

**SENATE**  
**STATE OF MINNESOTA**  
**NINETY-SECOND SESSION**

**S.F. No. 2956**

(SENATE AUTHORS: KIFFMEYER)

DATE  
02/07/2022

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OFFICIAL STATUS  
Introduction and first reading  
Referred to State Government Finance and Policy and Elections

1.1 A bill for an act

1.2 relating to elections; requiring ballots to be printed on paper that includes a unique

1.3 watermark; providing an exception for ballots prepared and distributed for military

1.4 and overseas absentee voters; amending Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 204B.36,

1.5 subdivision 1; Minnesota Statutes 2021 Supplement, section 203B.121, subdivision

1.6 4.

1.7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MINNESOTA:

1.8 Section 1. Minnesota Statutes 2021 Supplement, section 203B.121, subdivision 4, is

1.9 amended to read:

1.10 Subd. 4. **Opening of envelopes.** After the close of business on the seventh day before

1.11 the election, the ballots from secrecy envelopes within the signature envelopes marked

1.12 "Accepted" may be opened, duplicated as needed in the manner provided in section 206.86,

1.13 subdivision 5, initialed by the members of the ballot board, and deposited in the appropriate

1.14 ballot box. Prior to depositing a ballot into the appropriate ballot box, the members of the

1.15 ballot board must verify that the ballot contains the unique watermark required by section

1.16 204B.36, subdivision 1. If more than one voted ballot is enclosed in the ballot envelope, or

1.17 if a ballot does not contain a watermark indicating its authenticity, the ballots must be

1.18 returned in the manner provided by section 204C.25 for return of spoiled ballots, and may

1.19 not be counted.

1.20 Sec. 2. Minnesota Statutes 2020, section 204B.36, subdivision 1, is amended to read:

1.21 Subdivision 1. **Type.** (a) All ballots shall be printed with black ink on paper of sufficient

1.22 thickness to prevent the printing from being discernible from the back. All ballots shall be

1.23 printed in easily readable type with suitable lines dividing candidates, offices, instructions

2.1 and other matter printed on ballots. The same type shall be used for the names of all  
2.2 candidates on the same ballot.

2.3 (b) Except for ballots prepared and distributed under sections 203B.16 to 203B.27, all  
2.4 ballots must be printed on paper that contains a unique watermark of sufficient size to permit  
2.5 verification of the ballot's authenticity. At a federal or state election, the form of the  
2.6 watermark must be prescribed by the secretary of state. At a local election, the form of the  
2.7 watermark must be prescribed by the county auditor or municipal clerk.