

House Bill 0197

Election Law – Qualification of Voters – Proof of
identity

February 6, 2020

Ways and Means Committee

Sponsored by: Delegate Neil Parrott

Al Gore

- In the 2000 Presidential Election, Al Gore lost in Florida by only 537 votes.
- There were 6 million ballots cast in Florida
- Why not make improvements to voter ID to reduce questions about the veracity of the elections?

Example from Virginia

- Proof of identity matters, especially in close elections
- In 2017, Virginia had to settle one disputed election by casting lots.
- One ballot would determine if there was a tie and what party would have control over the House of Delegates
- In cases like this it is imperative that officials be able to verify votes were not fraudulent

Reduce Voter Fraud

Check
every
voter's
photo ID



I Just Got Back From Virginia... The Process Was Great!



- Last November, I spent election day in Virginia supporting local candidates.
 - I carefully observed the check-in process for Virginia Voters. I was amazed!
 - Turnout was high, but the lines moved quickly because physical ID's were used to check-in voters.
 - Prospective voters simply handed their ID to the election worker. The election worker was then able to quickly and seamlessly check in the voter.
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- Over the course of the entire election day, I never once saw the process break down. Things were simple and smooth and the lines never stopped moving.

Speed Up Lines



- In Maryland, long lines often occur at early voting sites and on election day.

Speed Up Lines

- Long lines to vote are bad for Democracy. They discourage participation.
- Lines are long because they are slow. It is a time consuming process to have to ask every single person checking into vote to indicate their address and then check it against the massive voter file.
- Checking in voters with physical ID's would help automate this process.

Why Elections Are Important

- Elections have serious consequences, and we need to make sure that each Maryland citizen gets one, and only one, vote.
- Every fraudulent vote counteracts one honest vote and restricts your voice in your government.

HB 197

What it does

- An individual can vote by provisional ballot, only as long as no other person with that name/voter record voted across the state in that election.
- If they cannot provide a photo ID, they can vote by provisional ballot and confirm their identity within a reasonable time frame determined by the BOE.
- Requires voters to provide a current, government-issued photo ID when they vote at the polls.

We Can Give Them An ID

- If a voter does not have a photo ID, the bill provides that individuals can obtain one from the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), free of charge, if the ID card is for voting purposes.

Actions that require a photo ID

- Gaining admission into the General Assembly to testify on a bill
- Driving
- Boarding an airplane
- Going to the doctor
- Applying for a job
- Buying Sudafed
- Bank transactions
- College applications
- Getting a library card
- Receiving Social Security Services
- Buying alcohol or Cigarettes
- Renting a Car/Carpet steamer
- Going to an "R" rated movie

ID's Not Just For Voting

- ID's are needed to be able to operate well in our society
- The Voting Process can be used to help individuals without a physical ID to obtain one
- This Bill would incentivize political campaigns to not only help individuals register to vote, but to also help them obtain an ID which they can then continue to use to better other aspects of their life.

What this Bill Does

- This bill helps people obtain a photo-ID that they can use to vote and for other purposes.
- By giving out free photo-IDs, this bill will help people register to vote who would not vote otherwise.

Voter ID
Fraud is a
problem

We need to improve our voting system so that we can effectively deter and detect voter fraud

A Wise Quote From President Carter

“A good registration list will ensure that citizens are only registered in one place, but elections officials still need to make sure that the person arriving at a polling site is the same one that is named on the registration list... There is no evidence of extensive fraud in U.S. elections or of multiple voting, but both occur, and it could affect the outcome of a close election. **The electoral system cannot inspire public confidence if no safeguards exist to deter or detect fraud or to confirm the identity of voters.**”

-Jimmy Carter



National Voter Registration Act of 1993

Findings:

The Congress finds that—

- (1) the right of citizens of the United States to vote is a fundamental right;
- (2) it is the duty of the Federal, State, and local governments to promote the exercise of that right; and
- (3) discriminatory and unfair registration laws and procedures can have a direct and damaging effect on voter participation in elections for Federal office and disproportionately harm voter participation by various groups, including racial minorities.

I would not be introducing this bill if I thought it would have a detrimental effect.

Voter Turn Out – Georgia

- *“If you look at the numbers, they clearly show that critics of this [voter ID] law were wrong,”* said Hans von Spakovsky, a former legal counsel to the Justice Department’s civil rights division.
- He also stated, *“Their argument has always been it would depress turnout, but it didn’t happen — **quite the opposite.**”*

Voter Turn Out – Georgia

TABLE 2

Georgia Voter Turnout, by Racial Group, 2004 and 2008

Voter Demographic	2004 Total Votes Cast	2008 Total Votes Cast	Percentage Increase
Hispanic/Latino	18,000	43,000	140%
Black	834,000	1.2 million	42%
White	2.3 million	2.5 million	8%

Source: Brian P. Kemp, Georgia Secretary of State, "Voting with Photo Identification," PowerPoint presentation made at the Conservative Leadership Conference of the Civitas Institute, March 2, 2012.

IB 3541  heritage.org

Note: Both the 2004 and 2008 elections are non-presidential election years

Why this bill?

- **It protects** the integrity of our voting system. If you have to provide a valid ID to receive food stamps, to write a check, or to get a library card, why would we treat our elections with less respect?
- **It communicates** to voters that when they vote, it's fair, and their vote counts.
- **It counteracts** the disenfranchisement argument because:
 - It allows those without photo ID to still vote, but have their votes verified individually.
 - It provides a free state ID from the MVA to those that want one for voting

Please vote
favorably
on HB 197
to:

Tell our voters that we:

- Want to protect their right to vote
- Value their participation
- Will make sure that their, and only their, voices will be heard

Questions ??