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State of Minnesota
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
NINETIETH SESSION

H. F. No. 2306

03/09/2017 Authored by Garofalo
The bill was read for the first time and referred to the Committee on Government Operations and Elections Policy

1.1 A bill for an act
1.2 relating to elections; modifying procedures for absentee voting; amending
1.3 Minnesota Statutes 2016, sections 203B.081, subdivisions 1, 3; 203B.085; 204B.35,
1.4 subdivision 4.

1.5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.6 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 203B.081, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.7 Subdivision 1. **Location; timing.** An eligible voter may vote by absentee ballot in the
1.8 office of the county auditor and at any other polling place designated by the county auditor
1.9 during the 46 days before the Sunday prior to the election, except as provided in this section.

1.10 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 203B.081, subdivision 3, is amended to read:

1.11 Subd. 3. **Alternative procedure.** (a) The county auditor may make available a ballot
1.12 counter and ballot box for use by the voters ~~during the seven days before the election~~. If a
1.13 ballot counter and ballot box is provided, a voter must be given the option either (1) to vote
1.14 using the process provided in section 203B.08, subdivision 1, or (2) to vote in the manner
1.15 provided in this subdivision.

1.16 (b) If a voter chooses to vote in the manner provided in this subdivision, the voter must
1.17 state the voter's name, address, and date of birth to the county auditor or municipal clerk.
1.18 The voter shall sign a voter's certificate, which must include the voter's name, identification
1.19 number, and the certification required by section 201.071, subdivision 1. The signature of
1.20 an individual on the voter's certificate and the issuance of a ballot to the individual is evidence
1.21 of the intent of the individual to vote at that election.

2.1 (c) After signing the voter's certificate, the voter shall be issued a ballot and immediately
 2.2 retire to a voting station or other designated location in the polling place to mark the ballot.
 2.3 The ballot must not be taken from the polling place. If the voter spoils the ballot, the voter
 2.4 may return it to the election official in exchange for a new ballot. After completing the
 2.5 ballot, the voter shall deposit the ballot into the ballot box.

2.6 (d) The election official must immediately record that the voter has voted in the manner
 2.7 provided in section 203B.121, subdivision 3.

2.8 (e) The election duties required by this subdivision must be performed by the county
 2.9 auditor, municipal clerk, or a deputy of the auditor or clerk.

2.10 Sec. 3. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 203B.085, is amended to read:

2.11 **203B.085 COUNTY AUDITOR'S AND MUNICIPAL CLERK'S OFFICES TO**
 2.12 **REMAIN OPEN DURING CERTAIN HOURS PRECEDING ELECTION.**

2.13 The county auditor's office in each county and the clerk's office in each city or town
 2.14 authorized under section 203B.05 to administer absentee balloting must be open for
 2.15 acceptance of absentee ballot applications and casting of absentee ballots from 10:00 a.m.
 2.16 to 3:00 p.m. on the Saturday ~~and until 5:00 p.m. on the day~~ immediately preceding a primary,
 2.17 special, or general election ~~unless that day falls on a Saturday or Sunday~~. Town clerks'
 2.18 offices must be open for absentee voting from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on the Saturday
 2.19 before a town general election held in March. The school district clerk, when performing
 2.20 the county auditor's election duties, need not comply with this section.

2.21 Sec. 4. Minnesota Statutes 2016, section 204B.35, subdivision 4, is amended to read:

2.22 Subd. 4. **Absentee ballots; preparation; delivery.** At least ~~46~~ 48 days before an election,
 2.23 ballots necessary to fill applications of absentee voters shall be prepared and delivered to
 2.24 the officials who administer the provisions of chapter 203B, except as provided in this
 2.25 subdivision. Ballots necessary to fill applications of absentee voters for a town general
 2.26 election held in March shall be prepared and delivered to the town clerk at least 30 days
 2.27 before the election.

2.28 This section applies to school district elections held on the same day as a statewide
 2.29 election or an election for a county or municipality located partially or wholly within the
 2.30 school district.

3.1 Sec. 5. **EFFECTIVE DATE.**

3.2 Sections 1 to 4 are effective January 1, 2018, and apply to elections held on or after that
3.3 date.