

What PA-Specific Voter Data Says About Voter ID

By Rep. Seth Grove (R-York)

Since 2015, first-time voters showing up at a polling place have been required to show identification to vote.

Some of the accepted forms of photo identification include a state-issued driver's license or PennDOT ID card; a U.S. passport; student, employee or armed forces ID; IDs issued by a Pennsylvania state agency; or U.S. government ID.

Should a voter not have a photo IDs, non-photo identification that includes the voter's name and address is also acceptable. They include a county-issued voter registration card, non-photo ID issued by the U.S. or state government, a firearm permit, current utility bill or bank statement, or a paycheck or government check.

These lists are quite large and has led to some confusion for voters if they had the correct ID to vote. It is safe to say all voters possess one of the accepted forms of ID and it is the voter registration card.

With that in mind and to curb confusion, the Voting Rights Protection Act would require voters be issued new, enhanced voter registrations cards featuring their picture to ensure the person casting a ballot is in fact the registered voter.

It would put an end to voter fraud, such as a despicable case in Philadelphia in which a woman allegedly cast countless fraudulent ballots in the names of other voters between 2015 and 2019. This case is a form of identity theft. But instead of having just a couple victims in each instance, voter fraud through identity theft leaves thousands of victims in its wake. Requiring IDs be shown at the polls would protect the integrity of elections and protect the identities, and votes, of millions of people.

Data shows a large majority of Pennsylvanians support showing a photo ID at the polls. A poll conducted by F&M College reported that 74% of Pennsylvanians are in favor of an ID requirement when it comes to voting.

Data also shows voters haven't been disenfranchised by Pennsylvania's current ID requirement. Since the Voting Rights Protection Act would require all current voters be issued a new voter registration card, and all new voters be issued the card when they register to vote, no voter would be without acceptable ID.

On April 6, the House State Government Committee held a hearing where I asked the Department of State what complaints and lawsuits it received from the current voter identification policy. Their response: "The department is unaware of lawsuits/complaints filed against the department that specifically related to guidance on Voter ID."

I also asked for how many new voter registrations the department had received from 2015

through 2021. In total there were 2,473,046 new voters. Voter registration forms have an option for designating ethnicity/race as well. For these new voters who reported ethnicity and race here is the data from the Department of State:

Asian: 47,274
Black or African American: 127,804
Hispanic or Latino: 90,390
Native American or Alaskan Native: 3,099
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 1,039
Other: 14,706
Two or More Races: 24,255

Total: 308,567

From 2015 to 2021, 2.4 million new voters have been required to show identification when they showed up to vote and 308,567 designated themselves as a minority. During this time these millions of voters never filed one complaint or lawsuit that the voter identification requirement disenfranchised their ability to vote, which means every single new voter was able to provide one of the 16 allowable identifications.

The data does not lie. Voter identification is a commonsense solution to protect the integrity of the vote and close a loophole fraudsters and illegal voters can easily exploit. The data shows explicitly that Pennsylvanians can have a voter identification policy without disenfranchisement.

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6/17/2021 Peter Durantine

F&M Poll: Majority Believe State's Election Laws Need Revisions

Fifty-nine percent of Pennsylvania's registered voters believe revisions are needed to the state's election laws, according to the recent Franklin & Marshall College Poll.

The poll, conducted June 7-13, follows months of Republican-led efforts in many states across the country to change voting laws in response to false claims made by former President Donald Trump and his GOP allies that the 2020 election was stolen from him.

Among Pennsylvania voters, the poll showed that 75% of Republicans believed that election law changes are needed compared to 52% of independents and 46% of Democrats.

"This is just a fraught, partisan argument at the moment," F&M Poll Director Berwood Yost said, and noted that in terms of election reform, "It's difficult to know how things will change."

Of the voters polled, a majority, 81%, favored signature matching for mail-in ballots and 74% supported photo ID requirements. Voters are divided about eliminating "no-excuse" voting by mail. Yost said the poll showed that support for these reforms differs substantially by political party...

...The F&M Poll, like all surveys, is a snapshot of a specific point in time, not a forecast. All polls have variability; voters change their minds; and events after a survey can sometimes influence voters' decisions, including whether to vote at all.

Conducted by the Center for Opinion Research at F&M, the poll reflects interviews with 444 Pennsylvania likely voters, including 205 Democrats, 177 Republicans and 62 independents. The sample error is plus or minus 6.4 percentage points.

<https://www.washingtonexaminer.com/24-things-that-require-a-photo-id>

24 things that require a photo ID

Voter-ID laws continue to get a lot of attention, and proponents of the law are being drowned out by opponents claiming the laws discriminate against certain voters.

Rather than getting IDs to the people who are supposedly disenfranchised, opponents spend their efforts trying to end the laws, even though polls consistently show overwhelming majorities of voters approve of the laws.

Below are just some of the examples of things you need to prove your identity for:

1. Alcohol
2. Cigarettes
3. Opening A Bank Account
4. Apply for Food Stamps
5. Apply for Welfare
6. Apply for Medicaid/Social Security
7. Apply for Unemployment or a Job
8. Rent/Buy a house, apply for a mortgage
9. Drive/Buy/Rent A Car
10. Get on an Airplane
11. Get Married
12. Purchase a Gun
13. Adopt a Pet
14. Rent a Hotel Room
15. Apply for a Hunting License
16. Apply for a Fishing License
17. Buy a Cell Phone
18. Visit a Casino
19. Pick Up a Prescription
20. Hold a Rally or Protest
21. Blood Donations
22. Buy an "M" rated video game
23. Purchase Nail Polish at CVS
24. Purchase Certain Cold Medicines

<https://www.aclu.org/fact-sheet/oppose-voter-id-legislation-fact-sheet>

ACLU: Oppose Voter ID Legislation:

Background

Voter identification laws are a part of an ongoing strategy to roll back decades of progress on voting rights. Thirty-four states have identification requirements at the polls. Seven states have strict photo ID laws, under which voters must present one of a limited set of forms of government-issued photo ID in order to cast a regular ballot – no exceptions.

Voter ID laws deprive many voters of their right to vote, reduce participation, and stand in direct opposition to our country's trend of including more Americans in the democratic process. Many Americans do not have one of the forms of identification states acceptable for voting. These voters are disproportionately low-income, racial and ethnic minorities, the elderly, and people with disabilities. Such voters more frequently have difficulty obtaining ID, because they cannot afford or cannot obtain the underlying documents that are a prerequisite to obtaining government-issued photo ID card.

Voter ID Laws Deprive Many Americans of the Right to Vote

- Millions of Americans Lack ID. 11% of U.S. citizens – or more than 21 million Americans – do not have government-issued photo identification.¹
- Obtaining ID Costs Money. Even if ID is offered for free, voters must incur numerous costs (such as paying for birth certificates) to apply for a government-issued ID.
 - Underlying documents required to obtain ID cost money, a significant expense for lower-income Americans. The combined cost of document fees, travel expenses and waiting time are estimated to range from \$75 to \$175.²
 - The travel required is often a major burden on people with disabilities, the elderly, or those in rural areas without access to a car or public transportation. In Texas, some people in rural areas must travel approximately 170 miles to reach the nearest ID office.³
- Voter ID Laws Reduce Voter Turnout. A 2014 GAO study found that strict photo ID laws reduce turnout by 2-3 percentage points,⁴ which can translate into tens of thousands of votes lost in a single state.⁵

Voter ID Laws Are Discriminatory

- Minority voters disproportionately lack ID. Nationally, up to 25% of African-American citizens of voting age lack government-issued photo ID, compared to only 8% of whites.⁶
- States exclude forms of ID in a discriminatory manner. Texas allows concealed weapons permits for voting, but does not accept student ID cards. Until its voter ID law was struck down, North Carolina prohibited public assistance IDs and state employee ID cards, which are disproportionately held by Black voters. And until recently, Wisconsin permitted active duty military ID cards, but prohibited Veterans Affairs ID cards for voting.

- Voter ID laws are enforced in a discriminatory manner. A Caltech/MIT study found that minority voters are more frequently questioned about ID than are white voters.⁷
- Voter ID laws reduce turnout among minority voters. Several studies, including a 2014 GAO study, have found that photo ID laws have a particularly depressive effect on turnout among racial minorities and other vulnerable groups, worsening the participation gap between voters of color and whites.⁸

Voter ID Requirements are a Solution in Search of a Problem

- In-person fraud is vanishingly rare. A recent study found that, since 2000, there were only 31 credible allegations of voter impersonation – the only type of fraud that photo IDs could prevent – during a period of time in which over 1 billion ballots were cast.⁹
- Identified instances of “fraud” are honest mistakes. So-called cases of in-person impersonation voter “fraud” are almost always the product of an elections worker or a voter making an honest mistake, and that even these mistakes are extremely infrequent.¹⁰
- Voter ID laws are a waste of taxpayer dollars. States incur sizeable costs when implementing voter ID laws, including the cost of educating the public, training poll workers, and providing IDs to voters.
 - Texas spent nearly \$2 million on voter education and outreach efforts following passage of its Voter ID law.¹¹
 - Indiana spent over \$10 million to produce free ID cards between 2007 and 2010.¹²

The ACLU has led the charge against Voter ID in several states, challenging voter ID laws in in states such as Pennsylvania, Arkansas, Wisconsin, and North Carolina. For more information, please contact Robert Hoffman at rhoffman@aclu.org or visit <https://www.aclu.org/issues/voting-rights/fighting-voter-suppression/fighting-voter-id-requirements> to learn more.

<https://nypost.com/2022/05/24/georgia-sees-record-early-voter-turnout-despite-dems-carping-over-new-election-law/>

Georgia sees record early voter turnout despite Dems' carping over new election law

Early voting in Georgia's primary races has surged to record numbers despite dire warnings from Democrats that a new election law would suppress turnout — with President Biden likening it last year to “Jim Crow in the 21st century.”

In the three weeks of early voting, more than 850,000 ballots were cast in person or returned via absentee ballot, representing a 212% jump over the 2020 presidential primary race and a 168% increase over the 2018 gubernatorial primary contest, Georgia Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger said in a statement released last Friday.

“The incredible turnout we have seen demonstrates once and for all that Georgia's Election Integrity Act struck a good balance between the guardrails of access and security,” Raffensperger said in the statement.

When Gov. Brian Kemp signed the voting reforms in March 2021 imposing new rules on absentee voting that included requiring a photo ID and shortening the voting window, critics howled in outrage.

Biden, who defeated former President Donald Trump in Georgia in 2020 to become the first Democrat to win the state since 1992, was among those predicting the law would put a damper on voting, especially among minority groups, and called it “un-American.”

“This is Jim Crow in the 21st century. It must end,” he said.

Calls to boycott Georgia's government and businesses began almost immediately.

Major League Baseball pulled the 2021 All-Star Game out of Atlanta, and critics lashed out at Delta Air Lines after the Atlanta-based carrier put out a statement that praised parts of the law.

Amid criticism, Delta CEO Ed Bastian did an about-face and called the law “unacceptable.”

The top executive at Atlanta-based Coca-Cola, James Quincey, also came out in opposition to the measure.

But more than a year removed from the initial hubbub over the law, 857,401 people cast early ballots — including 795,567 in person and 61,744 by absentee as of May 20, Raffensperger said.

The heightened turnout was powered by Republicans, who cast 483,149 votes compared to the 368,949 cast by Democrats and the 5,303 nonpartisan votes.

<https://www.commonwealthfoundation.org/research/voter-id-constitutional-amendment/>

Voter ID Constitutional Amendment

Commonwealth Foundation: January 16, 2023

Key Points

- Voter ID requirements improve election integrity, while voter turnout increases, without impacting election outcomes.
- Pennsylvania voters support Voter ID requirements by a wide margin, with support across all regions and demographic groups.
- Voter ID requirements are common throughout the country. Thirty-five states require an ID to vote; Pennsylvania is among the 15 states that do not.

Background

- Currently, Pennsylvania does not require identification to vote in person, unless it is the voter's first time voting in an election district.^[1]
 - Individuals voting absentee or via mail-in-ballot must provide a "valid and current" driver's license number or PennDOT ID. For voters without these, the state requires the last four digits of their Social Security number. And "only if" none of these are available, does Pennsylvania accept limited types of valid proof of identification.^[2]
- In 2012, the state enacted a voter ID law that was later struck down as unconstitutional due to issues with implementing the law.^[3] Specifically, the law made it difficult for low-income individuals to obtain the necessary identification.
 - Since then, voter trust in elections has dropped significantly. A 2022 Gallup poll found that only 63 percent of voters nationwide were "very or somewhat confident" ahead of the 2022 midterms that votes would be accurately cast and counted. This is a 12-point drop in confidence compared to the 2006 midterms.^[4]
- House Bill 1300 was an election reform bill passed by the legislature in 2021,^[5] that provided for voter identification requirements. However, Gov. Tom Wolf vetoed HB 1300, citing the bill's voter ID requirements as a reason for his veto.^[6]
- Less than a month later, Wolf indicated that despite his veto, he was not completely opposed to voter ID requirements.^[7]

The Constitutional Amendment

- Senate Bill 1 includes a proposed constitutional amendment that would require voters to "present a valid identification before receiving a ballot to vote in person."^[8] Furthermore, this proposed legislation requires voters not voting in person to "provide proof of a valid identification with his or her ballot."
 - The amendment would allow for multiple forms of ID, not just photo ID.
 - The proposed amendment also provides **free government-issued IDs** to those without one, stating, "if a qualified elector does not possess a valid identification,

he or she shall, upon request and confirmation of identity, be furnished with a government-issued Identification at no cost to the qualified elector.”

- Providing free identification addresses the implementation problems that the 2012 law faced.
- A voter ID constitutional amendment was introduced in May of 2021 as [SB 735](#).^[19] In June of 2021, this legislation passed the Senate with a bipartisan [vote](#).^[10]
 - Following this, the House amended SB 106 in December 2021, with bipartisan support, to include the voter ID constitutional amendment from SB 735. In July 2022, [SB 106](#) received bipartisan approval in both the [House](#) and [Senate](#).^{[11]. [12]}
- If the House and Senate approve the amendment, now part of SB 1, during the 2023–24 legislative session, the voter ID constitutional amendment could be on the ballot as early as the 2023 primary election.
 - Constitutional amendments must pass in two consecutive legislative sessions to go on the ballot.
 - On January 9, 2023, SB 1 advanced out of the Senate State Government Committee with [bipartisan](#) support, and passed the Senate, again with bipartisan support, on January 11.^[13]

Voter ID and Turnout

- A study from the National Bureau of Economic Research found that voter ID [does not reduce turnout](#), nor does it have an impact on election outcomes.^[14]
- A [2015 study](#) determined that 93 percent of all voters already have a valid form of photo ID.^[15]
- Despite roughly two-thirds of the states being subject to a voter identification law, voter turnout in 2018 saw an historic surge. [Pew Research Center](#) analysts saw “historic jumps” among every racial group.^[16] Black turnout rose nearly 27 percent, outpacing the turnout increase among White voters. Hispanic and Asian voter turnout increased by 50 percent.
- In 2021, Georgia enacted Senate Bill 202, an election reform law that required proof of identity when absentee voting. President Biden [decried](#) the law as “Jim Crow.”^[17] Despite this, the state saw [record-breaking](#) turnout in the 2022 midterms.^[18]

Support for Voter ID

- Voter ID receives wide-ranging support nationally. A July 2021 poll from the Honest Elections Project shows that [81 percent of voters](#), support requiring identification to vote.^[19]
- High levels of support are also seen in [Pennsylvania polling](#): A June 2021 poll from Franklin and Marshall College found that 74 percent of respondents, including 77 percent of Independents, favored photo identification requirements.^[20]
- October 2022 [polling](#) from the Commonwealth Foundation revealed high levels of support for the proposed constitutional amendment in Pennsylvania, with 70 percent of respondents supporting the measure:
 - By voter registration, 91 percent of Republicans, 50 percent of Democrats, and 70 percent of independents support the amendment.

- Support in Philadelphia was 57 percent, and 64 percent in the Philadelphia suburbs. Support was greater than 67 percent everywhere else in Pennsylvania.
- By race, the amendment polled at 58 percent with African Americans and 66 percent with Hispanics.

Other States

- Thirty-five [states require](#) an ID to vote, with 18 requiring a photo ID and 17 allowing for certain non-photo IDs.^[21]
- In November 2018, voters in two states, [Arkansas](#) and [North Carolina](#), approved ballot measures to amend their state constitutions to require photo voter identification.^{[22]. [23]}
- In 2022, voters in [Nebraska](#) approved a voter ID ballot initiative by a two to one margin.^[24]

Conclusion

Pennsylvania is among the minority of states that do not require proof of identification to vote in person. Such requirements are popular with voters and have no negative effects on turnout, or election outcomes. At a time where confidence in elections is dropping, Voter ID requirements protect the integrity of all votes and serve to rebuild trust in Pennsylvania’s election process.

^[1]Pennsylvania Department of State, “Voter Identification Requirements for Voting,” September 2022, <https://www.dos.pa.gov/VotingElections/OtherServicesEvents/Documents/2022-09-26-DOS-Voter-ID-Guidance.pdf>.

^[2]Pennsylvania Department of State, “Voter Identification Requirements.”

^[3]Rick Lyman, “Pennsylvania Voter ID Law Struck Down as Judge Cites Burden on Citizens,” *New York Times*, January 17, 2014, <https://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/18/us/politics/pennsylvania-voter-id-law-struck-down.html>.

^[4]Justin McCarthy, “Confidence in Election Integrity Hides Deep Partisan Divide,” Gallup, November 4, 2022, <https://news.gallup.com/poll/404675/confidence-election-integrity-hides-deep-partisan-divide.aspx>.

^[5]Rep. Seth Grove, HB 1300, Pennsylvania General Assembly Regular Session 2021–2022, last action Veto, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/billinfo.cfm?year=2021&sind=0&body=H&type=B&bn=1300>.

^[6]Gov. Tom Wolf, Veto: House Bill 1300, Printer’s Number 1869, June 30, 2021, <https://www.governor.pa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/HB-1300.pdf>.

^[7]Jonathan Lai, “Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf Says He’s No Longer Opposed to New Voter ID Rules,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, July 20, 2021, <https://www.inquirer.com/politics/election/pennsylvania-voter-id-tom-wolf-interview-20210720.html>.

^[8]Sen. Dan Laughlin, SB 1, Pennsylvania General Assembly Regular Session 2023–24, last action referred to Rules and Executive Nominations, January 10, 2023, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billInfo/billInfo.cfm?sYear=2023&sInd=0&body=S&type=B&bn=0001>.

^[9]Sen. Judy Ward, SB 735, Pennsylvania General Assembly Regular Session 2021–2022, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/billinfo/BillInfo.cfm?syear=2021&sind=0&body=S&type=B&bn=735>.

^[10]Pennsylvania State Senate, “Senate Roll Calls, Senate Bill 735 PN 0925 Final Passage,” June 23, 2021, https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/RC/Public/rc_view_action2.cfm?sess_yr=2021&sess_ind=0&rc_body=S&rc_nbr=207.

^[11]Pennsylvania House of Representatives, “House Roll Calls, Senate Bill 106 PN 1279 Final Passage,” December 15, 2021, https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/RC/Public/rc_view_action2.cfm?sess_yr=2021&sess_ind=0&rc_body=H&rc_nbr=687.

^[12]Pennsylvania State Senate, “Senate Roll Calls, Senate Bill 106 PN 1857 Concurrence in House Amendments as Amended,” July 8, 2022, https://www.legis.state.pa.us/CFDOCS/Legis/RC/Public/rc_view_action2.cfm?sess_yr=2021&sess_ind=0&rc_body=S&rc_nbr=709.

^[13]Pennsylvania State Senate, “Senate Committee Roll Call Votes, State Government, Senate Bill 1 PN 0022 Reported as Amended,” January 9, 2023, <https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/RCC/PUBLIC/listVoteSummary.cfm?sYear=2023&sInd=0&chamber=S&cteeCde=41&theDate=01/09/2023&RollCallId=8>.

^[14]Mark Hoekstra and Vijetha Koppa, “Strict Voter Identification Laws, Turnout, and Election Outcomes,” National Bureau of Economic Research, August 2019, <https://www.nber.org/papers/w26206>.

^[15]Vanessa M. Perez, “Americans with Photo ID: A Breakdown of Demographic Characteristics,” Project Vote, February 2015, <https://www.projectvote.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/AMERICANS-WITH-PHOTO-ID-Research-Memo-February-2015.pdf>.

^[16]Jens Manuel Krogstad, Luis Noe-Bustamante, and Antonio Flores, “Historic Highs In 2018 Voter Turnout Extended Across Racial And Ethnic Groups,” Pew Research Center, May 1,

2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/05/01/historic-highs-in-2018-voter-turnout-extended-across-racial-and-ethnic-groups/>.

^[17]Seung Min Kim, “Biden Attacks New Georgia Voting Law,” *Washington Post*, March 26, 2021, https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/biden-georgia-law-jim-crow/2021/03/26/35383056-8e40-11eb-a730-1b4ed9656258_story.html.

^[18]Georgia Secretary of State, “Record Breaking Turnout in Georgia’s Runoff Election,” December 7, 2022, <https://www.sos.ga.gov/news/record-breaking-turnout-georgias-runoff-election>.

^[19]Brett Samuels, “Poll Finds Growing Support for Voter ID Requirements,” *The Hill*, August 18, 2021, <https://thehill.com/homenews/campaign/568385-poll-finds-growing-support-for-voter-id-requirements/>.

^[20]Franklin and Marshall College Center for Opinion Research, “Franklin & Marshall College Poll: June 2021,” June 2021, <https://www.fandm.edu/uploads/files/109736436702240144-fmpolljune2021-summary.pdf>.

^[21]National Conference of State Legislatures, “Voter ID Laws,” October 18, 2022, <https://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx>.

^[22]Ballotpedia, “Arkansas Issue 2, Voter ID Amendment (2018),” [https://ballotpedia.org/Arkansas_Issue_2_Voter_ID_Amendment_\(2018\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Arkansas_Issue_2_Voter_ID_Amendment_(2018)).

^[23]Ballotpedia, “North Carolina Voter ID Amendment (2018),” [https://ballotpedia.org/North_Carolina_Voter_ID_Amendment_\(2018\)](https://ballotpedia.org/North_Carolina_Voter_ID_Amendment_(2018)).

^[24]Ballotpedia, “Nebraska Initiative 432, Photo Voter Identification Initiative (2022),” [https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska_Initiative_432_Photo_Voter_Identification_Initiative_\(2022\)](https://ballotpedia.org/Nebraska_Initiative_432_Photo_Voter_Identification_Initiative_(2022)).