

JANUARY 22, 2021

SENATE GOVERNMENT AND VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SENATE BILL 2160

SEN DAVID CLEMENS

CHAIR VEDAA AND COMMITTEE, MY NAME IS DAVID CLEMENS FROM DISTRICT 16 IN WEST FARGO AND FARGO AND I AM HERE TO INTRODUCE SENATE BILL 2160.

WHAT THIS BILL DOES IS REMOVE THE LANGUAGE IN SECTION 1 THAT CURRENTLY ALLOWS VOTERS TO REQUEST ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR THE ENTIRE CALENDER YEAR. THIS BILL CHANGES THAT SO VOTERS MUST REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT ONLY FOR THE ELECTION IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE DATE OF THE APPLICATION. IN SECTION 2 THE WORDS "TO THE PUBLIC" ARE REMOVED, BUT MILITARY AND OVERSEAS VOTERS CAN STILL RECEIVE THEIR BALLOTS WITHOUT ANY SPECIFIC REQUESTS. LANGUAGE WAS ALSO ADDED THAT STATES ALL OTHER ELECTORS MUST REQUEST AN ABSENTEE BALLOT.

I BELIEVE THIS BILL IS NECESSARY TO CONTROL THE NUMBER OF ABSENTEE BALLOTS GOING OUT WHICH INCREASES THE CHANCES OF VOTER FRAUD. THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA HAS MADE IT VERY CONVENIENT FOR CITIZENS TO VOTE WITH EARLY VOTING, MAIL IN VOTING AND VOTING AT THE POLLS. TO SIMPLY BLANKET THE STATE WITH BALLOTS IS NOT IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE STATE. MANY ABSENTEE BALLOTS ARE NOT BEING USED AND THEREFORE WASTED, PARTLY DUE TO CONFUSTION WHEN THE VOTER DID NOT REALIZE THEY WERE ORDERING BALLOTS FOR THE ENTIRE CALENDER YEAR.

THIS BILL CHANGES NOTHING IN THE PROCESS OF REQUESTING AN ABSENTEE BALLOT. FOR THOSE VOTERS THAT NEED AN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR THE NEXT ELECTION, THE ABSENTEE BALLOT IS STILL AVAILABLE AS BEFORE.

I URGE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION ON SB2160.

ANY QUESTIONS.