

1 S.213

2 Introduced by Senator Pearson

3 Referred to Committee on

4 Date:

5 Subject: Elections; presidential elections; presidential primaries; military or  
6 overseas voters; rank choice voting

7 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to require the  
8 Secretary of State to prepare separate ballots in presidential primaries for  
9 military or overseas voters to enable those voters—who by federal law must  
10 receive their ballots 45 days in advance of a federal election—to rank their  
11 choice of candidates in case a candidate withdraws by the time of the primary.

12 An act relating to requiring rank choice voting for military or overseas  
13 voters in presidential primaries

14 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

15 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2704a is added to read:

16 § 2704a. MILITARY OR OVERSEAS VOTERS; RANK CHOICE

17 BALLOTS

18 (a)(1) The Secretary of State shall prepare and distribute for each  
19 presidential primary a separate early voter absentee rank choice ballot for each

1 qualified military or overseas voter that shall be labeled “EARLY VOTER  
2 ABSENTEE RANK CHOICE BALLOT.”

3 (2) The rank choice ballot shall conform to the standard presidential  
4 primary ballot but shall permit the military or overseas voter to vote his or her  
5 order of preference for each candidate by indicating a rank next to the  
6 candidate’s name on the ballot, with “1” being the highest rank and indicating  
7 the voter’s most preferred candidate.

8 (3) The rank choice ballot shall include instructions explaining the rank  
9 choice voting process.

10 (b) For any presidential primary, a town clerk shall send an early voter  
11 absentee rank choice ballot to each qualified military or overseas voter in  
12 accordance with subsection 2539(c) of this title.

13 (c) The voter shall not be required to indicate a preference for more than  
14 one candidate on the ballot.

15 Sec. 2. 17 V.S.A. § 2587 is amended to read:

16 § 2587. RULES FOR COUNTING VOTES

17 \* \* \*

18 (g) In counting votes in a presidential primary, a vote on an early voter  
19 absentee rank choice presidential primary ballot shall be counted as one vote  
20 for the highest ranked candidate who has not withdrawn from the election.

- 1      Sec. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE
- 2      This act shall take effect on passage.