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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R.

To direct the Secretary of Defense to provide an individual who enlists as a member, or who is commissioned as an officer, of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Space Force and who is eligible to register to vote in elections for Federal office in the State in which the individual resides with a voter registration application form for such elections at the time the individual enlists or is commissioned, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. CASTEN introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on _____

A BILL

To direct the Secretary of Defense to provide an individual who enlists as a member, or who is commissioned as an officer, of the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Space Force and who is eligible to register to vote in elections for Federal office in the State in which the individual resides with a voter registration application form for such elections at the time the individual enlists or is commissioned, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Military Voters Over-
3 seas Technical Enhancement Act” or the “Military VOTE
4 Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. MAKING VOTER REGISTRATION AVAILABLE UPON**
6 **ENLISTMENT.**

7 (a) VOTER REGISTRATION AVAILABILITY.—At the
8 time an individual enlists as a member, or is commissioned
9 as an officer, of a covered Armed Force, the Secretary
10 of Defense shall—

11 (1) ask the individual if the individual is eligible
12 to register to vote in elections for Federal office in
13 the State in which the individual resides; and

14 (2) if the individual responds by stating that
15 the individual is eligible to register to vote in such
16 elections, the Secretary shall, in accordance with sec-
17 tion 7(a)(4) of the National Voter Registration Act
18 of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20506(a)(4))—

19 (A) provide the individual with a mail voter
20 registration application form;

21 (B) assist the individual in completing the
22 form, unless the individual refuses such assist-
23 ance; and

24 (C) accept the individual’s completed voter
25 registration application form for transmittal to
26 the appropriate State election official.

1 (b) NO EFFECT ON SERVICE IN COVERED ARMED
2 FORCE.—In carrying out this section with respect to any
3 individual, the Secretary shall not—

4 (1) seek to influence the individual’s political
5 preference or party registration;

6 (2) display any such political preference or
7 party allegiance;

8 (3) make any statement to an individual or take
9 any action the purpose or effect of which is to dis-
10 courage the individual from registering to vote; or

11 (4) make any statement to an individual or take
12 any action the purpose or effect of which is to lead
13 the individual to believe that a decision to register
14 or not to register has any bearing on the individual’s
15 service in a covered Armed Force.

16 (c) AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary shall seek to enter
17 into agreements with the appropriate State election offi-
18 cials to enable the Secretary to carry out this section.

19 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

20 (1) The term “covered Armed Force” means
21 the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, or Space
22 Force.

23 (2) The terms “election” and “Federal office”
24 have the meaning given such terms in section 301

1 of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (52
2 U.S.C. 30101).

3 (3) The term “State” means each of the several
4 States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth
5 of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the United
6 States Virgin Islands, and the Commonwealth of the
7 Northern Mariana Islands.

8 **SEC. 3. PROMOTING TIMELY AND ACCURATE DELIVERY OF**
9 **ABSENTEE BALLOTS.**

10 (a) ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION.—Section 102(f)(2)
11 of the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting
12 Act (52 U.S.C. 20302(f)(2)) is amended to read as fol-
13 lows:

14 “(2) TRANSMISSION IF NO PREFERENCE INDI-
15 CATED.—If an absent uniformed services voter or
16 overseas voter does not designate a preference under
17 paragraph (1)(B)—

18 “(A) the State shall transmit the ballot
19 electronically; or

20 “(B) if the State lacks sufficient informa-
21 tion to transmit the ballot electronically, the
22 State shall transmit the ballot by any delivery
23 method allowable in accordance with applicable
24 State law.”.

1 (b) NOTIFICATION OF CHANGE OF ADDRESS AND
2 CHANGE IN UNIFORMED SERVICE STATUS.—Section
3 101(b) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 20301(b)) is amended—

4 (1) by striking the semicolon at the end of
5 paragraph (10);

6 (2) by striking the period at the end of para-
7 graph (11) and inserting a semicolon; and

8 (3) by adding at the end the following new
9 paragraphs:

10 “(12) take such steps as may be necessary to
11 ensure that the appropriate State election official of
12 a State has timely and accurate contact information,
13 including an updated mailing address, for each uni-
14 formed services voter who is registered to vote in the
15 State, without regard to whether the voter is an ab-
16 sent uniformed services voter; and

17 “(13) notify the appropriate State election offi-
18 cial of a State if an individual who is registered to
19 vote in the State and who is a uniformed services
20 voter, including an absent uniformed services voter,
21 is no longer a uniformed services voter.”.

22 (c) DEFINITION.—Section 107 of such Act (52
23 U.S.C. 20310) is amended—

24 (1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph
25 (7);

1 (2) by redesignating paragraph (8) as para-
2 graph (9); and

3 (3) by inserting after paragraph (7) the fol-
4 lowing new paragraph:

5 “(8) ‘uniformed services voter’ means an indi-
6 vidual who is not absent from the place of residence
7 where the member is otherwise qualified to vote and
8 who is—

9 “(A) a member of a uniformed service on
10 active duty;

11 “(B) a member of the merchant marine; or

12 “(C) a spouse or dependent of a member
13 referred to in subparagraph (A) or (B) ; and”.

14 **SEC. 4. USE OF SINGLE ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATION**
15 **FOR SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS.**

16 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 104 of the Uniformed and
17 Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20306)
18 is amended to read as follows:

19 **“SEC. 104. TREATMENT OF BALLOT REQUESTS.**

20 “(a) USE OF APPLICATION BY ABSENT UNIFORMED
21 SERVICES VOTERS FOR SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS.—

22 “(1) IN GENERAL.—If a State accepts and
23 processes an official post card form (prescribed
24 under section 101) submitted by an absent uni-
25 formed services voter for simultaneous voter reg-

1 istration and absentee ballot application (in accord-
2 ance with section 102(a)(4)) and the voter requests
3 that the application be considered an application for
4 an absentee ballot for each subsequent election for
5 Federal office held in the State, the State shall pro-
6 vide an absentee ballot to the voter for each such
7 subsequent election.

8 “(2) EXCEPTION FOR VOTERS CHANGING UNI-
9 FORMED SERVICE STATUS.—Paragraph (1) shall not
10 apply with respect to a voter registered to vote in a
11 State for any election held after the voter is no
12 longer a uniformed services voter.

13 “(b) PROHIBITION OF REFUSAL OF APPLICATION ON
14 GROUNDS OF EARLY SUBMISSION.—A State may not
15 refuse to accept or to process, with respect to any election
16 for Federal office, any otherwise valid voter registration
17 application or absentee ballot application (including the
18 postcard form prescribed under section 101) submitted by
19 an absent uniformed services voter or overseas voter on
20 the grounds that the voter submitted the application be-
21 fore the first date on which the State otherwise accepts
22 or processes such applications for that election which are
23 submitted by absentee voters who are not members of the
24 uniformed services or overseas citizens.”.

1 (b) CONFORMING REVISION TO POSTCARD FORM.—

2 Section 101 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 20301) is amended—

3 (1) in subsection (b)(2), by striking the semi-
4 colon and inserting “, in accordance with subsection
5 (c);”;

6 (2) by redesignating subsections (b) and (c) as
7 subsections (c) and (d); and

8 (3) by inserting after subsection (a) the fol-
9 lowing new subsection:

10 “(c) USE OF OFFICIAL POST CARD FORM FOR REG-
11 ISTRATION FOR SUBSEQUENT ELECTIONS.—The Presi-
12 dential designee shall ensure that the official postcard
13 form prescribed under subsection (b)(2) enables a voter
14 using the form to request an absentee ballot for subse-
15 quent elections for Federal office held in a State, as pro-
16 vided under section 104.”.

17 (c) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by
18 this subsection shall apply with respect to voter registra-
19 tion and absentee ballot applications which are submitted
20 to a State or local election official on or after the date
21 of enactment of this Act.

1 **SEC. 5. EVALUATION OF ACCURACY AND TIMELINESS OF**
2 **VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION PRO-**
3 **VIDED TO ABSENT UNIFORMED SERVICES**
4 **VOTERS UPON TRANSFER TO NEW DUTY STA-**
5 **TION.**

6 Section 105A of the Uniformed and Overseas Citi-
7 zens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20308) is amend-
8 ed—

9 (1) by redesignating subsection (c) as sub-
10 section (d); and

11 (2) by inserting after subsection (b) the fol-
12 lowing new subsection:

13 “(c) ADEQUACY OF VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMA-
14 TION PROVIDED TO MEMBERS UPON TRANSFER TO NEW
15 DUTY STATION.—Not later than one year after the date
16 of the enactment of this subsection, the Presidential des-
17 ignee shall submit to the President and the relevant con-
18 gressional committees an evaluation of whether the infor-
19 mation on voter registration which is included in the
20 change of base packet provided to absent uniformed serv-
21 ices voters who are transferred to new duty stations pro-
22 vides timely and accurate information on how such voters
23 may register to vote in elections for Federal office.”.