

July 13, 2010

To the Honorable Members of the
Illinois House of Representatives,
96th General Assembly

I hereby return House Bill 4842 with specific recommendation for changes.

I commend the sponsors of this bill for their hard work. This bill requires the State Board of Elections to publish an electronic voters guide prior to each general primary election. I firmly believe that publishing an electronic guide will help the citizens of our State be better informed prior to each primary election. House Bill 4842 is an important step forward for our State and will help Illinoisans participate in the democratic process.

Though this bill is an important step towards making our primary elections fairer and more competitive, it is not enough. To ensure that each citizen of our State has the ability to fully participate in primary elections, we cannot allow party affiliations to stand in the way of meaningful choice. The choice to favor one political party over another is a personal one and should be between a voter and his or her conscience. A voter should never have to fear the repercussions of picking one party over another when exercising his or her fundamental right to vote.

My specific recommendations for change to House Bill 4842 eliminate the requirement that a voter publicly declare party affiliation when voting at a primary election. Voting is a sacred right and as long as I am Governor, I will do everything within my power to protect each citizen's ability to cast a ballot. With my recommendation today, a voter's partisan preference will no longer be known to others. The decision to cast a primary ballot for one party or another will be strictly a matter of personal choice.

The fundamental purpose of this bill is to create a fairer primary election system. I am confident that implementing an electronic voting guide and an open primary system will help accomplish our shared goal.

Therefore, pursuant to Article IV, Section 9(e) of the Illinois Constitution of 1970, I hereby return House Bill 4842, entitled "AN ACT concerning elections.", with the following specific recommendations for change:

on page 1, line 4, by replacing "Section" with "Sections"; and

on page 1, by replacing line 5 with "7-43, 7-44, 12A-5, 19-2.1, 19-3, 19-4, 19-5, 19-8, 19-12.1, 20-3, 20-4, 20-5, and 20-8 and by adding Sections 19-4.5 and 20-4.5 as follows:"; and

on page 1, below line 5, by inserting the following:

“(10 ILCS 5/7-43) (from Ch. 46, par. 7-43)

Sec. 7-43. Every person having resided in this State 6 months and in the precinct 30 days next preceding any primary therein who shall be a citizen of the United States of the age of 18 or more years, shall be entitled to vote at such primary.

The following regulations shall be applicable to primaries:

~~No person shall be entitled to vote at a primary:~~

(a) ~~Unless he declares his party affiliations as required by this Article.~~

(b) (Blank.)

(c) (Blank.)

(c.5) (Blank.) ~~If that person has participated in the town political party caucus, under Section 45-50 of the Township Code, of another political party by signing an affidavit of voters attending the caucus within 45 days before the first day of the calendar month in which the primary is held.~~

(d) (Blank.)

(e) In cities, villages and incorporated towns having a board of election commissioners only voters registered as provided by Article 6 of this Act shall be entitled to vote at such primary.

(f) No person shall be entitled to vote at a primary unless he is registered under the provisions of Articles 4, 5 or 6 of this Act, when his registration is required by any of said Articles to entitle him to vote at the election with reference to which the primary is held.

(Source: P.A. 95-699, eff. 11-9-07.)

(10 ILCS 5/7-44) (from Ch. 46, par. 7-44)

Sec. 7-44. Voter choice of primary ballot.

(a) Any person desiring to vote at a primary shall state his or her name and, residence and party affiliation to the primary judges, one of whom shall thereupon announce the same in a distinct tone of voice, sufficiently loud to be heard by all persons in the polling place. When article 4, 5 or 6 is applicable the Certificate of Registered Voter therein prescribed shall be made and signed and the official poll record shall be made. If the person desiring to vote is not challenged, one of the primary judges shall give to him or her one, and only one, primary ballot of each of the established political parties nominating candidates for office at the primary election, but the voter may cast a ballot of only one political party, except as otherwise provided in subsection (b) party with which he declares himself affiliated, on the back of which the such primary judge shall endorse his or her initials in such manner that they may be seen when the primary ballot is properly folded. If the person desiring to vote is challenged he or she shall not receive a primary ballot from the primary judges until he or she shall have established his or her right to vote as hereinafter provided in this Article. No person who refuses to state his party affiliation shall be allowed to vote at a primary.

(b) A person who casts a ballot of declares his party affiliation with a statewide established political party and requests a primary ballot of such party may nonetheless also declare his affiliation with a political party established only within a political subdivision, and may also vote in the primary of a such local political party established only within a political subdivision on the same election day, provided that the such voter may not vote in both such party primaries with respect to offices of the same political subdivision. However, no person casting a ballot of declaring his affiliation with a statewide established political party may vote in the primary of any other statewide political party on the same election day. Each party's primary ballot shall include a space for the voter to mark, indicating that political party as the party for which the voter cast his or her votes. The voter may mark the space on the ballot of only one political party indicating that party, except as otherwise provided in this Section. If the voter desires to cast his or her ballot of a statewide political party and a political party established only within a political subdivision, the voter may indicate that choice by marking the space provided on the ballot of the statewide political party and by also marking the space provided on the ballot of the political party established only within a political subdivision. If the voter does not mark the space on the primary ballot indicating the political party in which the voter cast his or her ballot, or marks more than one such space, the judges of election shall count only the votes of the political party in which the voter cast a vote for the office nearest the top of the ballot.

(Source: P.A. 81-1535.)"; and

on page 3, below line 19 by inserting the following:

“(10 ILCS 5/19-2.1) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-2.1)

Sec. 19-2.1. At the consolidated primary, general primary, consolidated, and general elections, electors entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the provisions of Section 19-1 may vote in person at the office of the municipal clerk, if the elector is a resident of a municipality not having a board of election commissioners, or at the office of the township clerk or, in counties not under township organization, at the office of the road district clerk if the elector is not a resident of a municipality; provided, in each case that the municipal, township or road district clerk, as the case may be, is authorized to conduct in-person absentee voting pursuant to this Section. Absentee voting in such municipal and township clerk's offices under this Section shall be conducted from the 22nd day through the day before the election.

Municipal and township clerks (or road district clerks) who have regularly scheduled working hours at regularly designated offices other than a place of residence and whose offices are open for business during the same hours as the office of the election authority shall conduct in-person absentee voting for said elections. Municipal and township clerks (or road district clerks) who have no regularly scheduled working hours but who have regularly designated offices other than a place of residence shall conduct in-person absentee voting for said elections during the hours of 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. or 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., weekdays, and 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon on Saturdays, but not during such hours as the office of the election authority is closed, unless the clerk files a written waiver with the election authority not later than July 1 of each year stating that he or she is unable to conduct such voting and the reasons therefor. Such clerks who conduct in-person absentee voting may extend their hours for that purpose to include any hours in which the election authority's office is open. Municipal and township clerks (or road district clerks) who have no regularly scheduled office hours and no regularly designated offices other than a place of residence may not conduct in-person absentee voting for said elections. The election authority may devise alternative methods for in-person absentee voting before said elections for those precincts located within the territorial area of a municipality or township (or road district) wherein the clerk of such municipality or township (or road district) has waived or is not entitled to conduct such voting. In addition, electors may vote by absentee ballot under the provisions of Section 19-1 at the office of the election authority having jurisdiction over their residence. Unless specifically authorized by the election authority, municipal, township, and road district clerks shall not conduct in-person absentee voting. No less than 45 days before the date of an election, the election authority shall notify the municipal, township, and road district clerks within its jurisdiction if they are to conduct in-person absentee voting. Election authorities, however, may conduct in-person absentee voting in one or more designated appropriate public buildings from the fourth day before the election through the day before the election.

In conducting in-person absentee voting under this Section, the respective clerks shall be required to verify the signature of the absentee voter by comparison with the signature on the official registration record card. The clerk also shall reasonably ascertain the identity of such applicant, shall verify that each such applicant is a registered voter, and shall verify the precinct in which he or she is registered and the proper ballots of the political subdivisions in which the applicant resides and is entitled to vote, prior to providing any absentee ballot to such applicant. The clerk shall verify the applicant's registration and from the most recent poll list provided by the county clerk, and if the applicant is not listed on that poll list then by telephoning the office of the county clerk.

Absentee voting procedures in the office of the municipal, township and road district clerks shall be subject to all of the applicable provisions of this Article 19, including, without limitation, those procedures relating to primary ballots. Pollwatchers may be appointed to observe in-person absentee voting procedures and view all reasonably requested records relating to the conduct of the election,

provided the secrecy of the ballot is not impinged, at the office of the municipal, township or road district clerks' offices where such absentee voting is conducted. Such pollwatchers shall qualify and be appointed in the same manner as provided in Sections 7-34 and 17-23, except each candidate, political party or organization of citizens may appoint only one pollwatcher for each location where in-person absentee voting is conducted. Pollwatchers must be registered to vote in Illinois and possess valid pollwatcher credentials. All requirements in this Article applicable to election authorities shall apply to the respective local clerks, except where inconsistent with this Section.

The sealed absentee ballots in their carrier envelope shall be delivered by the respective clerks, or by the election authority on behalf of a clerk if the clerk and the election authority agree, to the election authority's central ballot counting location before the close of the polls on the day of the general primary, consolidated primary, consolidated, or general election.

Not more than 23 days before the general and consolidated elections, the county clerk shall make available to those municipal, township and road district clerks conducting in-person absentee voting within such county, a sufficient number of applications, absentee ballots, envelopes, and printed voting instruction slips for use by absentee voters in the offices of such clerks. The respective clerks shall receipt for all ballots received, shall return all unused or spoiled ballots to the county clerk on the day of the election and shall strictly account for all ballots received.

The ballots delivered to the respective clerks shall include absentee ballots for each precinct in the municipality, township or road district, or shall include such separate ballots for each political subdivision conducting an election of officers or a referendum on that election day as will permit any resident of the municipality, township or road district to vote absentee in the office of the proper clerk.

The clerks of all municipalities, townships and road districts may distribute applications for absentee ballot for the use of voters who wish to mail such applications to the appropriate election authority. Any person may reproduce, distribute, or return to an election authority the application for absentee ballot. Upon receipt, the appropriate election authority shall accept and promptly process any application for absentee ballot.

(Source: P.A. 96-1008, eff. 7-6-10.)

(10 ILCS 5/19-3) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-3)

Sec. 19-3. The application for absentee ballot shall be substantially in the following form:

APPLICATION FOR ABSENTEE BALLOT

To be voted at the election in the County of and State of Illinois, in the precinct of the (1) *township of (2) *City of or (3) *.... ward in the City of

I state that I am a resident of the precinct of the (1) *township of (2) *City of or (3) *.... ward in the city of residing at in such city or town in the county of and State of Illinois; that I have lived at such address for month(s) last past; that I am lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at the election to be held therein on; and that I wish to vote by absentee ballot.

I hereby make application for an official ballot or ballots to be voted by me at such election, and I agree that I shall return such ballot or ballots to the official issuing the same prior to the closing of the polls on the date of the election or, if returned by mail, postmarked no later than midnight preceding election day, for counting no later than during the period for counting provisional ballots, the last day of which is the 14th day following election day.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Section 29-10 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this application are true and correct.

....
*fill in either (1), (2) or (3).

Post office address to which ballot is mailed:

.....
~~However, if application is made for a primary election ballot, such application shall require the applicant to designate the name of the political party with which the applicant is affiliated.~~

Any person may reproduce, distribute, or return to an election authority the application for absentee ballot. Upon receipt, the appropriate election authority shall accept and promptly process any application for absentee ballot.

(Source: P.A. 95-440, eff. 8-27-07; 96-312, eff. 1-1-10; 96-553, eff. 8-17-09; 96-1000, eff. 7-2-10; 96-1008, eff. 7-6-10.)

(10 ILCS 5/19-4) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-4)
Sec. 19-4. Mailing or delivery of ballots - Time.)

Immediately upon the receipt of such application either by mail, not more than 40 days nor less than 5 days prior to such election, or by personal delivery not more than 40 days nor less than one day prior to such election, at the office of such election authority, it shall be the duty of such election authority to examine the records to ascertain whether or not such applicant is lawfully entitled to vote as requested, including a verification of the applicant's signature by comparison with the signature on the official registration record card, and if found so to be entitled to vote, to post within one business day thereafter the name, street address, ward and precinct number or township and district number, as the case may be, of such applicant given on a list, the pages of which are to be numbered consecutively to be kept by such election authority for such purpose in a conspicuous, open and public place accessible to the public at the entrance of the office of such election authority, and in such a manner that such list may be viewed without necessity of requesting permission therefor. Within one day after posting the name and other information of an applicant for an absentee ballot, the election authority shall transmit that name and other posted information to the State Board of Elections, which shall maintain those names and other information in an electronic format on its website, arranged by county and accessible to State and local political committees. Within 2 business days after posting a name and other information on the list within its office, the election authority shall mail, postage prepaid, or deliver in person in such office an official ballot or ballots if more than one are to be voted at said election or if Section 19-4.5 applies. Mail delivery of Temporarily Absent Student ballot applications pursuant to Section 19-12.3 shall be by nonforwardable mail. However, for the consolidated election, absentee ballots for certain precincts may be delivered to applicants not less than 25 days before the election if so much time is required to have prepared and printed the ballots containing the names of persons nominated for offices at the consolidated primary. The election authority shall enclose with each absentee ballot or application written instructions on how voting assistance shall be provided pursuant to Section 17-14 and a document, written and approved by the State Board of Elections, enumerating the circumstances under which a person is authorized to vote by absentee ballot pursuant to this Article; such document shall also include a statement informing the applicant that if he or she falsifies or is solicited by another to falsify his or her eligibility to cast an absentee ballot, such applicant or other is subject to penalties pursuant to Section 29-10 and Section 29-20 of the Election Code. Each election authority shall maintain a list of the name, street address, ward and precinct, or township and district number, as the case may be, of all applicants who have returned absentee ballots to such authority, and the name of such absent voter shall be added to such list within one business day from receipt of such ballot. If the absentee ballot envelope indicates that the voter was assisted in casting the ballot, the name of the person so assisting shall be included on the list. The list, the pages of which are to be numbered consecutively, shall be kept by each election authority in a conspicuous, open, and public place accessible to the public at the entrance of the office of the election authority and in a manner that the list may be viewed without necessity of requesting permission for viewing.

Each election authority shall maintain a list for each election of the voters to whom it has issued absentee ballots. The list shall be maintained for each precinct

within the jurisdiction of the election authority. Prior to the opening of the polls on election day, the election authority shall deliver to the judges of election in each precinct the list of registered voters in that precinct to whom absentee ballots have been issued by mail.

Each election authority shall maintain a list for each election of voters to whom it has issued temporarily absent student ballots. The list shall be maintained for each election jurisdiction within which such voters temporarily abide. Immediately after the close of the period during which application may be made by mail for absentee ballots, each election authority shall mail to each other election authority within the State a certified list of all such voters temporarily abiding within the jurisdiction of the other election authority.

In the event that the return address of an application for ballot by a physically incapacitated elector is that of a facility licensed or certified under the Nursing Home Care Act or the MR/DD Community Care Act, within the jurisdiction of the election authority, and the applicant is a registered voter in the precinct in which such facility is located, the ballots shall be prepared and transmitted to a responsible judge of election no later than 9 a.m. on the Saturday, Sunday or Monday immediately preceding the election as designated by the election authority under Section 19-12.2. Such judge shall deliver in person on the designated day the ballot to the applicant on the premises of the facility from which application was made. The election authority shall by mail notify the applicant in such facility that the ballot will be delivered by a judge of election on the designated day.

All applications for absentee ballots shall be available at the office of the election authority for public inspection upon request from the time of receipt thereof by the election authority until 30 days after the election, except during the time such applications are kept in the office of the election authority pursuant to Section 19-7, and except during the time such applications are in the possession of the judges of election.

(Source: P.A. 96-339, eff. 7-1-10.)

(10 ILCS 5/19-4.5 new)

Sec. 19-4.5. Primary ballots.

(a) A person entitled to vote by absentee ballot at a primary shall not be required to declare his or her political party affiliation and shall be provided with the ballots of all established political parties nominating candidates for offices for which the absentee voter is entitled to vote at that primary. That absentee voter may mark, cast, and have counted the primary ballot of only one established political party, except that he or she may mark, cost, and have counted the primary ballots of a statewide established political party and a local political party established only within a political subdivision as provided in subsection (b) of Section 7-44.

(b) With respect to the marking, casting, and counting of primary ballots, absentee voting shall be conducted in accordance with Sections 7-43 and 7-44 of this Code as well as the provisions of this Article.

(c) When voting absentee at a primary by means other than in-person absentee voting, the voter shall be instructed to discard or otherwise destroy any ballots of political parties that the voter does not intend to cast. Such a discarded or destroyed ballot or ballots is not the ballot or ballots the voter agreed in the absentee ballot application to return to the election authority.

If a voter subject to this subsection returns to the election authority the ballot of more than one established political party, the judges of election shall determine which votes to count as provided in subsection (b) of Section 7-44.

(10 ILCS 5/19-5) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-5)

Sec. 19-5. It shall be the duty of the election authority to fold the ballot or ballots in the manner specified by the statute for folding ballots prior to their deposit in the ballot box, and to enclose such ballot or ballots in an envelope unsealed to be furnished by him, which envelope shall bear upon the face thereof the name, official

title and post office address of the election authority, and upon the other side a printed certification in substantially the following form:

I state that I am a resident of the precinct of the

(1) *township of (2) *City of or (3) *.... ward in the city of residing at in such city or town in the county of and State of Illinois, that I have lived at such address for months last past; and that I am lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at the election to be held on

*fill in either (1), (2) or (3).

I further state that I personally marked the enclosed ballot in secret.

Under penalties of perjury as provided by law pursuant to

Section 29-10 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this certification are true and correct.

If the ballot is to go to an elector who is physically incapacitated and needs assistance marking the ballot, the envelope shall bear upon the back thereof a certification in substantially the following form:

I state that I am a resident of the precinct of the

(1) *township of (2) *City of or (3) *.... ward in the city of residing at in such city or town in the county of and State of Illinois, that I have lived at such address for months last past; that I am lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at the election to be held on; that I am physically incapable of personally marking the ballot for such election.

*fill in either (1), (2) or (3).

I further state that I marked the enclosed ballot in secret with the assistance of

(Individual rendering assistance)

(Residence Address)

Under penalties of perjury as provided by law pursuant to
Section 29-10 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this certification are true and correct.

In the case of a voter with a physical incapacity, marking a ballot in secret includes marking a ballot with the assistance of another individual, other than a candidate whose name appears on the ballot (unless the voter is the spouse or a parent, child, brother, or sister of the candidate), the voter's employer, an agent of that employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union, when the voter's physical incapacity necessitates such assistance.

In the case of a physically incapacitated voter, marking a ballot in secret includes marking a ballot with the assistance of another individual, other than a candidate whose name appears on the ballot (unless the voter is the spouse or a parent, child, brother, or sister of the candidate), the voter's employer, an agent of that employer, or an officer or agent of the voter's union, when the voter's physical incapacity necessitates such assistance.

~~Provided, that if the ballot enclosed is to be voted at a primary election, the certification shall designate the name of the political party with which the voter is affiliated.~~

In addition to the above, the election authority shall provide printed slips giving full instructions regarding the manner of marking and returning the ballot in order that the same may be counted, and shall furnish one of such printed slips to each of such applicants at the same time the ballot is delivered to him. Such instructions shall include the following statement: "In signing the certification on the absentee ballot envelope, you are attesting that you personally marked this absentee ballot in secret. If you are physically unable to mark the ballot, a friend or relative may assist you after completing the enclosed affidavit. Federal and State laws prohibit a candidate whose name appears on the ballot (unless you are the spouse or a parent, child, brother, or sister of the candidate), your employer, your

employer's agent or an officer or agent of your union from assisting physically disabled voters."

In addition to the above, if a ballot to be provided to an elector pursuant to this Section contains a public question described in subsection (b) of Section 28-6 and the territory concerning which the question is to be submitted is not described on the ballot due to the space limitations of such ballot, the election authority shall provide a printed copy of a notice of the public question, which shall include a description of the territory in the manner required by Section 16-7. The notice shall be furnished to the elector at the same time the ballot is delivered to the elector. (Source: P.A. 95-440, eff. 8-27-07; 96-553, eff. 8-17-09.)

(10 ILCS 5/19-8) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-8)

Sec. 19-8. Time and place of counting ballots.

(a) (Blank.)

(b) Each absent voter's ballot returned to an election authority, by any means authorized by this Article, and received by that election authority before the closing of the polls on election day shall be endorsed by the receiving election authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted in the central ballot counting location of the election authority on the day of the election after 7:00 p.m., except as provided in subsections (g) and (g-5).

(c) Each absent voter's ballot that is mailed to an election authority and postmarked by the midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, but that is received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the period for counting provisional ballots.

Each absent voter's ballot that is mailed to an election authority absent a postmark, but that is received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt, opened to inspect the date inserted on the certification, and, if the certification date is a date preceding the election day and the ballot is otherwise found to be valid under the requirements of this Section, counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the period for counting provisional ballots. Absent a date on the certification, the ballot shall not be counted.

(d) Special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots returned to an election authority, by any means authorized by this Article, and received by the election authority at any time before the closing of the polls on election day shall be endorsed by the receiving election authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the same period provided for counting absent voters' ballots under subsections (b), (g), and (g-5). Special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots that are mailed to an election authority and postmarked by the midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, but that are received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the closing of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the same periods provided for counting absent voters' ballots under subsection (c).

(e) Except as otherwise provided in this Section, absent voters' ballots and special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots received by the election authority after the closing of the polls on an election day shall be endorsed by the election authority receiving them with the day and hour of receipt and shall be safely kept unopened by the election authority for the period of time required for the preservation of ballots used at the election, and shall then, without being opened, be destroyed in like manner as the used ballots of that election.

(f) Counting required under this Section to begin on election day after the closing of the polls shall commence no later than 8:00 p.m. and shall be conducted by a panel or panels of election judges appointed in the manner provided by law. The counting shall continue until all absent voters' ballots and special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots required to be counted on election day have been counted.

(g) The procedures set forth in Articles 17 and 18 and, with respect to primaries, in Section 19-4.5 of this Code shall apply to all ballots counted under this Section. In addition, within 2 days after an absentee ballot, other than an in-person absentee ballot, is received, but in all cases before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots, the election judge or official shall compare the voter's signature on the certification envelope of that absentee ballot with the signature of the voter on file in the office of the election authority. If the election judge or official determines that the 2 signatures match, and that the absentee voter is otherwise qualified to cast an absentee ballot, the election authority shall cast and count the ballot on election day or the day the ballot is determined to be valid, whichever is later, adding the results to the precinct in which the voter is registered. If the election judge or official determines that the signatures do not match, or that the absentee voter is not qualified to cast an absentee ballot, then without opening the certification envelope, the judge or official shall mark across the face of the certification envelope the word "Rejected" and shall not cast or count the ballot.

In addition to the voter's signatures not matching, an absentee ballot may be rejected by the election judge or official:

- (1) if the ballot envelope is open or has been opened and resealed;
- (2) if the voter has already cast an early or grace period ballot;
- (3) if the voter voted in person on election day or the voter is not a duly registered voter in the precinct; or
- (4) on any other basis set forth in this Code.

If the election judge or official determines that any of these reasons apply, the judge or official shall mark across the face of the certification envelope the word "Rejected" and shall not cast or count the ballot.

(g-5) If an absentee ballot, other than an in-person absentee ballot, is rejected by the election judge or official for any reason, the election authority shall, within 2 days after the rejection but in all cases before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots, notify the absentee voter that his or her ballot was rejected. The notice shall inform the voter of the reason or reasons the ballot was rejected and shall state that the voter may appear before the election authority, on or before the 14th day after the election, to show cause as to why the ballot should not be rejected. The voter may present evidence to the election authority supporting his or her contention that the ballot should be counted. The election authority shall appoint a panel of 3 election judges to review the contested ballot, application, and certification envelope, as well as any evidence submitted by the absentee voter. No more than 2 election judges on the reviewing panel shall be of the same political party. The reviewing panel of election judges shall make a final determination as to the validity of the contested absentee ballot. The judges' determination shall not be reviewable either administratively or judicially.

An absentee ballot subject to this subsection that is determined to be valid shall be counted before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots.

(g-10) All absentee ballots determined to be valid shall be added to the vote totals for the precincts for which they were cast in the order in which the ballots were opened.

(h) Each political party, candidate, and qualified civic organization shall be entitled to have present one pollwatcher for each panel of election judges therein assigned.

(Source: P.A. 94-557, eff. 8-12-05; 94-1000, eff. 7-3-06;

(10 ILCS 5/19-12.1) (from Ch. 46, par. 19-12.1)

Sec. 19-12.1. Any qualified elector who has secured an

Illinois Disabled Person Identification Card in accordance with The Illinois Identification Card Act, indicating that the person named thereon has a Class 1A or Class 2 disability or any qualified voter who has a permanent physical incapacity of such a nature as to make it improbable that he will be able to be present at the polls at any future election, or any voter who is a resident of a facility licensed or certified pursuant to the Nursing Home Care Act or the MR/DD Community Care Act and has a condition or disability of such a nature as to make it improbable that he will be able to be present at the polls at any future election, may secure a disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card, which will enable him to vote under this Article as a physically incapacitated or nursing home voter.

Application for a disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card shall be made either: (a) in writing, with voter's sworn affidavit, to the county clerk or board of election commissioners, as the case may be, and shall be accompanied by the affidavit of the attending physician specifically describing the nature of the physical incapacity or the fact that the voter is a nursing home resident and is physically unable to be present at the polls on election days; or (b) by presenting, in writing or otherwise, to the county clerk or board of election commissioners, as the case may be, proof that the applicant has secured an Illinois Disabled Person Identification Card indicating that the person named thereon has a Class 1A or Class 2 disability. Upon the receipt of either the sworn-to application and the physician's affidavit or proof that the applicant has secured an Illinois Disabled Person Identification Card indicating that the person named thereon has a Class 1A or Class 2 disability, the county clerk or board of election commissioners shall issue a disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card. Such identification cards shall be issued for a period of 5 years, upon the expiration of which time the voter may secure a new card by making application in the same manner as is prescribed for the issuance of an original card, accompanied by a new affidavit of the attending physician. The date of expiration of such five-year period shall be made known to any interested person by the election authority upon the request of such person. Applications for the renewal of the identification cards shall be mailed to the voters holding such cards not less than 3 months prior to the date of expiration of the cards.

Each disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card shall bear an identification number, which shall be clearly noted on the voter's original and duplicate registration record cards. In the event the holder becomes physically capable of resuming normal voting, he must surrender his disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card to the county clerk or board of election commissioners before the next election.

The holder of a disabled voter's or nursing home resident's identification card may make application by mail for an official ballot within the time prescribed by Section 19-2. Such application shall contain the same information as is included in the form of application for ballot by a physically incapacitated elector prescribed in Section 19-3 except that it shall also include the applicant's disabled voter's identification card number and except that it need not be sworn to. If an examination of the records discloses that the applicant is lawfully entitled to vote, he shall be mailed a ballot or ballots as provided in Section 19-4 and, if applicable, in Section 19-4.5. The ballot envelope shall be the same as that prescribed in Section 19-5 for physically disabled voters, and the manner of voting and returning the ballot shall be the same as that provided in this Article for other absentee ballots, except that a statement to be subscribed to by the voter but which need not be sworn to shall be placed on the ballot envelope in lieu of the affidavit prescribed by Section 19-5.

Any person who knowingly subscribes to a false statement in connection with voting under this Section shall be guilty of a

Class A misdemeanor.

For the purposes of this Section, "nursing home resident" includes a resident of a facility licensed under the MR/DD Community Care Act.
(Source: P.A. 96-339, eff. 7-1-10.)

(10 ILCS 5/20-3) (from Ch. 46, par. 20-3)

Sec. 20-3. The election authority shall furnish the following applications for absentee registration or absentee ballot which shall be considered a method of application in lieu of the official postcard.

1. Members of the United States Service, citizens of the

United States temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States, and certified program participants under the Address Confidentiality for Victims of Domestic Violence Act may make application within the periods prescribed in Sections 20-2 or 20-2.1, as the case may be. Such application shall be substantially in the following form:

"APPLICATION FOR BALLOT

To be voted at the..... election in the precinct in which is located my residence at....., in the city/village/township of(insert home address) County of..... and State of Illinois.

I state that I am a citizen of the United States; that on (insert date of election) I shall have resided in the State of Illinois and in the election precinct for 30 days; that on the above date I shall be the age of 18 years or above; that I am lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at that election; that I am (check category 1, 2, or 3 below):

1. () a member of the United States Service,

2. () a citizen of the United States temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States and that I expect to be absent from the said county of my residence on the date of holding such election, and that I will have no opportunity to vote in person on that day.

3. () a certified program participant under the Address Confidentiality for Victims of Domestic Violence Act.

I hereby make application for an official ballot or ballots to be voted by me at such election if I am absent from the said county of my residence, and I agree that I shall return said ballot or ballots to the election authority postmarked no later than midnight preceding election day, for counting no later than during the period for counting provisional ballots, the last day of which is the 14th day following election day or shall destroy said ballot or ballots.

(Check below only if category 2 or 3 and not previously registered)

() I hereby make application to become registered as a voter and agree to return the forms and affidavits for registration to the election authority not later than 30 days before the election.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Article 29 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this application are true and correct.

.....
Post office address or service address to which registration materials or ballot should be mailed
.....
.....
.....
.....

~~If application is made for a primary election ballot, such application shall designate the name of the political party with which the applicant is affiliated.~~

Such applications may be obtained from the election authority having jurisdiction over the person's precinct of residence.

2. A spouse or dependent of a member of the United States Service, said spouse or dependent being a registered voter in the county, may make application

on behalf of said person in the office of the election authority within the periods prescribed in Section 20-2 which shall be substantially in the following form:
"APPLICATION FOR BALLOT to be voted at the..... election in the precinct in which is located the residence of the person for whom this application is made at..... (insert residence address) in the city/village/township of..... County of..... and State of Illinois.

I certify that the following named person..... (insert name of person) is a member of the United States Service.

I state that said person is a citizen of the United States; that on (insert date of election) said person shall have resided in the State of Illinois and in the election precinct for which this application is made for 30 days; that on the above date said person shall be the age of 18 years or above; that said person is lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at that election; that said person is a member of the United States Service, and that in the course of his duties said person expects to be absent from his county of residence on the date of holding such election, and that said person will have no opportunity to vote in person on that day.

I hereby make application for an official ballot or ballots to be voted by said person at such election and said person agrees that he shall return said ballot or ballots to the election authority postmarked no later than midnight preceding election day, for counting no later than during the period for counting provisional ballots, the last day of which is the 14th day following election day, or shall destroy said ballot or ballots.

I hereby certify that I am the (mother, father, sister, brother, husband or wife) of the said elector, and that I am a registered voter in the election precinct for which this application is made. (Strike all but one that is applicable.)

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Article 29 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this application are true and correct.

Name of applicant
Residence address
City/village/township.....

Service address to which ballot should be mailed:

.....
.....
.....
.....

~~If application is made for a primary election ballot, such application shall designate the name of the political party with which the person for whom application is made is affiliated.~~

Such applications may be obtained from the election authority having jurisdiction over the voting precinct in which the person for whom application is made is entitled to vote.

(Source: P.A. 96-312, eff. 1-1-10.)

(10 ILCS 5/20-4) (from Ch. 46, par. 20-4)

Sec. 20-4. Immediately upon the receipt of the official postcard or an application as provided in Section 20-3 within the times heretofore prescribed, the election authority shall ascertain whether or not such applicant is legally entitled to vote as requested, including verification of the applicant's signature by comparison with the signature on the official registration record card, if any. If the election authority ascertains that the applicant is lawfully entitled to vote, it shall enter the name, street address, ward and precinct number of such applicant on a list to be posted in his or its office in a place accessible to the public. Within one day after posting the name and other information of an applicant for a ballot, the election authority shall transmit that name and posted information to the State Board of Elections, which shall maintain the names and other information in an electronic format on its website, arranged by county and accessible to State and local political

committees. As soon as the official ballot is prepared the election authority shall immediately deliver the same to the applicant in person, by mail, by facsimile transmission, or by electronic transmission as provided in Section 20-4.5, when applicable, and this Article.

If any such election authority receives a second or additional application which it believes is from the same person, he or it shall submit it to the chief judge of the circuit court or any judge of that court designated by the chief judge. If the chief judge or his designate determines that the application submitted to him is a second or additional one, he shall so notify the election authority who shall disregard the second or additional application.

The election authority shall maintain a list for each election of the voters to whom it has issued absentee ballots. The list shall be maintained for each precinct within the jurisdiction of the election authority. Prior to the opening of the polls on election day, the election authority shall deliver to the judges of election in each precinct the list of registered voters in that precinct to whom absentee ballots have been issued.

Election authorities may transmit by facsimile or other electronic means a ballot simultaneously with transmitting an application for absentee ballot; however, no such ballot shall be counted unless an application has been completed by the voter and the election authority ascertains that the applicant is lawfully entitled to vote as provided in this Section.

(Source: P.A. 96-1004, eff. 1-1-11.)

(10 ILCS 5/20-4.5 new)

Sec. 20-4.5. Primary ballots.

(a) A person entitled to vote by absentee ballot at a primary shall not be required to declare his or her political party affiliation and shall be provided with the ballots of all established political parties nominating candidates for offices for which the absentee voter is entitled to vote at that primary. That absentee voter may mark, cast, and have counted the primary ballot of only one established political party, except that he or she may mark, cast, and have counted the primary ballots of a statewide established political party and a local political party established only within a political subdivision as provided in subsection (b) of Section 7-44.

(b) With respect to the marking, casting, and counting of primary ballots, absentee voting shall be conducted in accordance with Sections 7-43 and 7-44 of this Code as well as the provisions of this Article.

(c) When voting absentee at a primary, the voter shall be instructed to discard or otherwise destroy any ballots of political parties that the voter does not intend to cast. Such a discarded or destroyed ballot or ballots is not the ballot or ballots the voter agreed in the absentee ballot application to return to the election authority.

If a voter subject to this subsection returns to the election authority the ballot of more than one established political party, the judges of election shall determine which votes to count as provided in subsection (b) of Section 7-44.

(10 ILCS 5/20-5) (from Ch. 46, par. 20-5)

Sec. 20-5. The election authority shall fold the ballot or ballots in the manner specified by the statute for folding ballots prior to their deposit in the ballot box and shall enclose such ballot in an envelope unsealed to be furnished by it, which envelope shall bear upon the face thereof the name, official title and post office address of the election authority, and upon the other side of such envelope there shall be printed a certification in substantially the following form:

"CERTIFICATION

I state that I am a resident/former resident of the precinct of the city/village/township of,
(Designation to be made by Election Authority) or of the ward in the city
of (Designation to be made by Election Authority) residing at in

said city/village/township in the county of and State of Illinois; that I am a

1. () member of the United States Service

2. () citizen of the United States temporarily residing outside the territorial limits of the United States

3. () nonresident civilian citizen and desire to cast the enclosed ballot pursuant to Article 20 of The Election Code; that I am lawfully entitled to vote in such precinct at the election to be held on

I further state that I marked the enclosed ballot in secret.

Under penalties as provided by law pursuant to Article 29 of The Election Code, the undersigned certifies that the statements set forth in this certification are true and correct.

.....(Name)

.....
(Service Address)"
.....
.....

~~If the ballot enclosed is to be voted at a primary election, the certification shall designate the name of the political party with which the voter is affiliated.~~

In addition to the above, the election authority shall provide printed slips giving full instructions regarding the manner of completing the forms and affidavits for absentee registration or the manner of marking and returning the ballot in order that the same may be counted, and shall furnish one of the printed slips to each of the applicants at the same time the registration materials or ballot is delivered to him.

In addition to the above, if a ballot to be provided to an elector pursuant to this Section contains a public question described in subsection (b) of Section 28-6 and the territory concerning which the question is to be submitted is not described on the ballot due to the space limitations of such ballot, the election authority shall provide a printed copy of a notice of the public question, which shall include a description of the territory in the manner required by Section 16-7. The notice shall be furnished to the elector at the same time the ballot is delivered to the elector.

The envelope in which such registration or such ballot is mailed to the voter as well as the envelope in which the registration materials or the ballot is returned by the voter shall have printed across the face thereof two parallel horizontal red bars, each one-quarter inch wide, extending from one side of the envelope to the other side, with an intervening space of one-quarter inch, the top bar to be one and one-quarter inches from the top of the envelope, and with the words "Official Election Balloting Material-VIA AIR MAIL" between the bars. In the upper right corner of such envelope in a box, there shall be printed the words: "U.S. Postage Paid 42 USC 1973". All printing on the face of such envelopes shall be in red, including an appropriate inscription or blank in the upper left corner of return address of sender.

The envelope in which the ballot is returned to the election authority may be delivered (i) by mail, postage paid, (ii) in person, by the spouse, parent, child, brother, or sister of the voter, or (iii) by a company engaged in the business of making deliveries of property and licensed as a motor carrier of property by the Illinois Commerce Commission under the Illinois Commercial Transportation Law.

Election authorities transmitting ballots by facsimile or electronic transmission shall, to the extent possible, provide those applicants with the same instructions, certification, and other materials required when sending by mail.

(Source: P.A. 96-512, eff. 1-1-10; 96-1004, eff. 1-1-11.)

(10 ILCS 5/20-8) (from Ch. 46, par. 20-8)

Sec. 20-8. Time and place of counting ballots.

(a) (Blank.)

(b) Each absent voter's ballot returned to an election authority, by any means authorized by this Article, and received by that election authority before the

closing of the polls on election day shall be endorsed by the receiving election authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted in the central ballot counting location of the election authority on the day of the election after 7:00 p.m., except as provided in subsections (g) and (g-5).

(c) Each absent voter's ballot that is mailed to an election authority and postmarked by the midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, but that is received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the period for counting provisional ballots.

Each absent voter's ballot that is mailed to an election authority absent a postmark, but that is received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt, opened to inspect the date inserted on the certification, and, if the certification date is a date preceding the election day and the ballot is otherwise found to be valid under the requirements of this Section, counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the period for counting provisional ballots. Absent a date on the certification, the ballot shall not be counted.

(d) Special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots returned to an election authority, by any means authorized by this Article, and received by the election authority at any time before the closing of the polls on election day shall be endorsed by the receiving election authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the same period provided for counting absent voters' ballots under subsections (b), (g), and (g-5). Special write-in absentee voter's blank ballot that are mailed to an election authority and postmarked by midnight preceding the opening of the polls on election day, but that are received by the election authority after the polls close on election day and before the closing of the period for counting provisional ballots cast at that election, shall be endorsed by the receiving authority with the day and hour of receipt and shall be counted at the central ballot counting location of the election authority during the same periods provided for counting absent voters' ballots under subsection (c).

(e) Except as otherwise provided in this Section, absent voters' ballots and special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots received by the election authority after the closing of the polls on the day of election shall be endorsed by the person receiving the ballots with the day and hour of receipt and shall be safely kept unopened by the election authority for the period of time required for the preservation of ballots used at the election, and shall then, without being opened, be destroyed in like manner as the used ballots of that election.

(f) Counting required under this Section to begin on election day after the closing of the polls shall commence no later than 8:00 p.m. and shall be conducted by a panel or panels of election judges appointed in the manner provided by law. The counting shall continue until all absent voters' ballots and special write-in absentee voter's blank ballots required to be counted on election day have been counted.

(g) The procedures set forth in Articles 17 and 18 and, with respect to primaries, in Section 20-4.5 of this Code shall apply to all ballots counted under this Section. In addition, within 2 days after a ballot subject to this Article is received, but in all cases before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots, the election judge or official shall compare the voter's signature on the certification envelope of that ballot with the signature of the voter on file in the office of the election authority. If the election judge or official determines that the 2 signatures match, and that the voter is otherwise qualified to cast a ballot under this Article, the election authority shall cast and count the ballot on election day or the day the ballot is determined to be valid, whichever is later, adding the results to the precinct

in which the voter is registered. If the election judge or official determines that the signatures do not match, or that the voter is not qualified to cast a ballot under this Article, then without opening the certification envelope, the judge or official shall mark across the face of the certification envelope the word "Rejected" and shall not cast or count the ballot.

In addition to the voter's signatures not matching, a ballot subject to this Article may be rejected by the election judge or official:

- (1) if the ballot envelope is open or has been opened and resealed;
- (2) if the voter has already cast an early or grace period ballot;
- (3) if the voter voted in person on election day or the voter is not a duly registered voter in the precinct; or
- (4) on any other basis set forth in this Code.

If the election judge or official determines that any of these reasons apply, the judge or official shall mark across the face of the certification envelope the word "Rejected" and shall not cast or count the ballot.

(g-5) If a ballot subject to this Article is rejected by the election judge or official for any reason, the election authority shall, within 2 days after the rejection but in all cases before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots, notify the voter that his or her ballot was rejected. The notice shall inform the voter of the reason or reasons the ballot was rejected and shall state that the voter may appear before the election authority, on or before the 14th day after the election, to show cause as to why the ballot should not be rejected. The voter may present evidence to the election authority supporting his or her contention that the ballot should be counted. The election authority shall appoint a panel of 3 election judges to review the contested ballot, application, and certification envelope, as well as any evidence submitted by the absentee voter. No more than 2 election judges on the reviewing panel shall be of the same political party. The reviewing panel of election judges shall make a final determination as to the validity of the contested ballot. The judges' determination shall not be reviewable either administratively or judicially.

A ballot subject to this subsection that is determined to be valid shall be counted before the close of the period for counting provisional ballots.

(g-10) All ballots determined to be valid shall be added to the vote totals for the precincts for which they were cast in the order in which the ballots were opened.

(h) Each political party, candidate, and qualified civic organization shall be entitled to have present one pollwatcher for each panel of election judges therein assigned.

(Source: P.A. 94-557, eff. 8-12-05; 94-1000, eff. 7-3-06; 95-699, eff. 11-9-07.)".

With these changes, House Bill 4842 will have my approval. I respectfully request your concurrence.

Sincerely,

PAT QUINN
Governor