The National Conference Of State Legislatures -- A Compendium Of State Voter I.D. Laws

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Here, courtesy of the National Conference of State Legislatures, the premier state legislative analysis and tracking group, is a compendium of stat voter I.D. laws. Particular attention is paid to the recent spate of these laws, both those proposed and those passed. The importance of the spate of election laws that have been considered in primarily GOP controlled states cannot be underestimated. These states have fashioned draconian, cravenly partisan solutions for problems that do not exist. There is virtually no evidence of voting fraud in the absence of mandatory I.D.'s, nor, in other areas such as voter registration, etc. These GOP controlled legislatures pass these laws for one purpose: to suppress voter turnout Democratic voters who in many of these states are among the poor. . . .

According to a November 7th Harvard Crimson article, *Voter Suppression 101*,

> The vast majority of these new voter restrictions are passed by Republican state legislatures, and it is no coincidence that the voters that are disenfranchised by these laws are poor, minority, and disabled voters, also known as the Democratic base. To get a sense of the tangible impact of the laws, 21 million Americans do not have government-issued photo identification. This includes 25 percent of African-American voting-age citizens, as opposed to eight percent of white citizens, and 15 percent of voters earning less than $35,000, “more than twice” as many as citizens who earn more than $35,000. [Also see The Republican Threat to Voting, NYT]

So, here is the NCSL's most recent survey of I.D. requirement laws and proposals. It's chart at the end provides details about each state's provisions (Updated September 8, 2011).

Introduction

Thirty states require all voters to show ID before voting at the polls. In 14 of these, the ID must include a photo of the voter; in the remaining 16, non-photo forms of ID are acceptable. Voter ID laws can be broken down into the three following categories:

- **Strict Photo ID (7 states):** Voters must show a *photo* ID in order to vote. Voters who are unable to show photo ID at the polls are permitted to vote a provisional ballot, which is counted only if the voter returns to election officials within several days after the election to show a photo ID. At the beginning of 2011, there were just two states--**Georgia** and **Indiana**--with strict photo ID laws. Two states--**Kansas** and

Wisconsin--passed new strict photo ID laws this year, and three states with non-photo ID laws--**South Carolina**, **Tennessee** and **Texas**--amended them to make them strict photo ID laws. None of these new laws is in effect yet, although they likely will be before the 2012 elections. See the notes below Table 1 for more information regarding effective dates for new legislation.

- **Photo ID (7 states):** Voters are asked to show a photo ID in order to vote. Voters who are unable to show photo ID are still allowed to vote if they can meet certain other critieria. In some states, a voter with ID can vouch for a voter without. Other states ask a voter without ID to provide personal information such as a birth date, or sign an affidavit swearing to his or her identity. Voters without ID are not required to return to election officials after the election and show a photo ID in order to have their ballots counted in the manner that voters without ID in the strict photo ID states are. The seven states with photo ID laws are **Alabama, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Louisiana, Michigan** and **South Dakota**.
- **Non-Photo ID (16 states):** All voters must show ID at the polls. The list of acceptable IDs is varied and includes options that do not have a photo, such as a utility bill or bank statement with the voter's name and address.

For specifics on what forms of identification are acceptable and the options available to voters who cannot present identification, see Table 2 .

State Requirements for Voter ID