



TESTIMONY

**A BILL FOR AN ACT RELATING TO ELECTIONS; REQUIRING VOTER
VERIFICATION BEFORE MAIL DELIVERY OF AN ABSENTEE
BALLOT; AMENDING MINNESOTA STATUTES 2024, SECTION 203B.04,
SUBDIVISION 5; MINNESOTA STATUTES 2025 SUPPLEMENT, SECTION 203B.04,
SUBDIVISION 1.**

House File 3723

March 16, 2026

TESTIMONY BEFORE

MINNESOTA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Committee on Elections, Finance, and Government Operations

TESTIMONY BY

The Hon. J. Kenneth Blackwell

CHAIR, SECURE ELECTIONS

Chairs Quam and Frieberg, Vice-Chairs Altendorf and Lee, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HF 3723. As the former Secretary of State of Ohio, a former United States Ambassador at the United Nations, the former Chairman of the bipartisan International Foundation for Electoral Systems, and the Chair of Secure Elections at the America First Policy Institute (AFPI), I have been blessed with a wealth of experience in election administration and election policy. This bill makes a targeted, practical, commonsense improvement to Minnesota's absentee voting process by requiring that absentee ballot applications be verified against government identity databases before a ballot is mailed. It is a straightforward election security measure, and will protect legitimate voters, deter fraud, and strengthen confidence in Minnesota's elections.

Under HF 3723, when a county auditor or municipal clerk receives an absentee ballot application that would result in a ballot being mailed, that application must be electronically submitted to the Secretary of State for information verification. The Secretary of State then checks whether the applicant's information matches records associated with their driver's license number, state identification card number, or Social Security number in a government database. At AFPI, [we have shown](#) that confirming these three identification options are critical for mail-in ballots to be secure. Minnesota's existing policy of requiring voter ID for mail-in ballots protects voters; but this policy is improved further by a check on the front end of the application. It is much better to prevent a problem than to try to fix it after the fact.

Under this bill, applications that cannot be verified are reviewed for suspicious activity, and any application showing signs of fraud or irregularity is sent to a law enforcement agency for investigation. Again, this protects voters from fraudulent interference in elections. The Secretary of State is required to maintain a secure website for county auditors and municipal clerks to submit applications for this purpose. This system both allows for efficient centralization of fraud investigation while also respecting the on-the-ground work of local election officials.

Minnesotans deserve elections that are secure and trustworthy. HF 3723 does not make it harder for any eligible voter to cast an absentee ballot. It makes it harder for bad actors to exploit the absentee system at the expense of legitimate voters. We believe that good policy makes it easy to vote, and hard to cheat—and HF 3723 does exactly that.

