



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

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Absentee Ballot Tracking Bill Receives Public Hearing

Under proposal, absentee voters would receive text alerts on ballot status

Madison, WI – Today, State Representative David Steffen (R-Howard) and State Senator Rachael Cabral-Guevara (R-Appleton) testified in favor of a proposal they jointly authored that would allow absentee voters to receive text message updates on the status of their ballot.

Senate Bill 39, a bipartisan bill supported by a host of voter rights groups, would give absentee voters the option to enroll in text message updates to inform them of when their absentee application has been received and when their ballot has been received by the clerk. The text messaging service would utilize the state’s existing MyVote system to give voters another way to stay informed.

“The number of people voting absentee is greater than ever and only continues to grow. Whether voting absentee or in-person, Wisconsinites deserve to know their ballot counts. Receiving a simple text-message alert will give voters the confidence to know their ballot has reached its destination. At the same time, these updates will cut down on the number of calls related to ballot status that our already overly-tasked clerks receive,” said Rep. Steffen.

Under the proposal, when an absentee voter fills out their ballot application, they will be given the option to provide their mobile phone number to receive text updates. Once enrolled, they will receive text notifications regarding the status of their ballot in all elections moving forward.

“With absentee voting becoming more and more common, anything we can do to make the process more transparent is a step in the right direction,” said Sen. Rachael Cabral-Guevara. “This added layer of tracking will help boost confidence in the absentee voting process and give voters ample opportunity to identify any unusual delays in the receipt of their request or ballot.”

The bill is now available for a committee vote before being considered by the full Senate.

For more information please contact the office of Representative Steffen at (608)237-9104 or by email at Rep.Steffen@legis.wisconsin.gov or the office of Senator Cabral-Guevara at (608)266-0718 or by email at Sen.Cabral-Guevara@legis.wisconsin.gov.

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