

made only upon the affirmative vote of the election of the town at the annual town meeting or at a special town meeting held pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Sections 365.52 to 365.58.

Sec. 2. This act is effective the day following final enactment.

Approved May 24, 1973.

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## CHAPTER 637—H.F.No.954

*An act relating to elections; providing for the reception and counting of absentee ballots; amending Minnesota Statutes 1971, Section 207.11.*

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Minnesota:

Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 1971, Section 207.11, is amended to read:

**207.11 ELECTIONS; ABSENTEE VOTING; JUDGES TO RECEIVE AND COUNT BALLOTS.** The judges in the several precincts at any election shall receive all ballots delivered to them on election day by officers or employees of the United States post office department in due course of the business of that department or by the clerk of the municipality, and as herein provided, and deposit the same in the appropriate ballot box provided that they are satisfied that the person is a voter in such precinct and entitled to vote therein at such election; provided, further, that the conditions precedent hereinafter set forth, exist. Ballots so deposited shall be counted, canvassed and returned ~~in the same manner~~ and shall be given the same force and effect as the votes of other duly qualified voters who vote in person.

Upon a "Return Envelope" being delivered to the judges they shall open the same in such a manner as not to cut or mutilate the contents or deface or damage the certificate or the signatures thereto on the outside thereof. They shall compare the signature of the voter on the outside of the "Return Envelope" with the signature on the "Application for Ballots" delivered to them as provided herein. If the judges or a majority of them, shall be satisfied that the signature of the voter subscribed to the "Voter's Certificate" is the genuine signature of the person who made the "Application for Ballots," and if the signature of the voter has been properly authenticated as prescribed in the "Directions to

**Changes or additions indicated by underline, deletions by ~~strikeout~~.**

Voters" set forth in this chapter, the judges, or one or more of them shall write the word "Received" on such "Ballot Envelope" and under such word his or their name or initials, provided that in municipalities in which registration of voters is required such ballots shall not be so marked unless the voter mailing in such ballots has been theretofore duly registered in such precinct, nor shall said ballots be so marked with the word "Received" if it appears from the registration file that such voter has already voted at such election, either in person or by mail. If the ballots are not received for the reason that the voter has failed to comply with the requirements herein set forth or has previously voted at such election, then such "Ballot Envelope" shall be marked "Rejected" and placed in the "Return Envelope" and placed with and returned to the county auditor with the unused ballots. No person who voted by mail as herein provided shall be permitted to thereafter vote in person in the same election.

If the "Ballot Envelope" is marked with the word "Received" as herein provided, the judges in charge of the register shall make an appropriate notation on the register of voters indicating that the voter has voted by mail; this shall be done by placing the letters "V.M." in the appropriate column opposite the voter's name.

~~The "Ballot Envelope" marked "Received" as aforesaid shall be carefully kept placed by the judges in a separate absentees ballot box until after the closing of the polls on the election day, but before any of the regular ballot boxes are opened the absentees ballot box and each "Ballot Envelope" shall be opened and the ballots therein taken therefrom initialed by an election judge and deposited by the judges in the proper ballot box last regular mail delivery by the United States post office department on the election day. The absentees ballot box and each "Ballot Envelope" may then be opened, ballots therein initialed, counted and tabulated by the election judges. If there be more than one ballot of any kind enclosed in said "Ballot Envelope," then and in such case neither of such ballots of such kind shall be deposited in the ballot box, counted but all such kinds shall be placed with the spoiled ballots and returned as is provided for by law with reference to such spoiled ballots. The judges before depositing said ballots in the ballot boxes shall write their initials thereon on absentee ballots in the same manner as is provided by law with reference to ballots delivered by them to voters in person. No count results from any precinct shall be disclosed by any election official or other individual until all count results are available, nor shall the public media disclose any count results from any precinct before the polls are closed.~~

Approved May 24, 1973.

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