



**League of Women Voters
New Hampshire**

February 9, 2015

Senator Regina Birdsell, Chair
Public and Municipal Affairs Committee
Re: SB 207-FN, AN ACT eliminating the requirement that moderators photograph voters without identification.

Dear Senator Birdsell and members of the committee,

For more than 90 years, the League of Women Voters NH has worked to make sure that the Constitution's guarantee of the right to vote is a reality for the people of our state. Along with providing nonpartisan information about voting, LWVNH advocates for laws and policies that remove barriers to voting that discourage or even prevent qualified citizens from being able to cast a ballot.

In 2012, the Legislature adopted a photo ID law that called for every qualified voter to produce a certain kind of photo ID in order to receive a ballot on Election Day. Those who didn't have one of the required kinds of photo ID could not receive a ballot unless they signed a challenged voter affidavit. Voters who did not have a photo ID when they registered to vote signed a qualified voter affidavit in order to register vote.

The camera mandate is another phase of the photo ID law and is scheduled to go into effect in September of this year. It requires Moderators to take a photo, print it out and attach it to a challenged voter affidavit signed by a voter who does not have one of the required kinds of photo ID. The photo will be kept on file and made available to the Attorney General and the police.

The only possible kind of fraud that could be detected by looking at a photo ID is voter impersonation fraud. No other kind of fraud can be discovered through the use of a photo ID requirement. Showing a photo ID does not prove one's nationality, age or address. At this time, there isn't any common government document that includes proof of identity, age, nationality and address.

Since the photo ID law was adopted, almost 17,000 citizens who didn't have one of the required photo IDs to register to vote or to get a ballot have signed affidavits. The Attorney General's office has investigated thousands of these people from 2012 until now, and has not reported one single case of voter impersonation fraud. That's actually not surprising. Since 2000, there have been one billion votes cast in this country and only 31 *possibly* real cases of voter impersonation fraud have been reported for the entire country.* Even the dumbest criminal can apparently

figure out that stealing one vote isn't likely to change an election and certainly isn't worth paying a fine and possibly being sentenced to jail time.

Adding a mandate for Moderators to take photos of voters will only disrupt the polling place; increase election costs to towns, create longer lines at polling places, and discourage even more voters from trying to vote.

The truth is, the photo ID law and the cameras have nothing to do with detecting fraud around elections. If legislators were really worried about the integrity of our elections, they would investigate candidates, political parties and election officials to see if they are obeying election laws. They're the ones who are in a position to change the outcome of an election, and New Hampshire history confirms that they have occasionally tried to do just that.

At a time when most states are moving forward with reducing wait times at the polls, modernizing voter registration, and providing more opportunities for citizens to cast a ballot through absentee voting, early voting and online voting, New Hampshire has been moving backward and making voting less accessible for its citizens. At a time when most of the country is trying to encourage qualified voters, New Hampshire is creating more roadblocks to the right of citizens to vote.

The League of Women Voters believes that citizens should be encouraged to vote and the state should be using its resources to protect the right of every qualified voter to cast a ballot.

We urge the committee to vote *Ought to Pass* on SB 207-FN.

Thank you,

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

[*http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/08/06/a-comprehensive-investigation-of-voter-impersonation-finds-31-credible-incidents-out-of-one-billion-ballots-cast/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/wonkblog/wp/2014/08/06/a-comprehensive-investigation-of-voter-impersonation-finds-31-credible-incidents-out-of-one-billion-ballots-cast/)