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## **Absent voting will be harder unless Sabaugh wins court case County clerk to personally file motion in Lansing Friday morning**

Voters who use absentee ballots will have to make an extra effort to get their ballots for next year's elections, including the presidential election in November, unless Macomb County Clerk Carmella Sabaugh (D-Warren) wins her court case against the Michigan Republican Party. The court decision is expected to affect voter turnout in the 2008 presidential election.

At issue is whether clerks can automatically mail absent voter applications to senior citizens. All Oakland County clerks automatically mailed absent voter application forms to county senior voters while all Macomb County clerks did not. Only 11 of 24 local clerks in Macomb County automatically mailed absent ballot application forms to all seniors in their jurisdictions. Sabaugh got bipartisan Macomb County Board of Commissioners' approval to mail absent voter application forms to seniors in the county who would not have otherwise received one from their local clerk in the 2006 election.

The GOP sued Sabaugh to stop the mailing arguing the Republican Party would be "irreparably harmed" if senior citizens were given absent voter application forms. The GOP did not challenge the absent voter application form mailings by Oakland County clerks. The Macomb County Circuit Court ruled in favor of Sabaugh.

Despite the fact that one of the original plaintiffs recruited by the GOP against Sabaugh dropped out of the lawsuit saying he now agrees with Sabaugh that increasing voter turnout is in everyone's interest, the GOP is continuing the lawsuit in the appeals court.

"I am fighting to give seniors an equal opportunity to cast an absentee ballot," said Sabaugh. Sabaugh has 24 years experience running elections and using technology to improve ballot access for all voters.

Clerks have expressed concern that if the GOP wins, then clerks will be forced to mail absent voter application forms one at a time, instead of at a much cheaper and more convenient bulk mail rate.

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### **Fax-on-Demand**

Michigan: 1-888-99-CLERK  
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### **Register of Deeds**

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This week the Troy City Council followed the example of the Macomb County Board of Commissioners by passing a resolution authorizing the Troy Clerk to mail absent voter applications to all seniors.

Last month the Court of Appeals ruled a local clerk cannot mass mail absent voter application forms to senior citizens, in a case stemming from Detroit's 2005 election unrelated to the Macomb County case, which involves a county clerk.

A copy of the Sabaugh's brief may be found at <http://www.macombcountymi.gov/clerksoffice>.

While the GOP fights Sabaugh's efforts to provide all Macomb County seniors an equal opportunity to get an absent voter application, the state Republican Party last fall reportedly sent 1.2 million absent voter applications to "targeted" voters.

**PHOTO OPPORTUNITY:** Sabaugh will personally file a motion at the Michigan Court of Appeals, 925 West Ottawa Street, Lansing, Michigan tomorrow morning, Friday, November 16, 2007 at 9:30 a.m. asking the court to deny a Republican request to stop clerks from mailing absentee ballot application forms to seniors, continuing her fight to give senior citizens an equal opportunity to cast an absentee ballot.