

RESOLUTION 25-02

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF A CLEAN HCR OR BILL TO END THE PRACTICE OF DROPPING OFF EARLY BALLOTS AT POLLING PLACES ON ELECTION DAY

WHEREAS, due to the construction of Arizona law, each county's Board of Supervisors has a key role and ultimate responsibility in the success of elections; and

WHEREAS, it is a priority of the Cochise County Board of Supervisors to administer elections that are transparent, accurate, and efficient; and

WHEREAS, early ballots may be dropped off "at any place in the county no later than 7:00 P.M. on Election Day,"; and

WHEREAS, early ballots cast at a polling place on Election Day made up "one-fifth of all ballots cast," and under current law, despite the elector having identified themselves at the on-site voting location, their early ballot must still be signature verified; and

WHEREAS, this results in a labor intensive and costly process overseen by the county recorder, taking several days to accomplish, which has grown worse over time and has become particularly burdensome to rural Arizona counties; and

WHEREAS, per an October 2024 Pew Research poll, 92% of voters surveyed say it is "very or somewhat important" that "the outcome of an election should be known within a day or two,"; and

WHEREAS, the delay in election results is clearly attributable to the signature verification of early ballots dropped off on Election Day; and

WHEREAS, the present statutory structure that permits the dropping off of mail-in ballots on Election Day increases the ultimate result is delayed due to signature verification; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to A.R.S. § 16-542 (H), the Board of Supervisors may establish procedures whereby an elector – after showing appropriate identification and signing a statement under penalty of perjury – may vote between 7:00 P.M. on the Friday preceding the election and 5:00 P.M. on the Monday preceding the election can simply be extended to 7:00 P.M. on Election Day; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Cochise County Board of Supervisors unanimously supports any proposal to make elections more transparent and efficient; and

RESOLVED, that the Board endorses and applauds the Legislature’s effort to ask the voters of the Great State of Arizona to enable a solution to unnecessary election result delays. We ask the Legislature to focus the initiative on the process to require mail in ballots to be received by 7:00 P.M. the Friday prior to Election Day, and to allow Electors dropping off a mail-in ballot on Election Day, to have that ballot processed or exchanged for a ballot at the polls, without the requirement for signature verification subsequent to being properly identified; and

RESOLVED, that the Board also respectfully ask that any additional election reform outside of this proposal be reserved for a separate ballot initiative or future legislation.

ADOPTED this ____ day of _____, 2025 at Bisbee Arizona.

Thomas Crosby, Supervisor District 1

Date

Kathleen Gomez, Supervisor District 2

Date

Frank Antenori, Supervisor District 3

Date