

Governor Carney Signs Vote By Mail Legislation

House Bill 346 creates safe, more direct alternative to in-person voting due to COVID-19

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Wednesday signed into law [House Bill 346](#), legislation sponsored by House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst that allows Delawareans to vote by mail in the 2020 primary, general and special elections. House Bill 346 makes voting by mail an alternative to in-person voting due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and establishes procedures for voting by mail which mirror the procedures for absentee voting. Voting by mail does not replace in-person voting, which will be available for those not voting by absentee or mail ballot.

Watch video of bill signing on [Facebook](#) or [YouTube](#).

*“My position on this issue has been simple and consistent. We should make it easier – not harder – for all Delawareans to exercise their fundamental right to vote and participate in our democratic process,” said **Governor Carney**. “That’s especially important this year as our state and country continue to grapple with the impact of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This legislation will make sure that Delawareans can fairly and securely cast their ballots and have their voices heard.”*

“The COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed our lives as we have taken steps to protect residents’ health and reduce the spread of the virus. No resident should have to choose between their health and exercising their right to vote, and House

Bill 346 will make sure no one has to make that difficult choice,” said **House Majority Leader Valerie Longhurst**, the lead sponsor of the bill. “This new law gives every voter the option to cast their ballot by mail. Given the uncertainties of the virus and the steps we have to take to limit its spread, this is a critical option. We’ve done this the right way, using an existing, successful absentee voting system Delaware has used for decades. What we have done today will ensure that the 2020 elections in Delaware are a model for other states, not a ‘what went wrong?’ highlight on TV.”

“No one should ever have to choose between their health and voting in a free and open election,” said **Senate President Pro Tempore David McBride**. “With another spike of coronavirus cases expected in the fall just as many Delawareans prepare to exercise their fundamental right to vote, we have an obligation to provide our constituents – particularly those with a heightened risk of contracting COVID-19 – with safe, secure options for casting their ballots. House Bill 346 does not prevent a single person from voting in person, but it will give voters a choice that will preserve our democracy and could very well save lives.”

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