



**House
Legislative
Analysis
Section**

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AV BALLOT: NO REASONS

House Bill 4354

Sponsor: Rep. Joseph Rivet

Committee: Redistricting and Elections

Complete to 3-2-01

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4354 AS INTRODUCED 2-27-01

The bill would amend the Michigan Election Law so that any qualified voter could vote by absentee ballot. The bill would eliminate the current requirements that must be met before a person could be an "absent voter" and would instead define that term to mean "a qualified and registered elector who wishes to vote without attending the polls on the day of an election."

Currently, the law requires that in order to qualify for an "absent voter ballot," a qualified and registered voter must be 60 years of age or older or unable to attend the polls on the day of an election on account of a physical disability; on account of the tenets of his or her religion; because of being an election precinct inspector in another precinct; because he or she will be absent from the township or city during the entire period the polls are open; or on account of being confined in jail awaiting arraignment or trial.

The bill would not change the methods of acquiring or delivering absent voter ballot applications, except in the case of emergency absent voter ballot applications. Ordinarily, a voter must apply for an absentee ballot up until 2 p.m. of the Saturday before the election. However, the election law allows a voter to apply for an absentee ballot on election day, up until 4 p.m., if "he shall have become physically disabled or shall be absent from the city or township because of sickness or death in the family" occurring at a time that made applying within the statutory deadline impossible. House Bill 4354 would eliminate the current reasons and instead allow for an emergency ballot application if "an event" had occurred that made meeting the statutory deadline impossible.

MCL 168.758 et al.

Analyst: C. Couch

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