

HB 30 -- VOTER IDENTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Dugger

COMMITTEE ACTIONS: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections by a vote of 9 to 2. Voted "Do Pass" by the Committee on State and Local Government by a vote of 9 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 of 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, 1950. The state and all fee offices must provide one form of the required personal identification at no cost to any otherwise qualified voter who does not already possess the identification and who desires the identification in order to vote. 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 say that the bill allows voters to choose whether to attempt to safeguard the election process by requiring photographic identification in order to vote. The bill contains numerous exemptions allowing voting by provisional ballot so that no registered voter will be disenfranchised. The costs for one

form of identification necessary to vote will be paid by the state and if no appropriation is made, the bill will not be implemented.

Testifying for the bill were Representative Dugger; Denise Hubbard; Missouri Alliance For Freedom; Mitchell Hubbard; Donna Neeley, Taney County Clerk; and Missouri Federation of Animal Owners.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that it could cost millions of dollars and disenfranchise thousands of Missouri voters. The bill is the most strict regulation of voting in the country, and the use of provisional ballots is not adequate to safeguard the right to vote because few such ballots are counted. There is a complete lack of evidence of voter impersonation fraud which is the major type of fraud the legislation could prevent. Studies have shown that up to 10% of Missouri eligible voters currently lack identification and this percentage increases when minority groups are considered.

Testifying against the bill were United Steelworkers District 11; Missouri AFL-CIO; Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation, Smart Transportation Division; Nancy Copenhaver, League Of Women Voters of Missouri; ACLU of Missouri; Rev. Cassandra Gould, Faith Voices; Adolphus M. Pruitt, NAACP; Wayne Lee; John B. Scott, Office of the Secretary of State; AARP Missouri; Denise Lieberman, Advancement Project/Mo Voter Protection Coalition; Farilyn Hale, National Council of Jewish Women/St. Louis Chapter; Marilyn McLeod; Jacob Olson, SETU, Mo/Ks State Council; Michelle Scott-Huffman, Missouri National Education Association; Alison Dreith; Susan Cook, Empower Missouri; and Robin Acree, Gro-Grass Roots Organizing.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that they were there to answer questions regarding its content and potential costs.

Testifying on the bill was Darryl Kempf, Missouri County Clerks Association.