



House Office Building, 9 South
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

ABSENTEE BALLOTS: ALLOW FOR FIRST-TIME VOTERS WHO REGISTERED BY MAIL

House Bill 4161

Sponsor: Rep. Dale Sheltrown

Committee: Redistricting and Elections

Complete to 2-23-01

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4161 AS INTRODUCED 2-8-01

The bill would amend the Michigan Election Law to allow a person who was voting for the first time in a jurisdiction in which he or she had registered by mail to use an absentee ballot (provided the voter was otherwise eligible to vote by absentee ballot).

Currently, a person who registers by mail to vote in a jurisdiction within the state must vote in person the first time he or she votes in that jurisdiction. That is, he or she cannot vote by absentee ballot. There are exceptions to this requirement. It does not apply to a person entitled to vote by absentee ballot under the federal Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act; a person with a disability as defined in the federal Persons with Disabilities Civil Rights Act; a person who is 60 years of age or older; or a person who is entitled to vote other than in person under any other federal law.

House Bill 4161 would amend the election law to expand the exception so that it would apply to anyone entitled to vote as an absent voter under Section 758.

Section 758 of the election law currently defines an "absent voter" to mean a qualified and registered elector who is 60 years of age or older or who cannot attend the polls on the day of an election on account of a physical disability; on account of the tenets of his or her religion; because of being an election precinct inspector in another precinct; because he or she will be absent from the township or city during the entire period the polls are open; or on account of being confined in jail awaiting arraignment or trial.

MCL 168.509t

Analyst: C. Couch

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.