

JOINT COMMITTEE ON ELECTION LAWS
2025-2026 (194th) BILL SUMMARY

Bill Number: H.822

Title: *An Act relative to absentee voting*

Sponsor(s): Rep. Paul Donato (*Medford*)

Hearing Date: June 17, 2025

Reporting Deadline: August 16, 2025

Prior History: 2023-24 (H.682) Ordered to study

Similar Matters: N/A

CURRENT LAW:

M.G.L. c. 54 § 86 – Absent or physically disabled voters:

Allows voters who are absent from their city or town on election day, physically disabled, or unable to vote for religious reasons to vote by absentee ballot if they apply and are certified. Voters with a permanent physical disability can file a one-time physician's certificate and be added to a permanent absentee list, eliminating the need for future certifications. Clerks must send these permanently disabled voters a pre-filled absentee ballot application at least 28 days before each election.

SUMMARY:

This bill allows for voters with non-physical disabilities to qualify for an absentee ballot.