



**League of Women Voters
New Hampshire**

January 20, 2015

Rep. Kathleen Hoelzel, Chairman
House Election Law Committee

Re: House Bill 127, AN ACT relative to identification of voters.

Dear Chairman Hoelzel and members of the committee,

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan political organization dedicated to making democracy work through voter education, issue advocacy and citizen participation. The organization never supports or opposes candidates or political parties but does speak out about legislation based on positions adopted by our members after study of the issue.

House Bill 127 would allow ballot clerks (inspectors of elections) to recognize people they know and let them vote even if they don't have one of the photo IDs required to get a ballot on Election Day.

The League of Women Voters opposes this bill. We believe the sponsors of the bill mean well and are looking for a way to reduce the wait times for voting that have increased since the photo ID bill went into effect. Unfortunately, the bill is inherently discriminatory. It treats certain voters in a favored way over other voters.

If you're friends with the ballot clerk, or the moderator, clerk or supervisor, you don't have to show a photo ID to get a ballot. If you're new in town you have to show a photo ID. Allowing ballots clerks appointed by the political parties to decide who to recognize, will only add to the "us and them" problems with this bill.

The intention may be sincere, but this legislation is no different than the "Jim Crow" laws of the past because it depends on the goodwill of election officials to determine how you are treated as a citizen. Yesterday, we celebrated Martin Luther King Day. Today, we should not be accepting legislation that, however well meaning, does not treat voters equally.

Thank you,

Liz Tentarelli, co-president
Sally Davis, co-president
Joan Flood Ashwell, election law specialist
League of Women Voters NH