## As Introduced

## 136th General Assembly Regular Session 2025-2026

person.

H. B. No. 586

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## Representatives Bird, Lear

To amend sections 3509.03, 3511.02, and 3599.21 and to repeal section 111.31 of the Revised Code to prohibit any person from mailing out unsolicited

absentee ballot request forms to any other

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF OHIO:	
Section 1. That sections 3509.03, 3511.02, and 3599.21 of	6
the Revised Code be amended to read as follows:	7
Sec. 3509.03. (A) Except as otherwise provided in sections	8
3509.051, 3511.02, and 3511.021 of the Revised Code, any	9
qualified elector desiring to vote absent voter's ballots at an	10
election shall deliver a written application for those ballots,	11
either in person or by mail, to the board of elections of the	12
county in which the elector's voting residence is located.	13
(B) Except as otherwise permitted under section 3511.02 of	14
the Revised Code and under division (C) of this section, the	15
application shall be on a form prescribed by the secretary of	16
state and shall contain all of the following:	17
(1) The elector's name;	18
(2) The elector's signature;	19

(3) The address at which the elector is registered to	20
vote;	21
(4) The elector's date of birth;	22
(5) One of the following:	23
(a) The elector's Ohio driver's license or state	24
<pre>identification card number;</pre>	25
(b) The last four digits of the elector's social security	26
number;	27
(c) A copy of the elector's photo identification.	28
(6) A statement identifying the election for which absent	29
voter's ballots are requested;	30
(7) A statement that the person requesting the ballots is	31
a qualified elector;	32
(8) If the request is for primary election ballots, the	33
elector's party affiliation;	34
(9) If the elector desires ballots to be mailed to the	35
elector, the address to which those ballots shall be mailed.	36
(C) If the elector has a confidential voter registration	37
record, as described in section 111.44 of the Revised Code, the	38
elector may provide the elector's program participant	39
identification number instead of the address at which the	40
elector is registered to vote.	41
(D) Except as otherwise provided in division (A) of	42
section 3509.051 and in division (B) of section 3509.08 of the	43
Revised Code, an application to receive absent voter's ballots	44
shall be delivered to the office of the board not earlier than	45
the first day of January of the year of the elections for which	46

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the absent voter's ballots are requested or not earlier than	47
ninety days before the day of the election at which the ballots	48
are to be voted, whichever is earlier, and not later than the	49
close of business on the seventh day before the day of the	50
election at which the ballots are to be voted.	51
(E) Except as permitted under section 111.31 of the	52
Revised Code, no-(E)(1) No public office, and no public official	53
or employee who is acting in an official capacity, shall do	54
either of the following:	55
(1)(a) Prepay the return postage for an application for	56
absent voter's ballots;	57
(2) (b) Mail or otherwise deliver an unsolicited	58
application for absent voter's ballots to any person.	59
(2) No person shall mail an unsolicited application for	60
absent voter's ballots to any person.	61
(F)(1) Except as otherwise provided in division (F)(2) of	62
this section and in sections 3505.24 and 3509.08 of the Revised	63
Code, no person shall preprint or fill out any portion of an	64
application for absent voter's ballots on behalf of an	65
applicant.	66
(2) The secretary of state or a board of elections may	67
preprint only an applicant's name and address on an application	68
for absent voter's ballots before mailing that application to	69
the applicant, except that if the applicant has a confidential	70
voter registration record, the secretary of state or a board of	71
elections shall not preprint the applicant's address on the	72
application.	73
(3) A completed application for absent voter's ballots is	74
not valid if any portion of it has been completed by any person	75

other than the applicant in violation of division (F) of this	76
section.	77
Sec. 3511.02. (A) Notwithstanding any section of the	78
Revised Code to the contrary, whenever any person applies for	79
registration as a voter on a form adopted in accordance with	80
federal regulations relating to the "Uniformed and Overseas	81
Citizens Absentee Voting Act," 100 Stat. 924, 52 U.S.C.A. 20301,	82
this application shall be sufficient for voter registration and	83
as a request for an absent voter's ballot. Uniformed services or	84
overseas absent voter's ballots may be obtained by any person	85
meeting the requirements of section 3511.011 of the Revised Code	86
by applying electronically to the secretary of state or to the	87
board of elections of the county in which the person's voting	88
residence is located in accordance with section 3511.021 of the	89
Revised Code or by applying to the board of elections of the	90
county in which the person's voting residence is located, in one	91
of the following ways:	92
(1) That person may make written application for those	93
ballots. The person may personally deliver the application to	94
the office of the board or may mail it, send it by facsimile	95
machine, send it by electronic mail, send it through internet	96
delivery if such delivery is offered by the board of elections	97
or the secretary of state, or otherwise send it to the board.	98
Except as otherwise provided in division (B) of this section,	99
the application shall be on a form prescribed by the secretary	100
of state and shall contain all of the following information:	101
(a) The elector's name;	102
(b) The elector's signature;	103
(c) The address at which the elector is registered to	104

vote;	105
(d) The elector's date of birth;	106
(e) One of the following:	107
(i) The elector's Ohio driver's license or state	108
identification card number;	109
(ii) The last four digits of the elector's social security	110
number;	111
(iii) A copy of the elector's photo identification.	112
(f) A statement identifying the election for which absent	113
voter's ballots are requested;	114
(g) A statement that the person requesting the ballots is	115
a qualified elector;	116
(h) A statement that the elector is an absent uniformed	117
services voter or overseas voter as defined in 52 U.S.C. 20310;	118
(i) A statement of the elector's length of residence in	119
the state immediately preceding the commencement of service,	120
immediately preceding the date of leaving to be with or near the	121
service member, or immediately preceding leaving the United	122
States, or a statement that the elector's parent or legal	123
guardian resided in this state long enough to establish	124
residency for voting purposes immediately preceding leaving the	125
United States, whichever is applicable;	126
(j) If the request is for primary election ballots, the	127
elector's party affiliation;	128
(k) If the elector desires ballots to be mailed to the	129
elector, the address to which those ballots shall be mailed;	130
(1) If the elector desires ballots to be sent to the	131

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elector by facsimile machine, the telephone number to which they	132
shall be so sent;	133
(m) If the elector desires ballots to be sent to the	134
elector by electronic mail or, if offered by the board of	135
elections or the secretary of state, through internet delivery,	136
the elector's electronic mail address or other internet contact	137
information.	138
(2) A voter or any relative of a voter listed in division	139
(A)(3) of this section may use a single federal post card	140
application to apply for uniformed services or overseas absent	141
voter's ballots for use at the primary and general elections in	142
a given year and any special election to be held on the day in	143
that year specified by division (E) of section 3501.01 of the	144
Revised Code for the holding of a primary election, designated	145
by the general assembly for the purpose of submitting	146
constitutional amendments proposed by the general assembly to	147
the voters of the state. A single federal postcard application	148
shall be processed by the board of elections pursuant to section	149
3511.04 of the Revised Code the same as if the voter had applied	150
separately for uniformed services or overseas absent voter's	151
ballots for each election.	152
(3) Application to have uniformed services or overseas	153
absent voter's ballots mailed or sent by facsimile machine to	154
such a person may be made by the spouse, father, mother, father-	155
in-law, mother-in-law, grandfather, grandmother, brother or	156
sister of the whole blood or half blood, son, daughter, adopting	157
parent, adopted child, stepparent, stepchild, daughter-in-law,	158
son-in-law, uncle, aunt, nephew, or niece of such a person. The	159
application shall be in writing upon a blank form furnished only	160
by the board or on a single federal post card as provided in	161

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division (A)(2) of this section. The form of the application	162
shall be prescribed by the secretary of state. The board shall	163
furnish that blank form to any of the relatives specified in	164
this division desiring to make the application, only upon the	165
request of such a relative made in person at the office of the	166
board or upon the written request of such a relative mailed to	167
the office of the board. Except as otherwise provided in	168
division (B) of this section, the application, subscribed and	169
sworn to by the applicant, shall contain all of the following:	170
(a) The full name of the elector for whom ballots are	171
requested;	172
(b) A statement that the elector is an absent uniformed	173
services voter or overseas voter as defined in 52 U.S.C. 20310;	174
(c) The address at which the elector is registered to	175
vote;	176
(d) A statement identifying the elector's length of	177
residence in the state immediately preceding the commencement of	178
service, immediately preceding the date of leaving to be with or	179
near a service member, or immediately preceding leaving the	180
United States, or a statement that the elector's parent or legal	181
guardian resided in this state long enough to establish	182
residency for voting purposes immediately preceding leaving the	183
United States, as the case may be;	184
(e) The elector's date of birth;	185
(f) One of the following:	186
(i) The elector's Ohio driver's license or state	187
<pre>identification card number;</pre>	188
(ii) The last four digits of the elector's social security	189

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number;	190
(iii) A copy of the elector's photo identification.	191
(g) A statement identifying the election for which absent voter's ballots are requested;	192 193
(h) A statement that the person requesting the ballots is a qualified elector;	194 195
(i) If the request is for primary election ballots, the elector's party affiliation;	196 197
(j) A statement that the applicant bears a relationship to the elector as specified in division (A)(3) of this section;	198 199
(k) The address to which ballots shall be mailed, the telephone number to which ballots shall be sent by facsimile machine, the electronic mail address to which ballots shall be sent by electronic mail, or, if internet delivery is offered by the board of elections or the secretary of state, the internet contact information to which ballots shall be sent through internet delivery;	200 201 202 203 204 205 206
(1) The signature and address of the person making the application.	207 208
(B) If the elector has a confidential voter registration record, as described in section 111.44 of the Revised Code, the application may include the elector's program participant identification number instead of the address at which the elector is registered to vote.	209 210 211 212 213
(C) Each application for uniformed services or overseas absent voter's ballots shall be delivered to the office of the board not earlier than the first day of January of the year of the elections for which the uniformed services or overseas	214 215 216 217

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absent voter's ballots are requested or not earlier than ninety	218
days before the day of the election at which the ballots are to	219
be voted, whichever is earlier. An application to receive	220
uniformed services or overseas absent voter's ballots by mail or	221
by another method permitted under section 3511.021 of the	222
Revised Code shall be delivered to the office of the board not	223
later than the close of business on the seventh day preceding	224
the day of the election.	225
(D) If the voter for whom the application is made is	226
entitled to vote for presidential and vice-presidential electors	227
only, the applicant shall submit to the board, in addition to	228
the requirements of division (A) of this section, a statement to	229
the effect that the voter is qualified to vote for presidential	230
and vice-presidential electors and for no other offices.	231
(E) Except as permitted under section 111.31 of the	232
Revised Code, no (E) (1) No public office, and no public official	233
or employee who is acting in an official capacity, shall do	234
either of the following:	235
$\frac{(1)}{(a)}$ Prepay the return postage for an application for	236
absent voter's ballots;	237
$\frac{(2)}{(b)}$ Mail or otherwise deliver an unsolicited	238
application for absent voter's ballots to any person.	239
(2) No person shall mail an unsolicited application for	240
absent voter's ballots to any person.	241
(F)(1) Except as otherwise provided in divisions (A)(2)	242
and (3) and (F)(2) of this section and in sections $3505.24$ and	243
3509.08 of the Revised Code, no person shall fill out any	244
portion of a federal post card application or other application	245
for absent voter's ballots on behalf of an applicant.	246

(2) The secretary of state or a board of elections may	247
preprint only an applicant's name and address on a federal post	248
card application or other application for absent voter's ballots	249
before mailing that application to the applicant, except that if	250
the applicant has a confidential voter registration record, the	251
secretary of state or the board of elections shall not preprint	252
the applicant's address on the application.	253
(3) A completed application for absent voter's ballots is	254
not valid if any portion of it has been completed by any person	255
other than the applicant in violation of division (F) of this	256
section.	257
Sec. 3599.21. (A) No person shall knowingly do any of the	258
following:	259
(1) Impersonate another, or make a false representation in	260
order to obtain an absent voter's ballot;	261
(2) Aid or abet a person to vote an absent voter's ballot	262
illegally;	263
(3) If the person is an election official, open, destroy,	264
steal, mark, or mutilate any absent voter's ballot;	265
(4) Aid or abet another person to open, destroy, steal,	266
mark, or mutilate any absent voter's ballot after the ballot has	267
been voted;	268
(5) Delay the delivery of any absent voter's ballot with a	269
view to preventing its arrival in time to be counted;	270
(6) Hinder or attempt to hinder the delivery or counting	271
of such absent voter's ballot;	272
(7) Fail to forward to the appropriate election official	273
an absent voter's ballot application entrusted to that person to	274

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so forward;	275
(8) Fail to forward to the appropriate election official	276
an absent voter's ballot application entrusted to that person to	277
so forward within ten days after that application is completed	278
or within such a time period that the failure to so forward the	279
application disenfranchises the voter with respect to a	280
particular election, whichever is earlier;	281
(9) Return the absent voter's ballot of another to the	282
office of a board of elections, unless either of the following	283
apply:	284
(a) The person is a relative who is authorized to do so	285
under division (C)(1) of section 3509.05 of the Revised Code;	286
(b) The person is, and is acting as, an employee or	287
contractor of the United States postal service or a private	288
carrier.	289
(10) Except as authorized under Chapters 3509. and 3511.	290
of the Revised Code, possess the absent voter's ballot of	291
another.	292
(B)(1) Subject to division (B)(2) of this section, no	293
person who receives compensation for soliciting persons to apply	294
to vote by absent voter's ballots shall fail to forward to the	295
appropriate election official an absent voter's ballot	296
application entrusted to that person to so forward within ten	297
days after that application is completed.	298
(2) No person who receives compensation for soliciting	299
persons to apply to vote by absent voter's ballots shall fail to	300
forward to the appropriate election official an absent voter's	301
ballot application entrusted to that person to so forward within	302
such a time period that the failure to so forward the	303

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application disenfranchises the voter with respect to a	
particular election.	305
(C) No person shall mail an unsolicited application for an	306
absent voter's ballot to any other person.	307
(D) Whoever violates division (A) or (B) of this section	308
is guilty of a felony of the fourth degree. Whoever knowingly	309
violates division (C) of this section is guilty of a misdemeanor	310
of the first degree on the first offense, and a felony of the	311
fifth degree on each subsequent offense.	312
(D)(E) As used in this section, "person who receives	313
compensation for soliciting persons to apply to vote by absent	314
voter's ballots" includes any effort, for compensation, to	315
provide absent voter's ballot applications or to assist persons	316
in completing those applications or returning them to the	317
director of the board of elections of the county in which the	318
applicant's voting residence is located.	319
Section 2. That existing sections 3509.03, 3511.02, and	320
3599.21 of the Revised Code are hereby repealed.	321
Section 3. That section 111.31 of the Revised Code is	322
hereby repealed.	323