(1) The elector's driver's license number or state 34
identification card number; 35

(2) The last four digits of the elector's social security 36
number; 37

(3) A copy of the elector's current and valid photo 38
identification, a copy of a military identification, a copy of a 39
United States passport, or a copy of a current utility bill, bank 40
statement, government check, paycheck, or other government 41
document, other than a notice of voter registration mailed by a 42
board of elections under section 3503.19 of the Revised Code, that 43
shows the name and address of the elector. 44

(F) A statement identifying the election for which absent 45
voter's ballots are requested; 46

(G) A statement that the person requesting the ballots is a 47
qualified elector; 48

(H) If the request is for primary election ballots, the 49

elector's party affiliation; 50

(I) If the elector desires ballots to be mailed to the 51
elector, the address to which those ballots shall be mailed. 52

Each application for absent voter's ballots shall be 53
delivered to the board not earlier than the first day of January 54
of the year of the elections for which the absent voter's ballots 55
are requested or not earlier than ninety days before the day of 56
the election at which the ballots are to be voted, whichever is 57
earlier, and not later than twelve noon of the third day before 58
the day of the election at which the ballots are to be voted, or 59
not later than six p.m. on the last Friday before the day of the 60
election at which the ballots are to be voted if the application 61
is delivered in person to the office of the board. 62

A board of elections ~~shall not~~ may mail ~~any~~ unsolicited 63
applications for absent voter's ballots. ~~A board shall only mail~~ 64
~~an absent voter's ballot application to an elector who has~~ 65
~~requested such an application from the board. A board of elections~~ 66
~~that mails an absent voter's ballot application to an elector~~ 67
~~under this section shall not prepay the return postage for that~~ 68
~~application to any person registered to vote in the applicable~~ 69
county. The general assembly shall appropriate funds to the 70
secretary of state to pay costs incurred for mailing those 71
applications for a general election conducted in an even-numbered 72
year. The secretary of state shall use those funds to reimburse 73
the boards of elections for any costs the boards incur to mail 74
unsolicited applications for absent voter's ballots for a general 75
election conducted in an even-numbered year. 76

Section 2. That existing section 3509.03 of the Revised Code 77
is hereby repealed. 78