ASSEMBLY STATE GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2545

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 13, 2010

The Assembly State Government Committee reports favorably Assembly, No. 2545.

The purpose of this bill is to change the date by which mail-in ballots must be transmitted to mail-in voters and overseas voters from starting on the 40th day before the day of an election to starting on or before the 45th day before the day of an election.

This change in current law has been necessitated by the federal government's enactment of the "Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act," on October 28, 2009. That law requires, in part, that a validly requested ballot must be sent by mail or by electronic means to a military or overseas voter starting on or before the 45th day before the day of the federal election for which it is requested.

To effectuate the provisions of the MOVE act, the bill:

1) designates the office of the Secretary of State as the single State office responsible for providing information regarding voter registration procedures and vote by mail procedures to be used by overseas voters;

2) requires the secretary to work with the federal Elections Assistance Commission and the federal Department of Defense to develop standards to report data on the number of overseas voter ballots transmitted by mail or electronic means; and

3) amends N.J.S.A.19:61-5, which establishes a free-access system whereby a mail-in voter can check whether their request for a mail-in ballot has been accepted, to permit overseas voters to use the system to check on the status of their request for a ballot.

Assembly Bill No. 2545 is identical to Senate Bill No. 923 of 2010.