



SUPPORTS ABSENTEE AND EARLY VOTING: HB 90 and HB 446.

According to the National Conference of State Legislators, most states have a method for any eligible voter to cast a ballot before Election Day, either during the early voting period or by requesting an absentee ballot. In 13 states (currently including Delaware), early voting is not available and an excuse is required to request an absentee ballot.¹

HB 90 provides for in-person early voting at least 10 days prior to an election, including the Saturday & Sunday immediately prior to the election in at least one location in each county and the city of Wilmington. We urge its passage by June 30.

In 37 states (including 3 that mail ballots to all voters) and the District of Columbia, any qualified voter may cast a ballot in person during a designated period prior to Election Day.²

HB 446 is the first leg of a constitutional amendment that would eliminate restrictions on voting by absentee ballot, leaving the determination of needed restrictions up to the General Assembly in the future. We urge its passage by June 30.

Absentee Voting is a form of early voting: All states will mail an absentee ballot to certain voters who request one. The voter may return the ballot by mail or in person. In 20 states, an excuse is required, while 27 states and the District of Columbia permit any qualified voter to vote absentee without offering an excuse.³

Here are some reasons we support these bills:⁴

EARLY VOTING IS A COST-EFFECTIVE METHOD for shortening wait times for voting and reducing burdens on polling place officials.

EARLY VOTING REDUCES WAIT TIMES ON ELECTION DAY, helping relieve the burden of long lines and wait times.

EARLY VOTING REDUCES THE BURDEN ON ELECTION DAY POLL WORKERS at crowded polling centers on Election Day.

EARLY VOTING HAS THE POTENTIAL TO INCREASE TURNOUT AND EXPAND THE ELECTORATE.

¹ <http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/absentee-and-early-voting.aspx> (8/17/2017)

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Thanks to *ProjectVote.or* and *DEMOS.org* for these talking points in "What is Early Voting?"