

By: Senator(s) Blount

To: Elections

## SENATE BILL NO. 2047

1       AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO ESTABLISH A  
2 SECURE WEBSITE TO ENABLE STUDENT VOTERS TO SUBMIT ELECTRONIC  
3 ABSENTEE BALLOT APPLICATIONS; TO ESTABLISH THE DOCUMENTS WHICH  
4 MUST BE SUBMITTED BY THE STUDENT TO APPROVE SUCH APPLICATIONS; TO  
5 PROVIDE THAT UPON APPROVAL, STUDENT ABSENTEE VOTERS MAY BE  
6 AUTOMATICALLY MAILED ABSENTEE BALLOTS FOR ALL ELECTIONS THAT OCCUR  
7 FOR A CERTAIN PERIOD OF TIME; TO AMEND SECTIONS 23-15-627,  
8 23-15-631, 23-15-715 AND 23-15-721, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO  
9 CONFORM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

11       SECTION 1. (1) For purposes of this article, "student  
12 absentee voter" or "student absentee elector" means an individual  
13 who is a registered elector and who is enrolled in any institution  
14 of higher education whose studies at the institution require the  
15 individual's absence from the municipality or county of his or her  
16 voting residence on the date of any primary, general or special  
17 election.

18       (2) A student absentee elector may submit an electronic  
19 absentee ballot application using the following procedures:

20           (a) The student absentee elector must print and  
21 complete the application for absentee electors as described in

22 Section 2 of this act. The application must be signed and stamped  
23 by the registrar or a registrar's deputy for the institution in  
24 which the student is enrolled;

25 (b) The student must copy his or her student  
26 identification card issued by the institution of higher education  
27 in which he or she is enrolled; and

28 (c) The student must upload the application, copy of  
29 the student identification card and enter any other information as  
30 may be required into the secure internet website established by  
31 the Secretary of State.

32 (3) If approved, a student's application to receive absentee  
33 ballots by mail is valid from the date of approval until the  
34 following June 30.

35 **SECTION 2.** (1) The Secretary of State shall establish a  
36 secure internet website to permit student absentee electors to  
37 submit an electronic absentee ballot application. The software  
38 used by the Secretary of State for accepting and processing  
39 applications must be capable of the following:

40 (a) Uploading a copy of the elector's student  
41 identification card issued by the institution in which the student  
42 is enrolled; and

43 (b) Accepting an electronic absentee ballot application  
44 for student voters, as described in this section.

45 (2) The electronic absentee ballot application for student  
46 voters shall be substantially similar to the following form:



"OFFICIAL ELECTRONIC APPLICATION FOR ABSENT ELECTOR'S BALLOT

## STUDENT ABSENTEE ELECTORS

49 I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly qualified and registered in the \_\_\_\_ Precinct  
50 of the County of \_\_\_\_\_, and State of Mississippi, coming within  
51 the purview of the definition 'STUDENT ABSENTEE ELECTOR' will be  
52 absent from the county or municipality of my residence on election  
53 day (check all that apply):

54 ( ) I am a student at a college, university, junior college,  
55 community college or other institution of higher education whose  
56 studies at such institution necessitate my absence from the county  
57 of my voting residence.

58 ( ) I am a student at a college, university, junior college,  
59 community college or other institution of higher education whose  
60 studies at such institution necessitate my absence from the  
61 municipality of my voting residence.

62 I hereby assert that I am a student at

63 \_\_\_\_\_ (name of institute of higher  
64 education of enrollment).

65 I hereby make application for an official ballot, or ballots,  
66 to be voted by me for any election in which I am entitled to vote  
67 to be held on any day between July 1, and June 30, .

68 My permanent physical address is .

69 Mail 'Absent Elector's Ballot' to me at the following address  
70 .



71 I realize that if approved, my application to receive ballots  
72 by mail will expire on June 30, \_\_\_\_, and that I must submit a  
73 new electronic application for absent elector's ballots.

74 I realize that I can be fined up to Five Thousand Dollars  
75 (\$5,000.00) and sentenced up to five (5) years in the Penitentiary  
76 for making a false statement in this application and for selling  
77 my vote and violating the Mississippi Absentee Voter Law. (This  
78 sentence is to be in bold print.)

79 As a student absentee elector, you are not required to have  
80 this application notarized or signed by an official authorized to  
81 administer oaths for absentee balloting. You are required to sign  
82 this application in the proper place and have the registrar of the  
83 institution of higher education in which you are enrolled, or a  
84 deputy of such registrar to witness your signature and sign this  
85 application in the proper place.

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86          DO NOT SIGN WITHOUT READING.  (This sentence is to be in bold  
87  print.)
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88                   IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and seal this  
89   the              day of           , 2011.

90 \_\_\_\_\_  
91 (Signature of absent student elector)

92 TO BE SIGNED AND SEALED BY WITNESS FOR STUDENT ABSENTEE  
93 ELECTOR:

94 I HEREBY CERTIFY that this application for an absent  
95 elector's ballot was signed by the above-named student elector in

96 my presence, that I am the registrar of the institution of higher  
97 education in which the above-named student elector is enrolled or  
98 a deputy of such registrar, and that I have verified the  
99 above-named student's enrollment in such institution, this the  
100 \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2\_\_\_\_.

101 \_\_\_\_\_  
102 (Signature of registrar or deputy  
103 registrar)

104 \_\_\_\_\_  
105 (Print name of institute of higher  
106 education)

107 \_\_\_\_\_  
108 (Affix official imprint, stamp or seal  
109 of institute of higher education)."

110 (3) The Secretary of State shall verify the student  
111 elector's electronic absentee ballot application. If any of the  
112 information within the application does not match or the  
113 information does not match that on file with the elector's  
114 registration record, the ballot application shall be denied. The  
115 student absentee elector shall be notified of the reason for  
116 denial.

117 (4) The Secretary of State shall forward approved absentee  
118 ballot applications to the circuit and municipal clerks of the  
119 student absentee voter's residence. Upon receipt, the circuit and



120 municipal clerks shall affix their seals to the applications and  
121 initial them.

122 (5) An approved request for an absentee ballot to be mailed  
123 to a student voter shall remain valid until June 30 of each year.  
124 No less than thirty (30) days before the expiration of a  
125 designation to receive absentee ballots under this section, the  
126 Secretary of State shall send an announcement through electronic  
127 mail or postal mail to approved student absentee voters explaining  
128 that they must submit a new electronic absentee ballot  
129 application.

130 (6) The Secretary of State is authorized to promulgate  
131 additional rules and regulations as may be necessary to effectuate  
132 the intent of Sections 1 and 2 of this act.

133 **SECTION 3.** Section 23-15-627, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
134 amended as follows:

135 23-15-627. (1) Any elector described in Section 23-15-713  
136 may request an absentee ballot application and vote in person at  
137 the office of the registrar in the county in which he or she  
138 resides. The registrar shall be responsible for furnishing an  
139 absentee ballot application form to any elector authorized to  
140 receive an absentee ballot. Such form shall be printed on the  
141 absentee ballot envelope as provided in Section 23-15-659. Except  
142 as otherwise provided in Sections 1 and 2 of this act and Section  
143 23-15-625, absentee ballot applications shall be furnished to a  
144 person only upon the oral or written request of the elector who



145 seeks to vote by absentee ballot; however, the parent, child,  
146 spouse, sibling, legal guardian, those empowered with a power of  
147 attorney for that elector's affairs or agent of the elector, who  
148 is designated in writing and witnessed by a resident of this state  
149 who shall write his or her physical address on such designation,  
150 may orally request an absentee ballot application on behalf of the  
151 elector. The written designation shall be valid for one (1) year  
152 after the date of the designation. An absentee ballot application  
153 must have the seal of the circuit or municipal clerk affixed to it  
154 and be initialed by the registrar or his or her deputy in order to  
155 be used to obtain an absentee ballot. Except as provided in  
156 Sections 1 and 2 of this act, a reproduction of an absentee ballot  
157 application shall not be valid unless it is a reproduction  
158 provided by the office of the registrar of the jurisdiction in  
159 which the election is being held and which contains the seal and  
160 initials required by this section.

161 (2) Such application shall be substantially in the following  
162 form for applications mailed to absentee electors:

163 "OFFICIAL APPLICATION FOR ABSENT ELECTOR'S BALLOT

164 I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly qualified and registered in the \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct  
165 of the County of \_\_\_\_\_, and State of Mississippi, coming within  
166 the purview of the definition 'ABSENT ELECTOR' will be absent from  
167 the county of my residence on election day, or unable to vote in  
168 person because (check appropriate reason):



169           ( ) (PRESIDENTIAL APPLICANT ONLY:) I am currently a  
170 resident of Mississippi or have moved therefrom within thirty (30)  
171 days of the coming presidential election.

172           ( ) I am an enlisted or commissioned member, male or female,  
173 of any component of the United States Armed Forces and am a  
174 citizen of Mississippi, or spouse or dependent of such member.

175           ( ) I am a member of the Merchant Marine or the American Red  
176 Cross and am a citizen of Mississippi or spouse or dependent of  
177 such member.

178           ( ) I am a disabled war veteran who is a patient in any  
179 hospital and am a citizen of Mississippi or spouse or dependent of  
180 such veteran.

181           ( ) I am a civilian attached to and serving outside of the  
182 United States with any branch of the Armed Forces or with the  
183 Merchant Marine or American Red Cross, and am a citizen of  
184 Mississippi or spouse or dependent of such civilian.

185           ( ) I am a citizen of Mississippi temporarily residing  
186 outside the territorial limits of the United States and the  
187 District of Columbia.

188           ( ) I am a student, teacher or administrator at a college,  
189 university, junior or community college, high, junior high,  
190 elementary or grade school, whose studies or employment at such  
191 institution necessitates my absence from the county of my voting  
192 residence or spouse or dependent of such student, teacher or  
193 administrator who maintains a common domicile outside the county



194 of my voting residence with such student, teacher or  
195 administrator.

196 ( ) I will be outside the county on election day.

197 ( ) I have a temporary or permanent physical disability.

198 ( ) I am sixty-five (65) years of age or older.

199 ( ) I am the parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a  
200 temporary or permanent physical disability who is hospitalized  
201 outside his or her county of residence or more than fifty (50)  
202 miles away from his or her residence, and I will be with such  
203 person on election day.

204 ( ) I am a member of the congressional delegation, or spouse  
205 or dependent of a member of the congressional delegation.

206 ( ) I am required to be at work on election day during the  
207 times when the polls will be open or I am required to be on-call  
208 on election day during the times when the polls will be open.

209 ( ) I am incarcerated in prison or jail in the county where  
210 I am registered to vote and have not been convicted of a  
211 disenfranchising crime.

212 I hereby make application for an official ballot, or ballots,  
213 to be voted by me at the election to be held in \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_.

214 Mail 'Absent Elector's Ballot' to me at the following address  
215 \_\_\_\_\_.

216 ( ) I wish to receive an absentee ballot for the runoff  
217 election \_\_\_\_\_.

218 Notify me of a problem with my 'Absent Elector's Ballot' at  
219 the following:

220 Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

221 Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

222 Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

223 I realize that I can be fined up to Five Thousand Doll

224 (\$5,000.00) and sentenced up to five (5) years in the Penitentiary  
225 for making a false statement in this application and for selling  
226 my vote and violating the Mississippi Absentee Voter Law. (This  
227 sentence is to be in bold print.)

228 If you are temporarily or permanently disabled, you are not  
229 required to have this application notarized or signed by an  
230 official authorized to administer oaths for absentee balloting.  
231 You are required to sign this application in the proper place and  
232 have a person eighteen (18) years of age or older witness your  
233 signature and sign this application in the proper place.

234 DO NOT SIGN WITHOUT READING. (This sentence is to be in bold  
235 print.)

236 IN WITNESS WHEREOF I have hereunto set my hand and seal this  
237 the day of , 2 .

238

239 (Signature of absent elector)

240 SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me this the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_,  
241 2 .



243 (Official authorized to administer oaths  
244 for absentee balloting.)

245 TO BE SIGNED BY WITNESS FOR VOTERS TEMPORARILY OR PERMANENTLY  
246 DISABLED:

247 I HEREBY CERTIFY that this application for an absent  
248 elector's ballot was signed by the above-named elector in my  
249 presence and that I am at least eighteen (18) years of age, this  
250 the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2\_\_\_\_.

251 \_\_\_\_\_  
252 (Signature of witness)

253 CERTIFICATE OF DELIVERY

254 I hereby certify that \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of voter)  
255 has requested that I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name of person  
256 delivering application), deliver to the voter this absentee ballot  
257 application.

258 \_\_\_\_\_  
259 (Signature of person delivering application)  
260 \_\_\_\_\_  
261 (Address of person delivering application)"

262 (3) The application printed on the front of the absentee  
263 ballot envelope for absentee voters appearing before the registrar  
264 shall be substantially in the following form:

265 "OFFICIAL APPLICATION FOR ABSENT ELECTOR'S BALLOT

266 I, \_\_\_\_\_, duly qualified and registered in the \_\_\_\_\_ Precinct  
267 of the County of \_\_\_\_\_, and State of Mississippi, coming within



268 the purview of the definition 'ABSENT ELECTOR' will be absent from  
269 the county of my residence on election day, or unable to vote in  
270 person because (check appropriate reason):

271 ( ) (PRESIDENTIAL APPLICANT ONLY:) I am currently a  
272 resident of Mississippi or have moved therefrom within thirty (30)  
273 days of the coming presidential election.

274 ( ) I am an enlisted or commissioned member, male or female,  
275 of any component of the United States Armed Forces and am a  
276 citizen of Mississippi, or spouse or dependent of such member.

277 ( ) I am a member of the Merchant Marine or the American Red  
278 Cross and am a citizen of Mississippi or spouse or dependent of  
279 such member.

280 ( ) I am a disabled war veteran who is a patient in any  
281 hospital and am a citizen of Mississippi or spouse or dependent of  
282 such veteran.

283 ( ) I am a civilian attached to and serving outside of the  
284 United States with any branch of the Armed Forces or with the  
285 Merchant Marine or American Red Cross, and am a citizen of  
286 Mississippi or spouse or dependent of such civilian.

287 ( ) I am a citizen of Mississippi temporarily residing  
288 outside the territorial limits of the United States and the  
289 District of Columbia.

290 ( ) I am a student, teacher or administrator at a college,  
291 university, junior or community college, high, junior high,  
292 elementary or grade school, whose studies or employment at such



293 institution necessitates my absence from the county of my voting  
294 residence or spouse or dependent of such student, teacher or  
295 administrator who maintains a common domicile outside the county  
296 of my voting residence with such student, teacher or  
297 administrator.

298 ( ) I will be outside the county on election day.

299 ( ) I have a temporary or permanent physical disability.

300 ( ) I am sixty-five (65) years of age or older.

301 ( ) I am the parent, spouse or dependent of a person with a  
302 temporary or permanent physical disability who is hospitalized  
303 outside his or her county of residence or more than fifty (50)  
304 miles away from his or her residence, and I will be with such  
305 person on election day.

306 ( ) I am a member of the congressional delegation, or spouse  
307 or dependent of a member of the congressional delegation.

308 ( ) I am required to be at work on election day during the  
309 times when the polls will be open or I am required to be on-call  
310 on election day during the times when the polls will be open.

311 ( ) I am incarcerated in prison or jail in the county where  
312 I am registered to vote and have not been convicted of a  
313 disenfranchising crime.

314 I hereby make application for an official ballot, or ballots,  
315 to be voted by me at the election to be held in \_\_\_\_\_, on \_\_\_\_\_.

316 Notify me of a problem with my 'Absent Elector's Ballot' at  
317 the following:



318 Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

319 Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

320 Mailing address: \_\_\_\_\_

321 I realize that I can be fined up to Five Thousand Dollars  
322 (\$5,000.00) and sentenced up to five (5) years in the Penitentiary  
323 for making a false statement in this application and for selling  
324 my vote and violating the Mississippi Absentee Voter Law. (This  
325 sentence is to be in bold print.)"

326 **SECTION 4.** Section 23-15-631, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
327 amended as follows:

328 23-15-631. (1) The registrar shall enclose with each ballot  
329 mailed to an absent elector separate printed instructions  
330 furnished by the registrar containing the following:

331 (a) All absentee voters, excepting those with temporary  
332 or permanent physical disabilities \* \* \*l those who are sixty-five  
333 (65) years of age or older, or those who are student absentee  
334 voters as defined by Section 1 of this act, who mark their ballots  
335 in the county of the residence shall use the registrar of that  
336 county as the witness. The absentee voter shall come to the  
337 office of the registrar and neither the registrar nor his or her  
338 deputy shall be required to go out of the registrar's office to  
339 serve as an attesting witness.

340 (b) Upon receipt of the enclosed ballot, you will not  
341 mark the ballot except in view or sight of the attesting witness.

342 In the sight or view of the attesting witness, mark the ballot  
343 according to instructions.

344 (c) After marking the ballot, fill out and sign the  
345 "ELECTOR'S CERTIFICATE" in the box on the back of the envelope so  
346 that the signature is across the flap of the envelope to ensure  
347 the integrity of the ballot. All absent electors shall have the  
348 attesting witness sign the "ATTESTING WITNESS CERTIFICATE" in the  
349 box across the flap on the back of the envelope. A portion of the  
350 elector's signature extending outside of the box shall not be  
351 grounds for rejecting that elector's ballot. Place the necessary  
352 postage on the envelope and deposit it in the post office or some  
353 government receptacle provided for the deposit of mail so that the  
354 absent elector's ballot will be postmarked on or before the date  
355 of the election and received by the registrar no more than five  
356 (5) business days after the election. The ballot may only be  
357 transmitted by the United States Postal Service or other common  
358 carriers, including, but not limited to, United Parcel Service or  
359 FedEx Corporation.

360 Any notary public, United States postmaster, assistant United  
361 States postmaster, United States postal supervisor, clerk in  
362 charge of a contract postal station, or other officer having  
363 authority to administer an oath or take an acknowledgment may be  
364 an attesting witness; provided, however, that in the case of an  
365 absent elector who is temporarily or permanently physically  
366 disabled or who is a student absentee voter as defined in Section



367     1 of this act, the attesting witness may be any person eighteen  
368     (18) years of age or older and such person is not required to have  
369     the authority to administer an oath. If a postmaster, assistant  
370     postmaster, postal supervisor, or clerk in charge of a contract  
371     postal station acts as an attesting witness, his or her signature  
372     in a box on the elector's certificate must be authenticated by the  
373     cancellation stamp of their respective post offices. If an  
374     officer having authority to administer an oath or take an  
375     acknowledgment acts as attesting witness, his or her signature in  
376     a box on the elector's certificate, together with his or her title  
377     and address, but no seal, shall be required. A portion of the  
378     elector's signature extending outside of the box shall not be  
379     grounds for rejecting that elector's ballot. Any affidavits made  
380     by an absent elector who is in the Armed Forces may be executed  
381     before a commissioned officer, warrant officer, or noncommissioned  
382     officer not lower in grade than sergeant rating or any person  
383     authorized to administer oaths.

384                     (d) When the application accompanies the ballot it  
385     shall not be returned in the same envelope as the ballot but shall  
386     be returned in a separate pre-addressed envelope provided by the  
387     registrar.

388                     (e) A candidate for public office, or the spouse,  
389     parent or child of a candidate for public office, may not be an  
390     attesting witness for any absentee ballot upon which the  
391     candidate's name appears, unless the voter is related within the



392 first degree to the candidate or the spouse, parent or child of  
393 the candidate.

394 (f) Any voter casting an absentee ballot who declares  
395 that he or she requires assistance to vote by reason of blindness,  
396 temporary or permanent physical disability or inability to read or  
397 write, shall be entitled to receive assistance in the marking of  
398 his or her absentee ballot and in completing the affidavit on the  
399 absentee ballot envelope. The voter may be given assistance by  
400 anyone of the voter's choice other than a candidate whose name  
401 appears on the absentee ballot being marked, the spouse, parent or  
402 child of a candidate whose name appears on the absentee ballot  
403 being marked or the voter's employer, an agent of that employer or  
404 a union representative; however, a candidate whose name is on the  
405 ballot or the spouse, parent or child of such candidate may  
406 provide assistance upon request to any voter who is related within  
407 the first degree. In order to ensure the integrity of the ballot,  
408 any person who provides assistance to an absentee voter shall be  
409 required to sign and complete the "Certificate of Person Providing  
410 Voter Assistance" on the absentee ballot envelope.

411 (2) The foregoing instructions required to be provided by  
412 the registrar to the elector shall also constitute the substantive  
413 law pertaining to the handling of absentee ballots by the elector  
414 and registrar.



415 (3) The Secretary of State shall prepare instructions on how  
416 absent voters may comply with the identification requirements of  
417 Section 23-15-563.

418           **SECTION 5.** Section 23-15-715, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
419       amended as follows:

420 23-15-715. Any elector desiring an absentee ballot as  
421 provided in this subarticle may secure same if:

422 (a) Not more than forty-five (45) days nor later than  
423 12:00 noon, on the Saturday immediately preceding elections held  
424 on Tuesday, the Thursday immediately preceding elections held on  
425 Saturday, or the second day immediately preceding the date of  
426 elections held on other days, he or she shall appear in person  
427 before the registrar of the county in which he resides, or for  
428 municipal elections he or she shall appear in person before the  
429 city clerk of the municipality in which he or she resides and,  
430 when the elector so appears, he or she shall execute and file an  
431 application as provided in Section 23-15-627 and vote by absentee  
432 ballot. If the absentee ballot has not been printed by forty-five  
433 (45) days preceding the election, the elector may appear and file  
434 an application anytime before the election. Then the absentee  
435 ballot shall be mailed by the registrar to the elector as soon as  
436 the ballot has been printed.

437 (b) Within forty-five (45) days next prior to any  
438 election, any elector who cannot comply with paragraph (a) of this  
439 section by reason of temporarily residing outside the county, or



440 any person who has a temporary or permanent physical disability,  
441 persons who are sixty-five (65) years of age or older, any person  
442 who is incarcerated in prison or jail in the county where the  
443 person is registered to vote and has not been convicted of a  
444 disenfranchising crime, or any person who is the parent, spouse or  
445 dependent of a temporarily or permanently physically disabled  
446 person who is hospitalized outside of his or her county of  
447 residence or more than fifty (50) miles away from his or her  
448 residence and such parent, spouse or dependent will be with such  
449 person on election day, may make application for an absentee  
450 ballot by mailing the appropriate application to the registrar.  
451 Only persons temporarily residing out of the county of their  
452 residence, persons having a temporary or permanent physical  
453 disability, persons who are sixty-five (65) years of age or older,  
454 any person who is incarcerated in prison or jail in the county  
455 where the person is registered to vote and has not been convicted  
456 of a disenfranchising crime, or any person who is the parent,  
457 spouse or dependent of a temporarily or permanently physically  
458 disabled person who is hospitalized outside of his or her county  
459 of residence or more than fifty (50) miles away from his or her  
460 residence, and such parent, spouse or dependent will be with such  
461 person on election day, may obtain absentee ballots by mail under  
462 the provisions of this \* \* \* paragraph and as provided by Section  
463 23-15-713. Applications of persons temporarily residing outside  
464 the county shall be sworn to and subscribed before an official who



465 is authorized to administer oaths or other official authorized to  
466 witness absentee balloting as provided in this chapter, said  
467 application to be accompanied by such verifying affidavits as  
468 required by this chapter. The applications of persons having a  
469 temporary or permanent physical disability shall not be required  
470 to be accompanied by an affidavit but shall be witnessed and  
471 signed by a person eighteen (18) years of age or older. The  
472 registrar shall send to such absent voter a proper absentee voter  
473 ballot within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon thereafter as the  
474 ballots are available, containing the names of all candidates who  
475 qualify or the proposition to be voted on in such election, and  
476 with such ballot there shall be sent an official envelope  
477 containing upon it in printed form the recitals and data  
478 hereinafter required.

479 (c) Except when the voter has requested a runoff ballot  
480 on the initial absentee ballot application, upon request for a  
481 runoff ballot pursuant to Section 23-15-719, the registrar shall  
482 mail together the absentee ballot application and the absentee  
483 ballot to the absent voter for the runoff election.

484 (d) Within fourteen (14) days prior to any election,  
485 any student absentee voter, as defined in Section 1 of this act,  
486 may make application for an absentee ballot by submitting the  
487 appropriate electronic application to the Secretary of State.  
488 Applications of student absentee voters shall be sworn to and  
489 subscribed before the registrar or deputy registrar of the



490 institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled.  
491 The application shall be submitted with the verifying documents as  
492 required by Sections 1 and 2 of this act. Only student absentee  
493 voters, as defined in Section 1 of this act, may obtain absentee  
494 ballots by mail under the provisions of this paragraph. The  
495 registrar shall send to the student absentee voter a proper  
496 absentee voter ballot within twenty-four (24) hours, or as soon  
497 thereafter as the ballots are available, containing the names of  
498 all candidates who qualify or the proposition to be voted on in  
499 such election, and with the ballot an official envelope containing  
500 upon it in printed form the recitals and data hereinafter required  
501 shall be sent.

502       **SECTION 6.** Section 23-15-721, Mississippi Code of 1972, is  
503 amended as follows:

504       23-15-721. (1) Absentee ballots requested under the  
505 provisions of Section 23-15-715 for electors temporarily residing  
506 outside the county of residence shall be mailed to the elector's  
507 address outside of the county in which he or she is registered,  
508 and such electors shall appear before any official authorized to  
509 administer oaths or other official authorized to witness absentee  
510 balloting as provided in this article. The elector shall exhibit  
511 to such official his or her absentee ballot unmarked and thereupon  
512 proceed in secret to fill in the ballot. After the elector has  
513 properly marked the ballot and properly folded it, he or she shall  
514 deposit it in the envelope furnished to him or her. After the



515 elector has sealed the envelope he or she shall deliver it to the  
516 official before whom he or she is appearing and shall subscribe  
517 and swear to the elector's certificate provided for in Section  
518 23-15-635, which affidavit shall be printed on the back of the  
519 envelope as provided for in Section 23-15-635 containing the  
520 elector's ballot.

521 (2) Electors who are temporarily or permanently physically  
522 disabled or who are student absentee electors receiving a ballot  
523 under Section 23-15-715(d) shall sign the elector's certificate  
524 and the certificate of attesting witness shall be signed by any  
525 person eighteen (18) years of age or older.

526 (3) After the completion of the requirements of this  
527 section, the elector shall mail the envelope containing the ballot  
528 to the registrar in the county wherein the elector is qualified to  
529 vote. The ballots must be postmarked by the date of the election  
530 and received by the registrar no more than five (5) business days  
531 after the election to be counted; any received after such time  
532 shall be handled as provided in Section 23-15-647 and shall not be  
533 counted.

534 **SECTION 7.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
535 and after July 1, 2026.

