Ohio Legislative Service Commission

Bill Analysis

Emily E. Wendel

H.B. 266

129th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Reps. Stebelton, Yuko, Letson

BILL SUMMARY

- Permits an elector who is confined to a hospital or other health care facility under isolation to cast an absent voter's ballot with the assistance of two employees of the board of elections of the elector's county who belong to the two major political parties.
- Allows the employees to accept the elector's verbal instructions for marking the ballot using telephonic or other electronic means, so long as the elector and the employees can hear each other at all times.
- Provides that if possible under the circumstances, the elector and the employees also must be in view of each other at all times during the voting process.
- Allows the employees to obtain a facsimile copy of the elector's signature from the hospital instead of requiring the elector to sign the ballot identification envelope.
- Except as provided above, requires the elector and the board of elections to follow the same requirements and procedures as under continuing law for sick, disabled, and confined electors to request and complete an absent voter's ballot.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Electors confined under isolation

The bill permits an elector who is confined to a hospital or other health care facility under isolation and will be unable to travel to the polls on Election Day to cast an absent voter's ballot with the assistance of two employees of the board of elections of the elector's county who belong to the two major political parties.

Under current law, a board of elections must send employees to assist an elector in completing a ballot only if the elector is confined to a public or private institution

within the county, except that under certain circumstances, the elector's family member may deliver the ballot. Otherwise, the board may send the employees, or it may mail the absent voter's ballot to the elector. The bill requires the board to send the employees to an elector who is confined under isolation, regardless of the elector's location.

For an elector who is under isolation, the bill allows the board employees to accept the elector's verbal instructions for marking the ballot using telephonic or other electronic means, as long as the elector and the employees can hear each other at all times. If possible under the circumstances, the elector and employees must be in view of each other at all times during the voting process.

The elector is not required to sign the identification envelope in order for the ballot to be counted. The board employees may obtain a facsimile copy of the elector's signature from the hospital, and the signature must be affixed to the identification envelope and used to verify the elector's signature.

Except as described above, the elector and the board must follow the same requirements and procedures as under continuing law for sick, disabled, and confined electors to request and complete an absent voter's ballot.[1]

HISTORY

ACTION	DATE
Introduced	06-15-11

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[1] R.C. 3509.08(A), (B), and (D).