

SENATE BILL No. 160

February 6, 2007, Introduced by Senators CLARK-COLEMAN, JACOBS, CLARKE, GLEASON, SCOTT, SCHAUER, HUNTER, BARCIA, CHERRY, OLSHOVE, BRATER and SWITALSKI and referred to the Committee on Campaign and Election Oversight.

A bill to amend 1954 PA 116, entitled
"Michigan election law,"
by amending section 759 (MCL 168.759), as amended by 1995 PA 261.

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF MICHIGAN ENACT:

1 Sec. 759. (1) At any time during the 75 days before a
2 primary or special primary, but not later than 2 p.m. of the
3 Saturday immediately before the primary or special primary, an
4 elector who qualifies to vote as an absent voter, as defined in
5 section 758, may apply for an absent voter ballot. The elector
6 shall apply in person or by mail with the clerk of the township,
7 city, or village in which the elector is registered. An
8 application received before a primary or special primary may be
9 for either that primary only, or for that primary and the

1 election that follows.

2 (2) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (1), at any
3 time during the 75 days before an election, but not later than 2
4 p.m. of the Saturday before the election, an elector who
5 qualifies to vote as an absent voter, as defined in section 758,
6 may apply for an absent voter ballot. The elector shall apply in
7 person or by mail with the clerk of the township, city, or
8 village in which the voter is registered.

9 (3) An application for an absent voter ballot under this
10 section may be made in any of the following ways:

11 (a) By a written request signed by the voter stating the
12 statutory grounds for making the application.

13 (b) On an absent voter ballot application form provided for
14 that purpose by the clerk of the city, township, or village.

15 (c) On a federal postcard application.

16 (4) An applicant for an absent voter ballot shall sign the
17 application. A clerk or assistant clerk shall not deliver an
18 absent voter ballot to an applicant who does not sign the
19 application. A person ~~other than~~ **SHALL NOT BE IN POSSESSION OF A**
20 **SIGNED ABSENT VOTER BALLOT APPLICATION EXCEPT FOR** the applicant;
21 a member of the applicant's immediate family; a person residing
22 in the applicant's household; a person whose job normally
23 includes the handling of mail, but only during the course of his
24 or her employment; a registered elector requested by the
25 applicant **TO RETURN THE APPLICATION**; or a clerk, assistant of the
26 clerk, or other authorized election official. ~~shall not be in~~
27 ~~possession of a signed absent voter ballot application. A~~

1 registered elector who is requested by the applicant to return
2 his or her absent voter ballot application shall sign the
3 certificate on the absent voter ballot application.

4 (5) The clerk of the city, township, or village shall have
5 absent voter ballot application forms available in the **CLERK'S**
6 office ~~of the clerk~~ at all times and shall furnish an absent
7 voter ballot application form to anyone upon a verbal or written
8 request. **IN ADDITION, THE CLERK OF THE CITY, TOWNSHIP, OR VILLAGE**
9 **MAY FORWARD AN ABSENT VOTER BALLOT APPLICATION FORM TO AN ELECTOR**
10 **WHO QUALIFIES TO VOTE AS AN ABSENT VOTER AS DEFINED IN SECTION**
11 **758, EVEN IF THE ELECTOR HAS NOT REQUESTED AN ABSENT VOTER BALLOT**
12 **APPLICATION FORM UNDER THIS SECTION.** The absent voter ballot
13 application shall be in substantially the following form:

14 "Application for absent voter ballot for:

15 [] The primary or special primary election to be held on
16 ~~....., 19...~~ _____ (DATE).

17 [] The election to be held on ~~....., 19...~~ _____ (DATE).

18 (Check applicable election or elections)

19 I, , a qualified and registered elector of the
20 precinct of the township of or village of
21 or of the ward of the city of ,
22 in the county of and state of Michigan, apply for an
23 official ballot, or ballots, to be voted by me at the election or
24 elections as requested in this application.

25 The statutory grounds on which I base my request are:

26 [] I expect to be absent from the community in which I am

1 registered for the entire time the polls are open on election
2 day.

3 I am physically unable to attend the polls without the
4 assistance of another.

5 I cannot attend the polls because of the tenets of my
6 religion.

7 I have been appointed an election precinct inspector in a
8 precinct other than the precinct where I reside.

9 I am 60 years of age or older.

10 I cannot attend the polls because I am confined to jail
11 awaiting arraignment or trial.

12 (Check applicable reason)

13 Send absent voter ballot to me at:

14
15 (Street No. or R.R.)

16
17 (Post Office) (State) (ZIP CODE)

18 My registered address
19 (Street No. or R.R.)

20
21 (Post Office) (State) (ZIP CODE)

22 Date.....

23 I ~~declare~~**CERTIFY** that the statements in this absent voter
24 ballot application are true.

25
26 (Signature)

27 WARNING

28 A person making a false statement in this absent voter
29 ballot application is guilty of a misdemeanor. It is a violation

1 furnished an applicant:

2 INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICANTS FOR ABSENT VOTER BALLOTS

3 Step 1. After completely filling out the application, sign
4 and date the application in the place designated. Your signature
5 must appear on the application or you will not receive an absent
6 voter ballot.

7 Step 2. Deliver the application by 1 of the following
8 methods:

9 (a) Place the application in an envelope addressed to the
10 appropriate clerk and place the necessary postage upon the return
11 envelope and deposit it in the United States mail or with another
12 public postal service, express mail service, parcel post service,
13 or common carrier.

14 (b) Deliver the application personally to the **CLERK'S**
15 office, ~~of the clerk,~~ to the clerk, or to an authorized assistant
16 of the clerk.

17 (c) In either (a) or (b), a member of the immediate family
18 of the voter including a father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother-
19 in-law, sister-in-law, son-in-law, daughter-in-law, grandparent,
20 or grandchild or a person residing in the voter's household may
21 mail or deliver the application to the clerk for the applicant.

22 (d) ~~In the event~~ **IF** an applicant cannot return the
23 application in any of the above methods, the applicant may select
24 any registered elector to return the application. The person
25 returning the application must sign and return the certificate at

1 the bottom of the application.

2 (7) A person who prints and distributes absent voter ballot
3 applications shall print on the application the warning,
4 certificate of authorized registered elector returning absent
5 voter ballot application, and instructions required by this
6 section.

7 (8) A person who makes a false statement in an absent voter
8 ballot application is guilty of a misdemeanor. A person who
9 forges a signature on an absent voter ballot application is
10 guilty of a felony. A person who is not authorized in this act
11 and who both distributes absent voter ballot applications to
12 absent voters and returns those absent voter ballot applications
13 to a clerk or assistant of the clerk is guilty of a misdemeanor.