



**Testimony in opposition to  
H.762 An Act requiring photo IDs to vote  
and  
H.792 An Act ensuring the election integrity through voter identification  
Submitted to the Joint Committee on Election Laws  
By Nancy Brumback, LWVMA Election and Voting Legislative Specialist  
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As we have in past sessions of the legislature, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts strongly opposes passage of bills that would place unnecessary requirements, including showing a photo identification, on voters at the polls. Voter suppression and intimidation tactics are gaining ground across our country, fed by a false narrative of widespread voter fraud. Massachusetts must not be part of any efforts to hinder the ability of qualified citizens to vote.

These bills would expand voter identification requirements and make it more difficult to vote. H.762 would require “a current valid photo form of identification,” specifying “a current driver’s license, a government employee card, a pilot’s license, military identification, a Medicaid or Medicare card, and for students, a photo identification university card.” Medicare cards do not have a photo.

H.792 specifies a voter shall present: “his Commonwealth of Massachusetts voter registration card, his social security card, his valid Massachusetts driver’s license, or any other identification card issued by a government agency by the Commonwealth, one of its political subdivisions, or the United States; or any valid employee identification card containing a photograph of the voter and issued by an employer of the voter in the ordinary course of the employer’s business.” We note the assumption in this bill that the voter is male, presenting “his” identification.

The right to vote is the foundation of our democracy, and voting should be as easy and accessible as possible. Expansion of voter identification requirements beyond what is mandated by the Help America Vote Act can suppress voter turnout, be burdensome to voters and election officials, and create barriers – especially for voters who are elderly or disabled, members of a racial or ethnic minority, new citizens, and young voters.

Under the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), states must, among other things, require all voters to provide their driver's license number or the last four digits of their Social Security number when registering to vote. HAVA also requires first-time voters who registered by mail to produce identification before voting. The League believes these requirements are adequate to prevent voter impersonation. Massachusetts does not need to add costly and time-consuming voter ID regulations that would disenfranchise voters as proposed in these bills.

LWVMA and the 47 local Leagues we represent oppose these bills because:

- Voter disenfranchisement and low voter turnout are much greater problems than in-person voter impersonation, the only form of fraud showing ID would address.



- Requiring identification at the polling place would result in many eligible voters being turned away. Many voters, and particularly poor and minority voters, do not carry photo identification, and would be turned away in error. These voters, and especially new citizens who may be concerned about government intrusion, are also more likely to be intimidated by such requirements.
- Implementing photo ID to vote is an unnecessary expense. One study found that implementing the voter photo ID law in Indiana exceeded \$10 million over four years. The costs for a proposed photo ID law in Missouri were put at \$6 million the first year and \$4 million each year for the second and third years.
- ID requirements can affect those who do not drive to their polling place and thus do not bring identification with them to the polls.
- In comprehensive studies of voter fraud, researchers concluded that in-person election fraud has been extremely rare. Most reported instances of in-person voter impersonation fraud were found to be baseless.
- HAVA's requirements for identification at the time of registration and for first-time voters who register by mail are adequate to prevent fraud.

The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts urges the Joint Committee on Election Laws to reject these voter ID bills. They place additional and unnecessary burdens on citizens and election officers.

Thank you for your consideration.