



Jon Husted
Ohio Secretary of State

180 East Broad Street, 16th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215
Tel: (877) 767-6446 Fax: (614) 644-0649
www.OhioSecretaryofState.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, June 2, 2014

**SECRETARY HUSTED OUTLINES WHAT VOTERS NEED TO KNOW
IN LIGHT OF NEW ELECTION LAW CHANGES**

Secretary Husted: "Ohio is one of the easiest places to vote in the nation."

COLUMBUS – With three new election bills taking effect, Secretary of State Jon Husted is focused on ensuring Ohio voters understand how the changes impact them when they go to the polls in all future elections.

"Ohio is one of the easiest states to vote in the nation, with the safeguards in place to also ensure the integrity of our elections. As we implement the new laws passed by the General Assembly we will make sure it stays that way," Secretary Husted said.

Voting Absentee

In the November General Election, voters will have approximately four weeks to cast a ballot prior to Election Day, whether they choose to vote by mail or in person.

Under Senate Bill 238, absentee voting will begin the day after the close of voter registration, which is October 7th for the November general election. Under a uniform schedule proposed by the bipartisan Ohio Association of Elections Officials, this will give voters nearly a month of early (absentee) voting, including on two Saturdays. This is well above the national average of 19 days and offers Ohioans significantly more opportunity to vote than many surrounding states which do not offer any forms of early voting.

Under Senate Bill 205, lawmakers established new rules governing the mailing of unsolicited absentee ballot applications and gave the Secretary of State the responsibility for ensuring all Ohio voters are treated the same. To ensure uniformity, Secretary Husted will be mailing all voters with a current address an absentee ballot request form shortly after Labor Day using already allocated funding from the federal Help America Vote Act. The Secretary is committed to continuing the practice of mailing absentee ballot requests in even numbered General Elections and will encourage the legislature to fund that effort.

The process will be similar to that administered by Secretary Husted in 2012, which was the first ever statewide absentee ballot application mailing. That year, one out of three voters cast ballots prior to Election Day. Prior to 2012, only certain counties offered this service to voters. Now, no matter where they live, Ohioans can complete their personalized application, mail it back to their board of elections and they will be sent an absentee ballot

beginning 28 days before Election Day, giving them four weeks to vote without ever having to leave home.

“With four weeks of voting and the ability to cast a ballot early by mail or in person and on Election Day, all Ohio voters will have the same opportunity to vote no matter where they live,” Secretary Husted said.

Provisional Ballots

Other changes recently implemented by the Ohio General Assembly through Senate Bill 216, deal with the casting of provisional ballots. Among the provisions included in the law, county boards of elections are required to use a more user-friendly provisional ballot envelope form on which voters must provide five key pieces of information to ensure their ballot is counted. The information is the same required for registering to vote and requesting an absentee ballot and includes the voter’s:

- Printed name,
- Signature,
- Date of birth,
- Current address, and
- One valid form of identification, which can include an Ohio driver’s license or state identification card number or the last four digits of the voter’s Social Security number, or a copy of a current and valid photo identification, a military identification, or a current (within the last 12 months) utility bill, bank statement, government check, paycheck or other government document (other than a notice of voter registration mailed by a board of elections) that shows the voter’s name and current address.

Additionally, the voter who does not provide identification on Election Day may return to the board of elections within seven days to show identification to ensure their ballot will be counted in the official canvas.

One of the most common reasons a voter must cast a provisional ballot is because they did not update their address 30 days prior to the election. Between now and October, Secretary Husted is encouraging all voters to take advantage of the Secretary of State’s Online Change of Address System at www.MyOhioVote.com.

“The rules are now in place and it's time to focus on educating the voters on the many options they have to cast their ballots in the next election,” Secretary Husted said. “We will continue to make Ohio a state where it is both easy to vote and hard to cheat.”

Additional voter information is available at MyOhioVote.com.

Additional Information

[Advisory 2014-04](#)

[Updated Elections Calendar](#)

[What Voters Need to Know This Fall](#)

For more information, please contact [Matt McClellan](#) at (614) 995-2168.