SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the circuit clerk is designated as the absentee election manager unless the circuit clerk declines the duties. The county commission of a county designates the place or office where the absentee voting duties are performed.

The bill would authorize the county commission to designate additional places or offices where the absentee voting duties are performed. The additional places or offices would be under the control of the county and the absentee election manager would be required to be physically present when the place or office is open for absentee voting purposes. Any additional places or offices would be designated by the county commission in advance and the dates and times they would be open would be publicized in advance.
AN ACT

Relating to absentee voting; to amend Section 17-11-2, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the county commission of a county to designate additional places or offices where the duties of the absentee election manager may be performed for the purpose of absentee voting; to require the places or offices designated to be under the control of the county commission; to require the absentee election manager to be present when the places or offices are open for absentee voting purposes; and to require the places or offices to be designated in advance and to be made widely known to the qualified electors of the county.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Section 17-11-2 of the Code of Alabama 1975, is amended to read as follows:

"§17-11-2.

(a) In each county there shall be an "absentee election manager," who shall fulfill the duties assigned by this chapter. The circuit clerk of the county shall, at his or her option, be the absentee election manager. If the circuit clerk of the county declines the duties of absentee election manager, the appointing board shall thereupon appoint an absentee election manager, who shall be a person qualified by training and experience, who is a qualified elector of the county, and who is not a candidate in the election to perform the duties assigned by this chapter. The county commission
shall designate the place or office where such duties shall be performed. Such place or office shall be open on the days and during the hours as that of the circuit clerk prior to each election. Any person so appointed shall have all the powers, duties, and responsibilities of the circuit clerk for the purposes of this chapter, including the power to administer oaths. Such powers, duties, and responsibilities shall terminate when the election results are certified. The absentee election manager or circuit clerk shall be entitled to the same compensation for the performance of his or her duties as is provided in Section 17-11-14.

"(b) The county commission shall designate the principal place or office where the duties of the absentee election manager will be performed. The county commission may designate one or more additional places or offices where a qualified elector may appear in person before the absentee election manager for absentee voting purposes, including to make an application for an absentee ballot, to receive an absentee ballot, and to return an absentee ballot to the absentee election manager. The absentee election manager shall be physically present at any additional place or office designated by the county commission when the place or office is open for absentee voting purposes. Any place or office designated that is not a county courthouse or other county facility shall be under the exclusive control of the county at all times during any election cycle in which the duties of the absentee election manager are performed at the place or
office. If more than one place or office is designated by the county commission, not less than 14 days before absentee voting begins in any election, the county commission shall designate the dates when the absentee election manager shall be present at each place or office, which dates shall be made widely known to the qualified electors of the county. Any place or office designated by the county commission pursuant to this section shall be open on the days and during the hours that the office of the circuit clerk is open prior to each election."

Section 2. This act shall become effective on the first day of the third month following its passage and approval by the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.