

Fast Facts on the Voter ID Restriction Amendment

(Prepared by Democracy NC - Updated 6/28/2018)

Voter ID hurts eligible North Carolina voters, and especially voters of color. The vague proposal on November's ballot would permanently change our state constitution in a way that will harm real people, reduce access to voting, and waste taxpayer dollars. It was wrong in 2013, and it's still wrong in 2018. This amendment does not even define what ID voters would need to cast a ballot— instead, it's asking voters to skip the details and hand lawmakers a blank check. **Vote "NO" on the Voter ID Restriction Amendment.**

Amendment Would Be Extreme, Not Mainstream

- **Only 1 state has a photo ID mandate in its constitution: Mississippi.** The Voter ID Restriction Amendment is an extreme proposal that would make North Carolina only the second state to enshrine a photo ID restriction in its constitution.
- **Like Amendment One (2012), the Monster Voting Law, and HB2 before it, the extreme Voter ID Restriction Amendment is another "black eye" to North Carolina's reputation.**

Amendment Asks Voters to Change the Constitution Without Any Details

- The Voter ID Restriction Amendment would require "photo ID" at the polls, but provides no guidance as to what would meet that requirement. Our state's last ID law was thrown out in court, **yet the legislature wants the public's trust to just "fill in the details later."**
- The Voter ID Restriction Amendment is a confusingly vague, permanent addition to the state constitution that will require another ballot measure to undo, and **will severely restrict the ability of future legislatures to ease the burden on voters.**

Amendment Justifications Lack Credibility, Honesty, and Integrity

- **The amendment's sponsors say that it would place our state in the *mainstream*, but that ignores realities that it puts North Carolina in the *extreme*.** Every state already requires voters to prove who they are either at the time of registration or while voting; far fewer specifically require photo ID. Only seven (7) states have a strict photo ID requirement. A mere two (2) states have permanently added voter ID to their state constitution. Only one (1) mandates a photo ID: Mississippi.
- The amendment's sponsors say this is about "honesty and integrity" in our elections. While we should all demand an election system we can trust, **a photo ID requirement does nothing to address the state's most pressing election security issues:** reliability of voting equipment, safeguards for voter data, or protections against foreign interference. Research consistently shows that

irregularities in voting are vanishingly rare, and the types of irregularities that this amendment would prevent are even rarer.

- **Legitimate election security doesn't prevent voting access.** In North Carolina, we know voter ID is intended to silence certain voters and impacts many more. Voter ID has already disproportionately disenfranchised African-American voters. Although African Americans made up only 23% of all voters in the March 2016 Primary, they were 34% of the 1,400 voices silenced by the previous law.

Amendment Will Reduce Turnout Among Voters, Including Voters of Color

- A 2014 U.S. Government Accountability Office study¹ found that **strict photo ID laws reduce turnout by 2-3 percentage points**, which can translate into tens of thousands of votes lost in a single state. A 2016 study from the University of Wisconsin-Madison,² on the impact of Wisconsin's photo ID law on the 2016 election, concluded that **thousands, and perhaps tens of thousands, of otherwise eligible people were deterred from voting by the ID law**. As the study's principal investigator put, "An eligible voter who cannot vote because of the ID law is disenfranchised, and that in itself is a serious harm to the integrity to the electoral process."
- Scholars have also provided evidence from Indiana³, which has a smaller population of voters of color than North Carolina, that **racial and ethnic minorities have less access to photo IDs**. A 2017 report by academics from the University of California-San Diego and Bucknell University, found that **Hispanic turnout is affected most by voter ID**: turnout is 7.1 percentage points lower in general elections and 5.3 points lower in primaries in strict ID states than in other states.⁴ **Strict ID laws mean lower African-American, Asian-American, and multiracial-American turnout as well.**

The freedom to vote is under attack. Flip your ballot, vote NO, and fight back!

For more information about the Voter ID Restriction Amendment and other amendments targeting the freedom to vote in North Carolina, visit democracync.org.

¹ See <https://www.gao.gov/assets/670/665966.pdf>

² See <http://electionlawblog.org/?p=94997>

³ See http://mattbarreto.com/papers/PS_VoterID.pdf

⁴ See <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/688343>