

October 19, 2006

Use the Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot

Under the provisions of the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (UOCAVA)*, the Federal Voting Assistance Program provides a "back-up" ballot, called the Federal Write- In Absentee Ballot, or FWAB, should an absent uniformed services voter or a citizen residing outside the United States not receive his or her requested regular ballot from their state or territory.

Generally, a citizen can only use the FWAB under the following conditions:

- Be stateside but absent from his/her voting residence (for uniformed services members and their family members); OR be located outside the United States (for all UOCAVA citizens); **AND**
- Have requested a regular ballot early enough so the request is received by the appropriate local election official not later than the State deadline; OR the date that is 30 days before the general election, whichever is shorter; **AND**
- Have not received the requested regular absentee ballot from the state.

Hard copies of the FWAB are available at military installations from your unit or installation Voting Assistance Officer, from the nearest embassy or consular office, and from many organizations of US citizens overseas. An on-line version of the FWAB is available on the FVAP website at <http://www.fvap.gov/pubs/onlinefwab.html>.

A citizen who receives their state ballot after submitting a FWAB should also vote their state ballot, and return it to their local election official, up to and including election day. If both ballots arrive in time to meet the state's deadlines, local officials have procedures in place so that only one ballot is counted for each individual.

The Integrated Voting Alternative Site (IVAS) allows citizens to see what electronic alternatives are permitted for the return of their voted ballot in their state of residence. The site is available through the FVAP website at http://www.fvap.gov/ivas/fvap_state_menu.html.

For assistance, you may contact an FVAP staff member through the DoD Voting Information Center (VIC). The VIC also provides names, political party affiliation, and recorded messages from candidates, as well as other information concerning elections, 24 hours a day. Citizens may reach the VIC toll-free using the toll-free numbers listed on the FVAP website, <http://www.fvap.gov/services/tollfree.html>. In the U.S. or Canada call 1-800-438-VOTE (8683) or local (703) 588-1343 or use DSN (military) 425-1343.

Questions regarding the above may also be referred to the Director, Federal Voting Assistance Program, Department of Defense, 1155 Defense Pentagon, Washington DC 20301-1155. Additionally, the FVAP can be reached via e-mail at vote@fvap.ncr.gov and on the World Wide Web at <http://www.fvap.gov/>.