

HCS SS SCS SB 116 -- VOTING PROCEDURES FOR UNIFORMED SERVICES AND OVERSEAS VOTERS

SPONSOR: Kraus (Davis)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on Elections by a vote of 12 to 0.

The substitute establishes the Uniformed Military and Overseas Voters Act to apply to all federal and state elections and local elections where absentee ballots are utilized. The Secretary of State must make available to the appropriate individuals information regarding voter registration procedures and procedures for casting military-overseas ballots; establish an electronic transmission system through which a covered voter may apply for and receive voter registration materials, military-overseas ballots, and other specified information; and develop standardized absentee-voting materials and voting instructions. The substitute allows an overseas voter or military voter to use a federal postcard or the application's electronic equivalent to apply to register to vote in addition to any other approved method. A covered voter may use the declaration accompanying a federal write-in absentee ballot to apply to register to vote simultaneously with the submission of the federal write-in absentee ballot if the declaration is received no later than 4:00 p.m. on the fourth Tuesday prior to the election. An overseas or military voter who is registered to vote in Missouri and satisfies voter eligibility requirements may use a federal write-in absentee ballot to vote for all offices and ballot measures in an election. A valid military-overseas ballot must be counted if it is delivered by the end of business on the business day before the election authority convenes a verification board under Section 115.497, RSMo, to the address of the appropriate election authority.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the bill will make it easier for military and overseas voters to request ballots and to vote.

Testifying for the bill were Senator Kraus; and Dewey Riehn, Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States, Missouri Department.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that it may need a small modification to continue to allow non-registered federal service voters to vote in federal elections in Missouri.

Testifying on the bill was Office of the Secretary of State.