

HB 1631 -- VOTER IDENTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Alferman

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections by a vote of 9 to 3. Voted "Do Pass" by the Select Committee on State and Local Governments by a vote of 7 to 3.

This bill changes the laws regarding elections by requiring persons wishing to vote in a public election to present specified personal identification to establish their identity and eligibility to vote. Satisfactory forms of identification include a nonexpired Missouri driver's license or nonexpired or nonexpiring Missouri nondriver's license, a document issued by the United States or the State of Missouri containing the name of the individual that shows a photograph of the individual, or any armed services identification containing a photograph that is not expired or does not have an expiration date.

A person who appears at a polling place without one of the specified forms of personal identification may execute an affidavit that he or she does not possess one of the specified forms because of an inability to pay for birth certificates or other supporting documentation or because he or she was born on or before January 1, 1946. Any person denied the ability to cast a regular ballot because of a lack of photographic identification must be allowed to vote by provisional ballot. The provisional ballot must not be counted unless the voter returns to the election authority within three days after the election and provides a specified personal identification.

All election authority costs associated with the implementation of the photo identification requirements of these provisions must be reimbursed from general revenue by an appropriation for that purpose. If there is no appropriation, then the identification requirements must not be enforced.

These provisions will become effective only upon the passage and approval by the voters of a constitutional amendment regarding the authorization of photo identification requirements by general law.

PROPONENTS: Supporters provided information only.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Alferman.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill will disenfranchise voters and complicate the election process. The Missouri Supreme Court decision defending the fundamental right to

vote under the state constitution should be respected. The use of exceptions and provisional ballots does not fully protect the interest of voters and the right to vote should not be subject to appropriation decisions by the General Assembly. The bill/HJR has a discriminatory effect and would result in an unfair financial burden for many minority groups, women, transgendered individuals, and the disabled population.

Testifying against the bill were John B Scott; Otto Fajen; Wayne Lee; ACLU-Missouri; AARP Missouri; Mid Amer Const Management LLC; League Of Women Voters Of Missouri; Missouri Faith Voices; Missouri Association For Social Welfare; and Communications Workers Of America.