



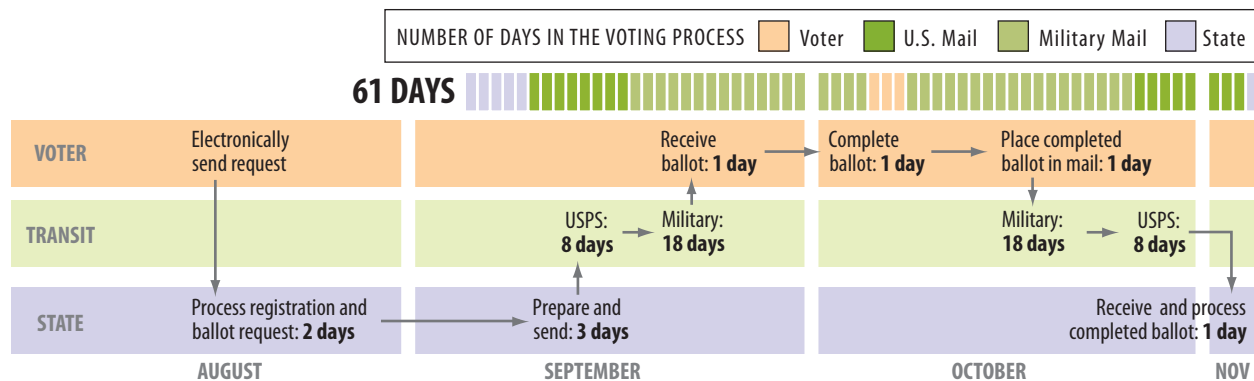
# No Time to Vote: Challenges Facing America's Overseas Military Voters

## South Dakota

Overseas military voters from South Dakota can use fax or e-mail to request a ballot—but the state requires the ballots to be transmitted to and from voters by postal mail. Because the time needed for ballots to travel by mail takes longer than the time South Dakota provides in its process, its military voters abroad would need at least 20 additional days to have enough time to vote.



### THE CURRENT VOTING PROCESS



South Dakota could follow the lead of 32 other states and send blank ballots to overseas military voters 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. Still, even with that reform, the state's military voters abroad would have a cushion of fewer than five days to accommodate any delays in the process—putting them at risk of not having enough time to vote. To help address this problem, South Dakota could send out blank ballots to voters 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 20 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	NO   NO CHANGE
ELIMINATE NOTARY REQUIREMENT	ALREADY IN PLACE   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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