

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1880

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Government Operations & Elections, March 26, 2009

Title: An act relating to ballot envelopes.

Brief Description: Concerning ballot envelopes.

Sponsors: Representatives Armstrong, Hunt, Appleton, Alexander and Nelson.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/04/09, 93-2.

Committee Activity: Government Operations & Elections: 3/24/09, 3/26/09 [DPA].

SENATE COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS

Majority Report: Do pass as amended.

Signed by Senators Fairley, Chair; Oemig, Vice Chair; Roach, Ranking Minority Member; Benton, McDermott, Pridemore and Swecker.

Staff: Edward Redmond (786-7471)

Background: County auditors are required to send each absentee voter (voter) a ballot, security envelope, and larger return envelope. Voters must print their name and address on the return envelope and sign a declaration that they are qualified to vote. The return envelopes must have a secrecy flap that voters may seal to cover their signature and optional telephone number.

Summary of Bill (Recommended Amendments): Secrecy flaps are not required for return envelopes. The return envelopes, however, must shield the voter's signature and optional telephone number.

EFFECT OF CHANGES MADE BY GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE (Recommended Amendments): The return envelopes must shield the voter's signature and optional telephone number.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony on Amended House Bill: PRO: The biggest difference between the House Bill and Senate Bill is the secrecy flap. This House Bill gives the county auditors the option of providing a secrecy flap for signatures that are required. The substantial saving on these envelopes is relatively huge in some of the larger counties. We heard from the auditors on the House side and they all wanted the option to choose whether to include secrecy flaps on return envelopes.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative Armstrong, prime sponsor.