

PHILIP B. SCOTT
GOVERNOR



State of Vermont
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

January 14, 2022

Vermont General Assembly
115 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05633

Re: S. 172, An act relating to authorizing alternative procedures for 2022 annual municipal meetings in response to COVID-19

Dear Legislators:

Today, I signed S. 172, *An act relating to authorizing alternative procedures for 2022 annual municipal meetings in response to COVID-19* because I believe public concerns regarding large gatherings may discourage some who would otherwise participate in Town Meetings and alternative arrangements will help increase voter turnout.

Unfortunately, the Legislature has missed another opportunity to expand voter access further by expanding automatic mailing of ballots beyond general elections (Act 60) to include school budget votes, local elections and primary elections. Last year after signing Act 60 into law, I asked the Legislature to take this up when they returned in January, and if passed could be a model for the country.

General elections already have the highest voter turnout. What we need is increased voter participation for elections like those on Town Meeting Day or school budget votes, which experience a fraction of the turnout of general elections.

I ask the Legislature to begin work with the Secretary of State to establish a timeline and process to achieve the universal, proactive mailing of ballots to registered voters for **ALL** elections in Vermont. Please know I'm willing to work with you to fund this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip B. Scott", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Philip B. Scott
Governor