

1 _____ BILL NO. _____

2 INTRODUCED BY _____
3 (Primary Sponsor)

4 A BILL FOR AN ACT ENTITLED: "AN ACT ALLOWING A COUNTY TO ESTABLISH SATELLITE ELECTION
5 OFFICES; ALLOWING CERTAIN ENTITIES TO REQUEST A SATELLITE ELECTION OFFICE; PROVIDING
6 RESTRICTIONS ON WHEN AN OFFICE MAY BE ESTABLISHED; PROVIDING REQUIREMENTS FOR AN
7 OFFICE; ALLOWING AN INDIVIDUAL TO VOTE AN ABSENTEE BALLOT AT THE OFFICE IN PERSON ONLY
8 IF THE INDIVIDUAL IS LEGALLY REGISTERED; REQUIRING THE SECRETARY OF STATE TO ADOPT
9 RULES TO GOVERN MINIMUM PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR A SATELLITE ELECTION OFFICE AND
10 TRAINING FOR TEMPORARY OFFICE STAFF; AND AMENDING SECTION 13-13-222, MCA."

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12 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MONTANA:

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14 NEW SECTION. **Section 1. Satellite election offices -- rulemaking.** (1) A governing body of a county
15 may, by resolution addressed to the election administrator, provide up to five satellite election offices at which
16 an election administrator may conduct election activities for a federal election, including absentee voting in person
17 allowed under 13-13-222. A resolution establishing a satellite election office must be specific about what election
18 services are provided at the office.

19 (2) A governing body may not establish a satellite office if the main county election office must close
20 during normal business hours to accommodate the operation of the satellite office.

21 (3) (a) A municipality, Montana nonprofit corporation, Montana community organization, tribal
22 government, tribal college, or postsecondary educational institution may request that the governing body provide
23 a satellite election office only if:

24 (i) the request is made before January 1 of an even-numbered year; and

25 (ii) the requesting entity provides at no cost to the county a location that is adequate to ensure the
26 security of the ballots and electors' privacy.

27 (b) The requesting entity may provide funds or temporary staff to cover additional costs, including any
28 travel or personnel expenses, incurred by the election administrator to establish and operate the satellite election
29 office. If the requesting entity provides temporary staff, the election administrator shall provide appropriate
30 training.



1 (4) On any day it is open, a satellite election office must remain open for at least 4 hours.

2 (5) The election administrator shall provide reasonable public notice of the locations of satellite election
3 offices, including the times and dates each office will be open and the specific services provided at the office.

4 (6) To vote at a satellite election office pursuant to 13-13-222, an individual must be a legally registered
5 elector.

6 (7) If an elector votes at a satellite election office pursuant to 13-13-222, the election administrator shall
7 handle the ballot as provided in 13-13-241.

8 (8) The secretary of state shall adopt rules to administer the provisions of this section, including rules to
9 establish:

10 (a) the minimum physical requirements of a location to be used as a satellite election office, including
11 accessibility considerations and telephone, internet, and other technological capabilities required for the election
12 administrator to conduct election activities at the office in a manner that ensures the security of the ballots and
13 electors' privacy; and

14 (b) the training requirements for any temporary staff provided by a requesting entity.

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16 **Section 2.** Section 13-13-222, MCA, is amended to read:

17 **"13-13-222. Marking ballot before election day.** (1) (a) As soon as the official ballots are available
18 pursuant to 13-13-205, the election administrator shall permit an elector to apply for, receive, and mark an
19 absentee ballot before election day by appearing in person at the office of the election administrator and marking
20 the ballot in a voting station area designated by the election administrator.

21 (b) The election administrator shall allow a legally registered elector to receive and mark an absentee
22 ballot pursuant to this section at a satellite election office established pursuant to [section 1].

23 (2) The provisions of this chapter apply to voting under this section.

24 (3) For the purposes of this section, an official ballot is voted when the ballot is received at the election
25 administrator's office, which includes a satellite election office established pursuant to [section 1]."

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27 NEW SECTION. **Section 3. Notification to tribal governments.** The secretary of state shall send a
28 copy of [this act] to each tribal government located on the seven Montana reservations and to the Little Shell
29 Chippewa tribe.

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