

1 H.598

2 Introduced by Representatives Miller of Shaftsbury, Browning of Arlington,  
3 Deen of Westminster, Donovan of Burlington, Edwards of  
4 Brattleboro, Evans of Essex, Fisher of Lincoln, Howard of  
5 Rutland City, Keenan of St. Albans City, Lenex of Shelburne,  
6 Martin of Wolcott, Mook of Bennington, Moran of Wardsboro,  
7 Mrowicki of Putney, Myers of Essex, Nuovo of Middlebury,  
8 Partridge of Windham, Ram of Burlington, Sharpe of Bristol  
9 and Zuckerman of Burlington

10 Referred to Committee on

11 Date:

12 Subject: Elections; early voter absentee ballots; sorting

13 Statement of purpose: This bill proposes to allow the town clerk of a  
14 municipality with at least 500 registered voters on its checklist to direct two  
15 election officials to open the outside envelope in order to sort early voter  
16 absentee ballots by ward and district, to data enter the return of the ballots by  
17 the voter, to determine that the certificate has been signed, and to place the  
18 inside envelopes in various secure containers to be transported to the polling  
19 places on election day.

20 An act relating to sorting early voter absentee ballots

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

2 Sec. 1. 17 V.S.A. § 2546(a) is amended to read:

3 (a) No sooner than 30 days before the opening of polls on election day, the  
4 town clerk of a municipality with at least ~~5,000~~ 500 300 registered voters on its  
5 checklist may direct two election officials working together to open the outside  
6 envelope in order to sort early voter absentee ballots by ward and district, may  
7 data enter the return of the ballots by the voter, may determine that the  
8 certificate has been signed, and may place the inside envelopes in various  
9 secure containers to be transported to the polling places on election day. No  
10 sooner than 48 hours before the opening of polls on election day, a town clerk  
11 in all other municipalities may direct two election officials working together to  
12 open the outside envelope and remove the certificate envelope in order to  
13 determine that an early voter absentee ballot certificate has been properly  
14 signed by the early voter, and that the name of the early voter appears on the  
15 checklist. The election officials shall check the name of the early voter off the  
16 entrance checklist and place the sealed envelope into a secure container  
17 marked “checked in early voter absentee ballots” to be transported to the  
18 polling place on election day. Upon opening of the polls on election day,  
19 ballots from this container shall be opened by election officials, who are not  
20 members of the same political party, and deposited either into the ballot box or  
21 into the voting machine.