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Absentee Ballot Applications Mailed to Voters

(Columbus) Nearly 600,000 active voters in Franklin County will soon receive an application to vote absentee by mail for the May 4, 2010 primary election.

The board of elections will mail applications this Friday, March 19. Voters will need a stamp to return the application, but they won't need one for the voted ballot they send back. The county will provide postage paid envelopes for completed ballots just as it did for elections in 2008 to encourage turnout. The mailings will cost \$427,650.

"Budgets are tight, but we were able to stretch the tax dollars available this year by inserting as many applications as we needed for a single household in just one envelope" said board of elections Director Bill Anthony. "As a result, we're paying postage for about 400,000 envelopes to mail 600,000 applications."

"Experience tells us that voters like the convenience of voting by mail and respond in greater numbers when they receive an application from the board of elections," added Deputy Director Matt Damschroder. "Cuyahoga County generated four times as many absentee votes by mail as Franklin County in 2009 when it mailed applications to all registered voters and Franklin County did not."

Voters who apply to vote by mail will receive absentee ballots beginning March 30. Voted ballots must be returned to the board by 7:30 p.m. on Election Day, May 4, or received by the board by May 14 if postmarked by May 3.

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