House Research
Act Summary

| **CHAPTER:** | 185 | **SESSION:** | 2014 Regular Session |

TOPIC: Online Voter Registration and Absentee Ballot Applications

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Overview

This act permits an individual to register to vote and/or request an absentee ballot online, using a Web site operated by the secretary of state. It also adds holiday and seasonal greeting cards to the definition of "noncampaign disbursement" for purposes of campaign finance law.

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1   **Noncampaign disbursement.** Adds post-general election holiday and seasonal cards to the definition of "noncampaign disbursement" for purposes of campaign finance reporting under chapter 10A, if mailed prior to the end of the election cycle. Thank you notes and advertisements in the news media, provided for in current law, would also be subject to this deadline for mailing or publishing.

Items that qualify as a noncampaign disbursement may be paid for with campaign funds, and the payments must be included in reports filed with the Campaign Finance Board. However, these payments do not count against the applicable expenditure limit for the candidate's campaign.

2   **Prior to election day (voter registration).** Authorizes an eligible individual to submit a voter registration application through a secure Web site maintained by the secretary of state.

An e-mail address, plus the applicant's driver's license number, state identification card number, or the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number are required to use the Web site. The deadline for submitting a registration application is also specified.

Paragraph (b) provides that an application submitted electronically may only be transmitted for processing if the identification number provided by the applicant is verified. If an application is unverifiable, the application must be reviewed for evidence of suspicious

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activity and, if appropriate, forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

Submission of a registration application through the Web site on behalf of another individual is prohibited.

3   **Web site security (online registration).** Requires the secretary of state to maintain a log of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses used to submit a voter registration application electronically. The secretary is required to monitor the log, volume of Web site use, and other indicators, for evidence of suspicious activity. Potential suspicious activity that can not be resolved by the secretary of state must be forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

4   **Form.** Provides conforming changes to the provisions governing the format of a voter registration application to reflect the new authorization to submit the application online.

Paper and electronic applications are required to contain the same information, except where otherwise specified in the law.

5   **Deficient registration.** Provides that a voter registration application submitted through the Web site of the secretary of state prior to enactment of this bill does not invalidate the application.

6   **Registration files.** Requires a voter registration application submitted electronically via the secretary of state's Web site to be maintained in its original form, in a manner suitable for printing, for the same time period that paper applications must be maintained.

The IP address used to submit an electronic application must be maintained with the voter registration data.

7   **Investigations; prosecutions.** Specifies jurisdictional standards for initiating an investigation or prosecution of alleged voter registration crimes related to electronic submission of a registration application via the secretary of state's Web site. Alleged crimes may be investigated and prosecuted in the county in which the individual registered or attempted to register.

8   **Application procedures (absentee ballots).** Authorizes a voter to submit an application to receive an absentee ballot for a federal, state, or county election through a secure Web site maintained by the secretary of state.

An e-mail address, plus the applicant's driver's license number, state identification card number, or the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number are required to use the Web site.

An application submitted electronically may only be transmitted for processing if the identification number provided by the applicant is verified. If an application is unverifiable, the application must be reviewed for evidence of suspicious activity and, if appropriate, forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

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9   **Web site security (standard absentee applications).** Requires the secretary of state to maintain a log of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses used to submit an absentee ballot application electronically. The secretary is required to monitor the log, volume of Web site use, and other indicators, for evidence of suspicious activity. Potential suspicious activity that can not be resolved by the secretary of state must be forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

10   **Application for ballot (UOCAVA).** Authorizes a military or overseas voter to submit an application to receive an absentee ballot for an election through a secure Web site maintained by the secretary of state.

   An e-mail address, plus the applicant's driver's license number, state identification card number, or the last four digits of the applicant's Social Security number are required to use the Web site.

   An application submitted electronically may only be transmitted for processing if the identification number provided by the applicant is verified. If an application is unverifiable, the application must be reviewed for evidence of suspicious activity and, if appropriate, forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

11   **Web site security (UOCAVA applications).** Requires the secretary of state to maintain a log of Internet Protocol (IP) addresses used to submit an absentee ballot application electronically. The secretary is required to monitor the log, volume of Web site use, and other indicators, for evidence of suspicious activity. Potential suspicious activity that can not be resolved by the secretary of state must be forwarded to law enforcement for investigation.

12   **Effective date.** Provides that the act is effective the day following final enactment. The act became effective April 30, 2014.