

## Continuing Access to Absentee Voting in New Hampshire

Although absentee voting in New Hampshire has traditionally been restricted to voters with a specific set of reasons for doing so (like disability, absence on Election Day, and so on), the temporary expansion of absentee voting during the COVID-19 pandemic increased efficiency and voter turnout. Given its success, the policy should be extended permanently so that all New Hampshire voters can request and cast an absentee ballot.

- **Absentee voting saves money.** In-person voting costs the taxpayer significantly more than absentee voting. Colorado saved \$6.40 per voter after expanding mail voting—if even 10% more New Hampshire voters cast ballots absentee, taxpayers could save over a half million dollars per election.
- **Absentee voting reduces Election Day bottlenecks.** Fewer in-person voters means shorter lines and less strain on poll workers on Election Day.
- **Absentee voting does not delay results.** Permitting more absentee ballots does not require counting delays, especially when coupled with best practices from other states like ballot pre-processing (opening envelopes and verifying signatures prior to Election Day, or counting already-received ballots prior to Election Day, with results secret until the close of polls).
- **Absentee voting is not partisan.** Research confirms neither party gains an advantage when absentee voting is expanded.
- **Absentee voting is secure.** Multiple layers of anti-fraud protections are built into the process, including signature verification. For years, military personnel stationed abroad have voted by absentee ballot with virtually no claims of election fraud. Any potential fraudsters are subject to criminal penalties.
- **Absentee voting is widely used in other states.** More than two-thirds of states already allow all eligible voters to cast ballots absentee.
- **Absentee voting enhances democracy.** Under the expanded absentee voting rules, the 2020 general election saw the largest voter turnout in state history.