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Legislature Passes Absentee Ballot Bill **Coghill's HB 109 Protects Against Election Worker Mistakes**

(JUNEAU) – In a action aimed at strengthening Alaskans' electoral rights, the Senate passed House Bill 109 on Wednesday to ensure absentee ballots cast in person will not be invalidated due to minor errors by elections workers.

HB 109, introduced by Rep. John Coghill, Jr. (R-North Pole), resulted from several instances in which Alaskans who had voted absentee in person got letters from the state Division of Elections disqualifying their votes because election workers had failed to fill out or properly sign the associated paperwork.

“Alaskans take their right to vote seriously, and many people take advantage of the opportunity to vote absentee in person to make sure their voice is heard on Election Day,” Coghill said. “House Bill 109 helps avoid the chance that a simple human error may cost anyone their access to the ballot box.”

Coghill said Alaska's poll workers are generally conscientious citizens performing a valuable public service, but that the press and confusion of busy election days can cause anyone to make a mistake. HB 109 simply provides protection against such mistakes for the poll workers and voters alike.

The Senate's passage represents the Legislature's final approval of HB 109, which now moves to the governor for his signature.

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