



NEW HAMPSHIRE SENATE

NEWS RELEASE

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Senate Fine-tunes New Hampshire Absentee Ballot Process

CONCORD, NH – Senator James Gray (R-Rochester) issued the following statement today on the Senate passing SB 213-FN and rejecting SB 214-FN:

“People often ask, ‘what if I am not sure if I will be required to work overtime on election day? Do I qualify to request an absentee ballot?’ The simple answer is YES. SB 213 clarifies existing law so that voters can acquire an absentee ballot by answering the question ‘is it more likely than not’ that they qualify for one of the conditions to vote by absentee ballot. Voters should also know that if their plans change and they can be at the polling location before the processing of the absentee ballots, they should attempt to do so.

On the other hand, SB 214 would open the flood gates to obtain an absentee ballot without giving any reason why. The New Hampshire constitution, Part 1, article 11, provides guidelines for voting by absentee ballot. I believe that this bill goes too far and would violate the State Constitution. This bill is unnecessary and the state of New Hampshire already allows voters to request an absentee ballot if the voter will be absent on Election Day or due to a medical excuse. They simply need to go to their clerk’s office ahead of Election Day and they will be able to vote. Our elections work and we do not need any absentee ballot expansions that would threaten to disrupt our current system.”

Background: SB 213-FN changes the standard for absentee voting to “It is more likely than not” that a voter will be absent and requires proof of identity, citizenship, age and domicile when applying for an absentee ballot. Senator Gray is the prime sponsor of the bill.

SB 214-FN would have allowed for no-excuse absentee registration and voting in New Hampshire.

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