

League of Women Voters of Wyoming Request to Joint Corporations Interim Committee concerning provisions for absentee ballots in the Wyoming Elections Code

Members of our group have brought to our attention an issue concerning the anonymity of the vote in the case of some absentee ballots. The problem is that ballots received by mail at a county clerk's office are in an envelope bearing the name and return address of the voter who sent the ballot to be counted. Thus, when the envelope is opened after logging in and verifying the name of the voter, the votes recorded on that ballot, if it is the sort on which ovals are blackened, are easily visible along with the name and address of that voter.

The League of Women Voters of Wyoming would like to urge your group to consider amending the present requirements to adopt a very simple procedure which would ensure the confidentiality and privacy of all absentee ballots: the voter would insert the ballot in an unmarked envelope which he/she would then seal and insert in the outer "signature" envelope which has on the outside the information necessary to verify eligibility of that person to cast that absentee ballot. The outer envelope would remain with the verification team, and the blank, sealed envelope holding the ballot could then be opened and anonymity preserved.