

By: Senator(s) Tate

To: Elections

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE  
FOR  
SENATE BILL NO. 2587

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 23-15-637, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,  
2 TO AUTHORIZE THE REGISTRAR TO ALPHABETIZE RECEIVED ABSENTEE  
3 BALLOTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

4 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

5 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-15-637, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
6 amended as follows:

7 23-15-637. (1) (a) Absentee ballots and applications  
8 received by mail, except for fax or electronically transmitted  
9 ballots as otherwise provided by Section 23-15-699 for UOCAVA  
10 ballots, must be postmarked on or before the date of the election  
11 and received by the registrar no more than five (5) business days  
12 after the election; any received after such time shall be handled  
13 as provided in Section 23-15-647 and shall not be counted.

14 (b) All ballots cast by the absent elector appearing in  
15 person in the office of the registrar shall be cast with an  
16 absentee paper ballot and deposited into a sealed ballot box by  
17 the voter, not later than 12:00 noon \* \* \* on the Saturday  
18 immediately preceding elections held on Tuesday, the Thursday



19 immediately preceding elections held on Saturday, or the second  
20 day immediately preceding the date of elections held on other  
21 days. At the close of business each day at the office of the  
22 registrar, the registrar may alphabetize the ballots and separate  
23 the ballots by precinct, and the ballot box used shall be sealed  
24 and not unsealed until the beginning of the next business day, and  
25 the seal number shall be recorded with the number of ballots cast  
26 which shall be stored in a secure location in the registrar's  
27 office.

28 (2) The registrar shall deposit all absentee ballots which  
29 have been timely cast and received by mail in a secured and sealed  
30 box in a designated location in the registrar's office upon  
31 receipt. The registrar shall not send any absentee ballots to the  
32 precinct polling locations.

33 (3) The Secretary of State shall promulgate rules and  
34 regulations necessary to ensure that when a qualified elector who  
35 is qualified to vote absentee votes by absentee ballot, either by  
36 mail or in person with a regular paper ballot, that person's  
37 absentee vote is final and he or she may not vote at the polling  
38 place on election day. Notwithstanding any other provisions of  
39 law to the contrary, the Secretary of State shall promulgate rules  
40 and regulations necessary to ensure that absentee ballots shall  
41 remain in the registrar's office for counting and not be taken to  
42 the precincts on election day.



43           **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
44 and after July 1, 2021.

