

By: Representative Scott

To: Apportionment and
Elections

HOUSE BILL NO. 195

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 23-15-639, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REVISE THE TIME FOR THE RESOLUTION BOARD TO COUNT ABSENTEE
3 BALLOTS; TO PROVIDE A DEADLINE FOR WHEN CERTAIN ABSENTEE BALLOTS
4 MUST BE COUNTED BY; TO REQUIRE THE RESOLUTION BOARD TO POST THE
5 VOTE TOTALS OF THE ABSENTEE BALLOTS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** Section 23-15-639, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
8 amended as follows:

9 23-15-639. (1) The examination and counting of all absentee
10 ballots shall be conducted as follows:

11 (a) At the opening of the regular balloting and at the
12 opening of the polls, the resolution board established under
13 Section 23-15-523 and trained in the process of canvassing
14 absentee ballots shall first take the envelopes containing the
15 absentee ballots of such electors from the secure location at the
16 circuit clerk's office, and the name, address and precinct
17 inscribed on each envelope shall be announced by the election
18 managers.



19 (b) The signature on the application shall then be
20 compared with the signature on the back of the envelope. If it
21 corresponds and the affidavit, if one is required, is sufficient
22 and the resolution board find that the applicant is a registered
23 and qualified voter or otherwise qualified to vote, the envelope
24 shall then be opened and the ballot removed from the envelope,
25 without its being unfolded, or permitted to be unfolded or
26 examined.

27 (c) Having observed and found the ballot to be regular
28 as far as can be observed from its official endorsement, the
29 resolution board shall deposit it in the ballot box with the other
30 ballots before counting any ballots and enter the voter's name in
31 the receipt book provided for that purpose. All absentee ballots
32 received prior to 7:00 p.m. the day before the election shall be
33 counted in the registrar's office by the resolution board when the
34 polls * * * open and then added to the votes cast in each
35 precinct. Once the resolution board has counted all of the
36 absentee ballots received prior to 7:00 p.m. the day before the
37 election, they shall post the vote totals of those absentee
38 ballots. All absentee ballots received after 7:00 p.m. the day
39 before the election but not later than the fifth business day
40 after the election shall be processed by the resolution board by
41 5:00 p.m. on the sixth business day after the election.



42 (2) The resolution board shall also take such action as may
43 be prescribed by the Secretary of State to ensure compliance with
44 the identification requirements of Section 23-15-563.

45 (3) The resolution board shall process the absentee ballots
46 using the procedure provided in subsection (1) of this section.

47 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
48 and after July 1, 2024.

