

SERVICEMEN'S ABSENTEE VOTING

242. Legislative Intent. *It is hereby declared to be the purpose of the General Assembly of Maryland, in enacting this sub-title, to provide that absentee residents of this State, as herein defined, at the time of any election, as herein defined, shall be given the right and every possible opportunity to register and vote by mail in any such election to the full extent permitted by the Constitution of this State; and, further, to protect such absentee residents in the exercise of those rights, and to correlate in so far as the Constitution of the United States and the Constitution of this State permit, the provisions of this sub-title with all Acts of Congress relating to voting by mail by such absentee residents; and to permit and facilitate the general cooperation of this State and its election officials and commissions with every department, commission or agency of the United States to which the carrying out of the provisions of such Act of Congress may be delegated and committed.*

243. Definitions. *(a) For the purposes of this sub-title and unless otherwise required by the context:*

(b) An "Absentee Resident" means a resident of Maryland, (1) qualified to vote under its Constitution as to age, citizenship and length of residence and not disfranchised because of crime, and (2) who is absent and engaged in the military or naval service of the United States as herein defined, and (3) who, because of such absence, is unable to vote in person at any election, as herein defined, in the ward or election district in this State in which he was a resident at the time of his entry or induction into the armed forces of the United States, or into any of the organizations, work or services hereinafter set forth; provided that, at the time his ballot is received, as in this sub-title provided, he is either already registered as a voter according to the Election Laws of this State, exclusive of this sub-title, or becomes so registered by mail under this sub-title.

(c) For the purpose of, and when used in, this sub-title, the phrase "absent and engaged in the military or naval service of the United States", shall be deemed to include and apply to persons in the armed forces of the United States and also to persons engaged in the work or services, or who are members of the organizations herein specified as limited in such specifications; and for such purposes and as so used, the term "Absentee Resident" shall include the following:

(1) All such absentee residents who are members of any branch of the armed forces of the United States and of any of their respective components;

(2) All such absentee residents who are members of the Merchant Marine of the United States, and who are hereby defined to be persons who are employed as officers or members of crews of vessels documented under the laws of the United States, and persons enrolled for such employment with the War Shipping Administration, exclusive, however, of those in the service or enrolled for service on the Great Lakes or the inland waterways of the United States;

(3) All such absentee residents who are serving with the American Red Cross, the Society of Friends, the Women's Auxiliary Service Pilots and the United Service Organizations who are