Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum Requests State’s Absent Voter Ballot Application Mailing to Promote Safe Voting


“COVID-19 will have a major impact on the way elections are run for the foreseeable future,” stated Ingham County Clerk Barb Byrum (D – Onondaga). “The prospect of voting in person and risking potential exposure to the virus has election officials coming up with new ways to keep you safe. Several weeks ago, I called on the Governor to send these Absent Voter Ballot Applications to every voter, a sentiment shared by many local and County Clerks, and I’m very pleased that the Secretary of State is taking this initiative.”

Prior to the Secretary of State’s announcement, Clerk Byrum had been preparing to proceed with a similar mailing to encourage Ingham County voters to cast their ballots by mail in upcoming elections, however, she has decided to allow the State to continue forward with their plan.

“My objective has always been to ensure that all voters have their right to vote and to do so safely,” said Byrum. “Given the Secretary of State’s announcement, it is fiscally prudent to allow the State to conduct the mailing and cover the cost. There is no reason to duplicate efforts as that would be a waste of taxpayer dollars and potentially confuse voters.”

The mailing will contain the option to sign up for an absentee ballot for the August Primary Election, the November General Election, and to enroll in the Permanent Absent Voter Ballot Application List.

“I encourage everyone to consider checking all three boxes, to get ballots for August and November, and applications for all future elections,” said Byrum. “We do not know when we will feel safe enough to return to the polls in-person and signing up for the permanent list will give voters the option to vote by mail before each election.”

In November of 2018, the voters of Michigan passed Proposal 3, which allowed for No-Reason Absentee Voting. Many local clerks maintain a list of voters who wish to permanently receive applications to vote absentee before each election. Those voters on the Permanent Absent Voter Ballot Application List will receive applications to vote from their local clerks, while all other qualified registered voters will receive applications from the Department of State.

“Over the last several years, I have worked hard with my local clerks to promote the implementation of Proposal 3 and encourage voters to sign up for the Permanent Absent Voter Ballot Application List. We have seen thousands take advantage of that opportunity already,” remarked Byrum. “I expect that we will see voters choosing to vote by absentee ballot in record numbers because they do not wish to vote at the polls.”
For more information, call (517) 676-7201.

###