



May 15, 2023

Rep. Penelope Tsernoglou
Michigan House of Representatives
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48933

Chair Tsernoglou,

We write to express our support for House Bill 4210, which will benefit our military service members' ability to exercise their right to vote by allowing electronic voting to meet the unique needs of active-duty military family members overseas.

There is a long history of service members participating in elections by casting absentee ballots. According to the National Postal Museum, members of the military voted absentee as early as the War of 1812. Union troops in the Civil War were the first group in American history to vote by mail in significant numbers.

Federal law requires states to provide special voting rights for service members stationed away from home. Since 2009, states have also been required to provide electronic transmission options for blank ballots, but at least 30 states require most overseas voters to mail their completed ballots back.

We count on our service members to defend our nation, so we owe it to them to count their ballots. We need to ensure our service members and their families are allowed to participate in our elections, no matter where in the world they are. We the undersigned thus ask that you support and pass this legislation so that Michigan's military families have greater options to vote while serving their country.

Signed,

Co-chairs, Count Every Hero

Adm. Steve Abbot, USN (ret.), former Acting Homeland Security Advisor to the President

Adm. Thad Allen, USCG (ret.), 23rd Commandant of the US Coast Guard
Secretary Louis Caldera, 17th Secretary of the Army

Gen. George Casey, USA (ret.), 36th Chief of Staff of the US Army

Gen. Carlton Fulford, USMC (ret.), former Deputy Commander in Chief, United States European Command

Secretary Debbie Lee James, 23rd Secretary of the Air Force
Gen. John Jumper, USAF (ret.), 17th Chief of Staff of the US Air Force
Gen. Craig McKinley, USAF (ret.), 26th Chief of the National Guard Bureau
Secretary Sean O'Keefe, 69th Secretary of the Navy

Count Every Hero is a nonpartisan initiative of retired admirals and generals and former service secretaries of the U.S. Armed Forces who have served under both Democratic and Republican administrations. Count Every Hero has three primary focus areas: promoting the understanding of the importance of a strong democracy to our national security; promoting civic literacy and civic participation; and protecting the voting rights of our active-duty servicemembers, our veterans, and their families.