



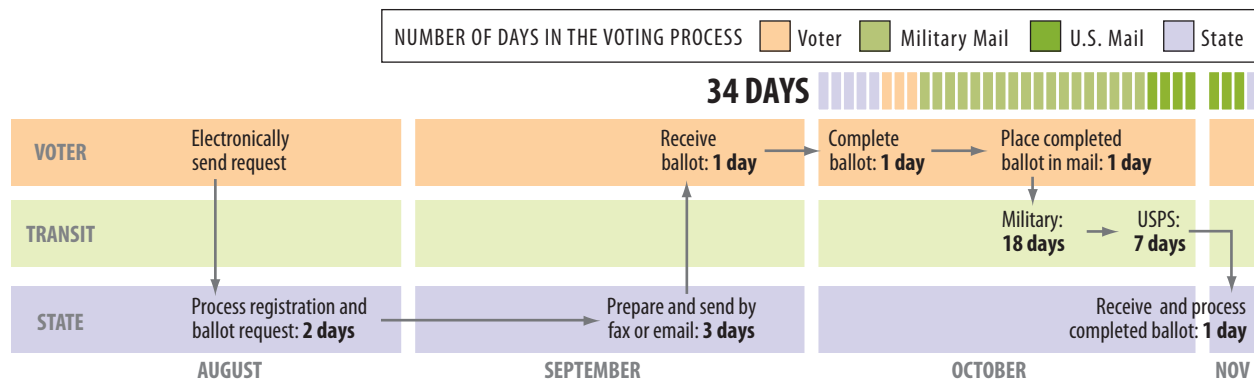
No Time to Vote: Challenges Facing America's Overseas Military Voters

Minnesota

Overseas military voters from Minnesota have just 30 days to receive, complete and return their ballots—15 days fewer than the 45-day allowance recommended by the U.S. Department of Defense's Federal Voting Assistance Program. As a result, the state's military voters abroad have a cushion of fewer than five days to accommodate any delays in the voting process, leaving them at risk of not having enough time to vote.



THE CURRENT VOTING PROCESS



Minnesota already allows its overseas military voters to receive blank ballots by fax or e-mail, helping them get their election materials much faster. Since these voters may not have easy access to e-mail or fax machines, the state could consider sending blank ballots by other electronic means (such as through a Web site). However, because ballots are not sent out until October 5, the state's military citizens abroad are at risk of running out of time to vote because of potential delays in the process or in postal mail delivery. To ensure these voters have enough time to vote, Minnesota needs to send out its ballots earlier, 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 four days to the process.

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	YES TIME TO VOTE
ELIMINATE NOTARY REQUIREMENT	ALREADY IN PLACE NO CHANGE
ALLOW ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION OF BLANK BALLOTS	ALREADY IN PLACE NO CHANGE
EXPAND USE OF FEDERAL WRITE-IN ABSENTEE BALLOT FOR STATE AND LOCAL ELECTIONS	ALREADY IN PLACE 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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