



**April 23, 2025**

Governor Kelly Armstrong  
Office of the Governor  
State of North Dakota  
600 East Boulevard Ave.  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0001

**Re: HB 1165 Veto Request**

Dear Governor Armstrong:

On behalf of the five cosigned organizations, we write to respectfully request a veto on House Bill 1165, a bill which will disenfranchise North Dakotans who mail in their completed election ballots.

In North Dakota's current election system, mailed ballots need to be **postmarked** by the day before Election Day. If HB 1165 becomes law, election officials would need to **receive** mailed ballots by the close of polls on Election Day. HB 1165 will disproportionately impact rural voters, Native voters, seniors, voters with disabilities, and any voters who may need as much time as possible to submit a ballot and who should not be penalized in the event their ballot is not delivered by Election Day.

The USPS is a world-class delivery service of which North Dakotans are proud. However, during an election the Postal Service must often engage in extraordinary measures to attempt timely ballot delivery such as extra deliveries and collections, special pick-ups, specialized sort plans, and local handling and transportation of ballots (USPS "Voting by Mail").<sup>1</sup> Despite these measures, staff shortages, extraordinary weather events, or other issues may impede delivery of all ballots to election officials by Election Day. Eligible North Dakota voters should be able to mail their absentee ballots without fear that their ballots will be tossed out.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Voting-by-Mail#time\\_Postal\\_Service\\_deliver\\_mail](https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Voting-by-Mail#time_Postal_Service_deliver_mail)

A majority of our counties—36 out of 53 counties—are “Vote by Mail” Counties<sup>2</sup>, where absentee ballot applications are automatically mailed to voting age residents in the county. These counties are only required to have one polling location in the entire county open on Election Day. These Vote by Mail county voters are especially vulnerable to changes to our absentee ballot process.

The amendment to the bill regarding the change in absentee ballot deadline—which came late in the legislative process—received no public hearing. North Dakota voters who would be affected were not given a chance to make their voices heard before the committee or legislature on the amendment. This should not have been attached to what was said to be an election law clean up bill. This is a major election policy change for North Dakota and is not simply a clean up to our election law.

We encourage you to veto legislation that imposes barriers for North Dakota voters. Our organizations work hard to encourage eligible North Dakota voters to cast a ballot each election, and this would create additional hurdles especially for those who already have difficulties casting a ballot. Therefore, we respectfully request you veto HB 1165.

We appreciate your consideration of our comments and are available to provide additional information related to absentee ballot policy.

Respectfully submitted,



Barbara Headrick, League of Women Voters of North Dakota (LWVND) president  
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**And the undersigned:**

Cody Schuler, American Civil Liberties Union of North Dakota  
Nicole Donaghy, North Dakota Native Vote  
Veronica Zietz, ND Protection & Advocacy Project  
Amy Jacobson, Prairie Action North Dakota Institute

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<sup>2</sup> <https://vip.sos.nd.gov/Precincts.aspx?eid=333>