

ATTENTION: Chair & Members Senate Rules Committee
RE: SB 1564 & SB1564-1
FROM: Ruth Bendl & Sharon Cornish

2.14.14

I urge members to support the above referred bill including its recent amendment.

With regard to the reporting of ballots printed, mailed and issued to voters, (listed in Section 3) if most of the above were to be done by the mailing house, it would be preferable for this reporting both to county election officials and the Secretary of State, would be done by the mailing house official.

Likewise, it would be preferable if the undeliverable ballots were to be sent back to the mailing house, and that the mailing house staff would report that data to both the county election officials and the Secretary of State.

The Amended Section 3 listed in SB1564 is extremely important for protecting the integrity of the ballot handling process. Delaying the vote enhancement and ballot duplication process until after election day, is a policy that was adopted in 2005 by former Elections Director Jeri Hansen, to enable volunteer observers to closely monitor the process.

It also meant that no pencils or pens were allowed on the regular election board tables, since all defective ballots are simply set aside prior to election day. This policy also protects all the "under votes" from fraudulent activity.

Finally, it is extremely important for accurate records to be done of the number of ballots picked up from ballot drop-sites. Ideally, when ballots are deposited in the drop-site/s, there should be a mechanism to read the bar code on the outer envelope. It should be equally important for the container in the drop-site to remain sealed until it is received at the election office.

SB 1564 does provide the guidelines for protecting the secrecy and integrity of the ballot contents, and approval of this bill should be urged.

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