

Bill Summary
2nd Session of the 57th Legislature

Bill No.:	SB 1779
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Author:	Sen. Treat
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Bill Analysis

SB 1779 prohibits absentee ballot harvesting during any election conducted by a county election board, the State Election Board, or any political subdivision of the state and creates a felony for any person convicted of absentee ballot harvesting. Absentee ballot harvesting is allowed under certain circumstances as outlined in the measure. Such instances include assistants or agents acting on behalf of a physically incapacitated or emergency incapacitated voter, absentee voting board members assisting a voter confined to a nursing home or veterans center, employees of the Federal Voting Assistance Program, the United States Department of Defense or the Oklahoma National Guard who assists a uniformed-services voter, spouses or relatives forwarding an absentee ballot to an absent voter, voters' spouses returning a ballot with the voters' consent, or official actions of election officials as provided for by law.

The measure prohibits any person from applying for or completing an absentee ballot on behalf of another voter unless explicitly authorized to do so by the measure and the voter. Additionally, the measure requires absentee ballots to be accompanied by a notice that informs voters that they may not complete or apply for an absentee ballot on behalf of another person. Voters returning an absentee ballot by hand must also provide a notarized absentee ballot affidavit and must return the ballot during the regular business hours of the relevant county election board.

The measure also directs district attorneys and members of law enforcement to conduct a criminal investigation of any instance wherein a single address requested 10 or more absentee ballots. Additionally, the measure stipulates that employees of a nursing facility may not coerce, prevent, or influence the vote of a resident. Voters who registered to vote or voted in another nation may not request an absentee ballot.

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