

League of Women Voters® of Virginia

February 3, 2013

ACTION ALERT: *FREE FAIR AND ACCESSIBLE ELECTIONS!*

Please contact your Delegate and Senator and ask them to OPPOSE HB 1337, SB 719 AND SB 1256:

All three bills will be on the floor of the respective chamber on Monday, February 4.

These bills remove several items from the list of acceptable identification documents that a voter must present when voting at the polls on Election Day: a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check, or paycheck that shows the name and address of the voter.

The League supports free, fair and accessible elections for all eligible Americans and we oppose efforts to create barriers that block citizens from fully participating in our great democracy. Voting is the one time when all citizens have an equal say in how we shall be governed. This bill threatens our equality, and thus our democracy, by gaming the system for political gain.

Further, VA spent millions of dollars educating voters on the changes in the law last year. While not everything was perfect in the past election, a record number of voters came to the polls. If this law passes it will disenfranchise many voters. Legislators should address the real and serious problems of our state instead of allocating funds to address a non-existent problem.

SB 1256. This bill would require a photo ID at the polls and eliminate all forms of identification that do not contain a photograph of the voter from the list of forms of identification any one of which a voter must present in order to be allowed to vote.

Besides the huge cost to implement and maintain the new government program, photo ID requirements represent one of the most serious threats in decades to our efforts to ensure the right of every eligible citizen to vote and have their vote counted. As Americans we believe that all men and women are "created equal." If America wants to live up to its promise to provide all citizens with the same opportunities, then we can't pass laws that block eligible Americans from voting, and deny them the opportunity to participate equally in our great democracy.

Lastly, ID requirements disproportionately affect the elderly, young people, racial and ethnic minorities, persons with disabilities and the poor. Underlying costs to obtain a photo ID are hidden and significant barriers. Even when the ID itself is free, there are hidden costs, including transportation and fees related to acquiring supporting documents like birth certificates and marriage licenses.

Click here to find out ["Who's my Legislator?"](#)