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GOVERNOR PARSON TAKES SECURITY MEASURES TO SAFEGUARD ELECTION PROCESS, PROTECT MISSOURI VOTERS DURING COVID-19

(mailto:?%20Safeguard%20Election%20Process%2C%20Protect%20Missouri%20Voters%20During%20COVID-ases/archive/governor-parson-takes-security-measures-safeguard-election-process-protect)

(https://governor.mo.gov/sites/gov/files/media/image/2020/06/SB%20631%20Signing.jpg)

JUNE 4, 2020

JEFFERSON CITY □ Today, Governor Mike Parson took security measures to safeguard the election process and protect Missouri voters during COVID-19 by signing SB 631 into law.

"Any Missourian affected by COVID-19 should still be able to vote, including those who are sick or considered at-risk," **Governor Parson** said. "I applaud Senator Dan Hegeman, Representative Dan Shaul, and the rest of the legislature for taking this important step, which provides Missourians with a safe and secure way to vote while still safeguarding our elections and ballot process."

"I fully agree with President Trump's position and do not support any plan to expand mass mail-in voting without a reason," **Governor Parson** continued. "This only enables voter fraud and ballot harvesting, and I am proud to sign this bill to stop that process from happening in our state."

Under SB 631, a mail-in absentee ballot will only be an option for voters who specifically request one. To prevent voter fraud and ballot harvesting, voters must also submit a notarized statement under penalty of perjury with their ballot. Ballots must be returned and received in an envelope postmarked by U.S. Mail by 7 p.m. on election day.

By requiring a signature verification, this provision reduces the opportunity for individuals to fraudulently cast another voter's ballot and provides a safe, secure, and legal way for Missourians to vote during the pandemic.

"We are not against voting by mail for people who have a reason. Our current law allows for that, and this bill allows for that," **Governor Parson** said. "What we are against, and what President Trump is against, is voting absentee without a reason and without a signature verification. That is a non-secure way to handle voting absentee, as is ballot harvesting. Signing SB 631 ensures this will not happen in the state of Missouri."

SB 631 also includes a provision giving voters who have contracted or are at-risk of contracting COVID-19 the option to cast an absentee ballot without notarization. Both provisions will expire on December 31, 2020.

Other provisions of the legislation include modifications to the following:

- Investigative powers for the Secretary of State
- Candidate filing fees
- Political activities by state employees
- Financial interest statements
- Secretary of State's Technology Trust Fund

To view SB 631, **click here (https://www.senate.mo.gov/20info/BTS_Web/Bill.aspx?SessionType=R&BillID=26837998)**.

CONTACT US

Office of Governor Michael L. Parson

P.O. Box 720
Jefferson City, MO 65102

Phone: (573) 751-3222
Fax: (573) 751-1495

Email Us (/contact-us)

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