

1297 Route 103
Newbury NH 03255
January 24, 2017

Re: HB 464 – relative to voter identification requirements when obtaining a ballot

Representative Griffin and members of the Election Law Committee:

As an elected Town Moderator for more than two decades, I am sworn to “secure the observance of the provisions ... relating to the conduct of voting.” (659:9) The first sentence under Voting Procedure is: “All persons whose names are entered upon the corrected checklist brought by the town or city clerk to the polling place shall be entitled to vote.” (659:12)

According to its Analysis, HB464 proposes: “to repeal the authority of election officials to vouch for the identity of voters or to accept any photo identification they determine to be legitimate.” Such repeal is a direct contradiction to checklisted voter entitlement to vote and to securing the provisions of voting.

In my experience few voters ask to be identified. Most who do ask simply forgot their valid photo identification. (As an aside, most are wearing work ID such as Dartmouth Hitchcock employee or Mt. Sunapee employee.) Without official authority to verify identity, such voters will be turned away from the polls, sent home to fetch ID. Their entitlement to vote would be denied. They may or may not return to vote. Even the few voters who protest the requirement for valid ID by asking to be identified would be losing their entitlement to vote. And as a Moderator, I would not be supporting Newbury voter entitlement.

Alternate legitimate voter identification is seldom requested; alternate ID's are usually from work.

HB 464 also misstates authority as that of “election officials.” RSA 659 gives the authority the bill seeks to repeal only to supervisors of the checklist, the moderator, or the clerk, that is, only to the ELECTED election officials, not to the appointed officials. Voters have selected those with the authority.

Election officials are vigilant in assuring that only those entitled to vote are allowed to vote. Repealing their authority to support local voters would achieve nothing but the undermining of the electoral process.

Please vote no on HB 464.

Nancy Marashio
Newbury Town Moderator