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Sen. Chance introduces legislation to secure absentee ballot box

ATLANTA – State Sen. Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone) has introduced legislation to ensure the integrity of voting by absentee ballot in the state of Georgia. Senate Bill 387 was introduced in the Senate recently in an effort to address ongoing problems with absentee voter fraud.

“Governor Perdue, the General Assembly, Secretary of State Karen Handel and the U.S. Department of Justice all agreed that the voters of Georgia should have to present a photo ID in order to vote in Georgia,” said Sen. Chance. “This bill simply adds another layer of common-sense security to the absentee balloting process by saying that ballot clerks need to compare the info on the ballot with what’s on file with the county registrar.”

SB 387, co-sponsored by Senators Chance and Cecil Staton (R-Macon), requires all ballot clerks to compare absentee ballots with the voter information on file in the county registrar’s office at the time the ballot is submitted. The legislation further protects the absentee balloting process by requiring clerks to compare the signature on the submitted ballot with the signature on the voter registration card on file. In addition, ballot clerks would be required to store completed ballots in a manner that prevents tampering and unauthorized access.

“It is important that our elections remain free from potential voter fraud, and I think we took a major step toward that goal with the voter ID law,” Sen. Chance added. “Due to theft, identification fraud is rampant in our country, and anyone can steal an absentee ballot from a mailbox. Senate Bill 387 is a logical step to secure the process, providing our citizens one of the safest and most effective voting systems in the nation.”

SB 387 has been assigned to the Senate Ethics Committee and will be up for consideration this year.

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Sen. Ronnie Chance represents the 16th Senate District, which includes Lamar and Pike counties and portions of Fayette, Monroe and Spalding counties. He may be reached by phone at 404.651.7738 or via e-mail at ronnie.chance@senate.ga.gov.