

On The Matter Of The Proposed Rules  
Of the Secretary of State Relating  
To Absentee Ballots, and Optical  
Scan Voting Systems.

STATEMENT OF NEED AND REASONABLENESS

The need to change parts 8210.0200, 8200.9910 and 8230.4350 arise from the desire of the Secretary of State to provide better access to the election process for absentee voters and to make the administration of elections more efficient for local election officials.

Part 8210.0200 is necessary to expand the coverage of an absentee application to both primary and general elections if the applicant so desires. This is reasonable because many voters find that the period they will be absent from their voting precinct covers both elections. Previously two separate applications were needed because of the statutory requirement of 203B.02 which at one time set the earliest date to submit an application as 45 days before the election. Chapter 303 s 3 Laws of 1983 removed this restriction. Further the paper work and filing effort of both the applicant and the local election official is doubled if two applications are required.

Part 8210.9910 is necessary to make the application form conform to the changes in 8210.0200.

Part 8230.4350 is necessary to reduce the administrative and operation costs of elections. It is reasonable because of the improvements to optical scan voting equipment which makes this rule change possible without reducing the integrity of the election. This change would allow counties and municipalities to more effectively deal with small precincts created as a result of reapportionment requirements, such as a municipality being split by a county line, congressional or legislative district boundary.

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 14.115 "Small Business Consideration in Rulemaking", the proposed rule will not have an impact on small business in Minnesota. Also pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, section 14.11 "Special Notice of Rulemaking", the adoption of this rule will not have any impact upon agricultural land nor will the adoption of this rule result in additional spending by local public bodies in excess of \$100,000 per year for the first two years following the adoption of this rule within the meaning of that law.