



MISSOURI SENATE
JEFFERSON CITY

Frank A. Barnitz
16th Senatorial District
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CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 427
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101
Contact: Tony Benz
(573) 751-2108

Senate Approves Measure Streamlining the Absentee Voter Process for Missourians Serving Overseas

JEFFERSON CITY – Senator Frank Barnitz, D-Lake Spring, today announced that the Senate has approved [Senate Bill 845](#) yesterday (3/23/10). The legislation would make it easier for soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines, as well as others who work overseas, to submit absentee voting applications while they are serving abroad.

Currently, Missourians who are out of the country must request an absentee voting ballot by mail, fax or in-person. In the time that it takes for voters to get the ballot returned, the election is often over and the ballot is only provisional. Senate Bill 845 would require the Secretary of State to establish procedures for overseas voters to request and send voter registration applications and absentee ballot applications electronically, resulting in a faster turn around.

“Currently, our military overseas are fighting for our right to vote and they don’t get an opportunity, a lot of times, to have their voices heard,” said Sen. Barnitz. “They are Americans, they have the right to vote, and they’re fighting for our right to vote. It’s time that we give them the opportunity to have their votes counted.”

Senate Bill 845 also contains provisions to ensure enough absentee ballots are ready and available for overseas military voters. The legislation also excuses military voters from being required to deliver a sworn affidavit to election officials in order to file their absentee ballot. To ensure that every vote is counted, the bill also contains a provision to encourage the Secretary of State to coordinate with local election jurisdictions to create a free access system so that absentee military voters can track their ballots and see they have been received.

Senate Bill 845 now moves to the House for similar consideration.

[Click here](#) for audio clips of Senator Barnitz discussing Senate Bill 845.

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