



Alaska State Legislature House and Senate Democrats

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Lincoln Wins Victory for Remote Absentee Voters

Putting Alaskans First, Moving Alaska Forward 2003

JUNEAU – The Legislature today transmitted House Bill 266 to Governor Frank Murkowski for signature. The bill is designed to update Alaska's election laws. Included in the bill are provisions written by Senator Georgianna Lincoln (D-Rampart) to provide special absentee ballots for voters in remote areas. The provisions were included at the request of the Lieutenant Governor.

Lincoln's provisions, originally found in her Senate Bill 24 offered a voter living in a remote location the opportunity to vote using the 60-day special advance absentee ballot.

"Voting is the fundamental method citizens utilize to participate in our democracy," said Senator Lincoln. "The health of our democracy rests on the participation of every Alaskan, and this new law will dramatically increase the window of opportunity to vote."

In current statute, only voters living, working or traveling outside of the United States are eligible for a 60-day special advance absentee ballot. However, voters living in extremely remote areas are sometimes disenfranchised by conditions beyond their control. Distance, terrain and natural conditions have prevented voters from receiving by-mail ballots or reaching a polling place.

"Voters in urban areas have multiple voting options," said Lincoln. "Those options include voting in person or at absentee voting stations at university campuses and airports. However, if a remote voter's mail does not reach them in time, or they cannot reach a post office, they are unable to participate in the election. HB 266 now corrects that problem."

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