



PHOTO ID IN MISSOURI 2015

Constitutional Amendment:

- **HJR1**– Would place a constitutional amendment on the Nov. 2016 ballot to allow a requirement that voters prove identity and citizenship by producing government-issued photo ID to vote.
- Such a requirement is currently unconstitutional. In 2006, the Missouri Supreme Court ruled that a photo ID requirement is “a **heavy and substantial burden** on Missouriian’s free exercise of the right of suffrage,” and violated the Missouri Constitution’s right to vote and right to equal protection under law. The proposed constitutional amendment would weaken those existing protections from the constitution.
- A 2011 resolution entitled “Voter Protection Act” that would have placed a photo ID amendment before voters during the Nov. 2012 elections was struck from the ballot by a judge who ruled that the ballot title was deceptive and misleading to voters.

Enabling Legislation:

- **HB30** – Limits forms of ID acceptable at the polls only to current Missouri or Federal photo ID’s with photos and expiration dates - typically a current Missouri driver's or non-driver’s license.
- Those without ID would have to cast provisional ballots that would not count unless the voter returned with the proper ID.
- The state would provide ID without cost to those needing one, but would not cover costs of underlying documents, like a certified birth certificate, needed to get the ID.
- Certain groups (such as seniors and people with disabilities or religious objection) would be exempt from the requirement but must cast a provisional ballot, which would not count unless the voter’s signature matched their registration.
- The Missouri Supreme Court ruled that Photo ID requirements are unconstitutional; these bills could not go into effect unless voters amend the constitution.
- Governor Jay Nixon vetoed similar legislation in 2011.

What’s Wrong with Missouri’s Photo ID Proposals:

- **Missouri already requires voter ID.** All voters must show ID to vote. The proposals needlessly limit the forms of acceptable ID and would not allow a college ID, driver’s license from another state, an expired ID, voter registration card, utility bill or other currently acceptable ID that can effectively verify a voter’s identity.
- **250,000 Missouri voters lack a state ID.** African Americans, seniors, people with disabilities, the working poor and students are twice as likely to lack a non-expired state ID. These laws fall hardest on the elderly, veterans, young people and communities of color.
- **Photo ID laws are a modern-day poll tax.** The barriers to getting IDs would effectively disenfranchise many eligible voters. It can be costly, difficult – even impossible – to get underlying documents (such as certified birth certificate) required to get a state ID. (i.e., Joplin tornado victims, Holocaust survivors, those born at home, those whose birth state can’t locate their records – may not be able to get birth certificates.)
- **It is expensive** – it could cost Missouri more than \$7 million in the midst of a budget crisis – with no benefit to the integrity to elections. NO cases of voter impersonation fraud have ever been documented in Missouri. Photo ID doesn’t address voter registration or absentee voting problems. Politicians shouldn’t needlessly make it harder to vote in order to manipulate the system for political gain.
- **Voter fraud is a serious crime**, punishable by 5 years in prison & a \$10,000 fine.
- **Voting is the one time we are all equal** – young or old, rich or poor, educated or un-educated. But that doesn’t work if some people are denied a voice. Elections should be **FREE, FAIR and ACCESSIBLE** to all who are eligible. Voters should take responsibility for understanding the rules and complying, but we shouldn’t make voting harder than it needs to be.
- As the leading democracy in the world, we should work to facilitate voting for all eligible voters.