



No Time to Vote: Challenges Facing America's Overseas Military Voters

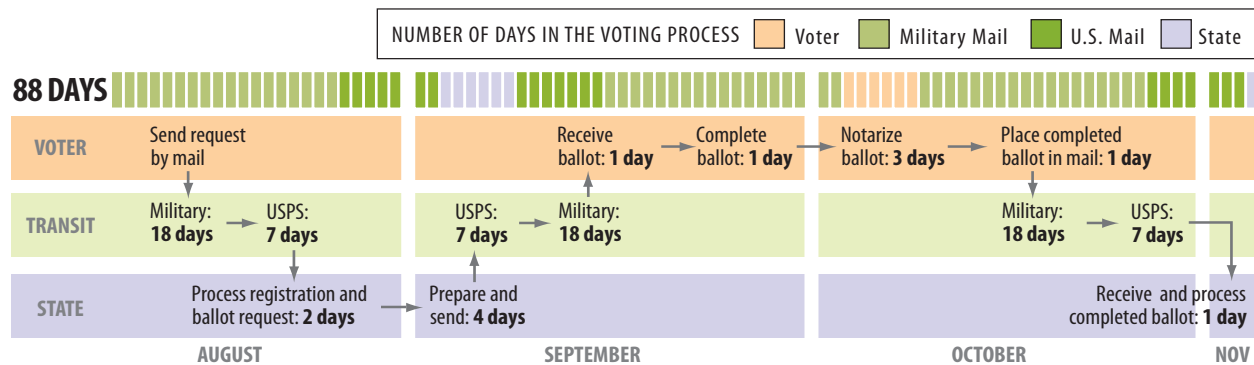
Alabama

Alabama's absentee voting process relies entirely on postal mail to transmit ballots to and from overseas military voters. Because the time needed for ballots to travel by mail takes longer than the time Alabama provides in its process, its military voters abroad would need at least 23 additional days to have enough time to vote.



No Time to Vote

THE CURRENT VOTING PROCESS



Alabama is one of just three states that relies entirely on postal mail to transmit election materials to and from its overseas military voters (the other two are New York and Wyoming). One step Alabama could take to ensure these voters have time to vote is to send them blank ballots by fax, e-mail or other electronic means (such as through a Web site). This change would help voters get their ballots much faster and give them more time to return their completed ballots by postal mail. The state also could send out blank ballots to voters earlier in the process, extend the deadline by which completed ballots must be received to be counted or a combination of the two steps that will add at least 23 days to the process. The state also could streamline its process by eliminating its requirement that completed ballots be notarized.

SOLUTIONS

POSSIBLE FIX	DOES IT PROVIDE ENOUGH TIME TO VOTE?
SEND BLANK BALLOTS OUT EARLIER AND ACCEPT COMPLETED BALLOTS LATER	YES TIME TO VOTE
ALLOW MINIMUM 45-DAY TRANSIT TIME FOR BALLOTS	NO NO CHANGE
ELIMINATE NOTARY REQUIREMENT	NO NO CHANGE
ALLOW ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF BLANK BALLOTS	YES TIME TO VOTE
EXPAND USE OF FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS	YES TIME TO VOTE

No Time to Vote: States that send out their absentee ballots after the date necessary for military overseas voters to have enough time to meet the required deadlines.

At Risk: States that provide overseas military voters with only five days or less of extra time to complete the voting process.

Time to Vote, But with Concerns: States that provide enough time to vote, but at a price. Overseas military voters from these states have time to vote only if they return their completed ballots by fax or e-mail—practices that raise concerns about voters' privacy and the security of ballots.

Time to Vote: States that provide overseas military voters with more than five days of extra time—that is, time beyond the absolute minimum needed to return a completed ballot—to allow for any delays in the voting process.



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