

SENATE BILL 711

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5lr2505

By: **Senator Raskin**

Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2015

Assigned to: Rules

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Election Law – Voting by Absentee Ballot – Prepaid Postage for the Return of**
3 **Ballots**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring that certain required envelopes used by certain voters voting
5 by absentee ballot to return their ballots include prepaid postage; requiring the State
6 Board of Elections to reimburse counties for the costs of prepaid postage for certain
7 absentee ballot envelopes for certain voters; and generally relating to prepaid
8 postage for the return of certain absentee ballots.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Election Law
11 Section 9–310
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2010 Replacement Volume and 2014 Supplement)

14 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
15 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

16 **Article – Election Law**

17 9–310.

18 (a) (1) This subsection applies only to an absentee ballot that is sent by mail.

19 (2) An absentee ballot shall be enclosed in specially printed envelopes, the
20 form and content of which shall be prescribed by the State Board.

21 (3) (i) A local board may use either two envelopes or three envelopes.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 (ii) If two envelopes are used, the inner envelope shall be designated
2 the “ballot/return envelope”, and, when issued, it shall fit inside the envelope designated
3 the “outgoing envelope”.

4 (iii) If three envelopes are used, the innermost envelope shall be
5 designated the “ballot envelope”, which shall fit inside the envelope designated the “return
6 envelope”, both of which, when issued, shall fit inside the envelope designated the “outgoing
7 envelope”.

8 **(IV) THE BALLOT/RETURN ENVELOPE DESCRIBED UNDER**
9 **SUBPARAGRAPH (II) OF THIS PARAGRAPH AND THE RETURN ENVELOPE DESCRIBED**
10 **UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (III) OF THIS PARAGRAPH PROVIDED TO A VOTER VOTING**
11 **BY ABSENTEE BALLOT SHALL INCLUDE PREPAID POSTAGE.**

12 (4) When voted and returned to the local board, an absentee ballot shall be
13 enclosed in a ballot envelope or ballot/return envelope, on which has been printed an oath
14 prescribed by the State Board.

15 **(B) THE STATE BOARD SHALL REIMBURSE A COUNTY FOR THE COST OF**
16 **PREPAID POSTAGE FOR BALLOT/RETURN ENVELOPES AND RETURN ENVELOPES**
17 **ISSUED BY A COUNTY UNDER SUBSECTION (A)(3)(IV) OF THIS SECTION TO A VOTER**
18 **VOTING BY ABSENTEE BALLOT.**

19 **[(b)] (C)** If an absentee ballot is sent by the Internet or facsimile transmission,
20 the local board shall provide the voter with an envelope template, the oath prescribed by
21 the State Board, and instructions for marking and returning the absentee ballot.

22 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
23 October 1, 2015.