



League of Women Voters of New Mexico

Legislative Priorities 2012

## MANDATORY PHOTO ID

*The League opposes efforts to create new barriers that block voter participation. The League works for full voting participation by all eligible American citizens.*

### A Solution in Search of a Problem

**New Mexico already has a voter ID requirement. A variety of forms of identification are allowable under current law in accordance with the federal Voting Rights Act. There are already hefty federal criminal penalties to deter anyone from attempting to impersonate another voter. Evidence of voter fraud in New Mexico is scarce to non-existent.**

### Photo Voter ID laws will make it harder to vote:

- 10-11% of voting age Americans, at least 21 million, do not have a state-issued photo ID.
- Photo ID laws hit older people, the poor, the disabled, people of color, and students the hardest and unfairly **reduce** their participation in elections.
  - Nearly one in five citizens over 65 — about 8 million — lacks a current, government-issued photo ID.
  - Over 15% of voting-age American citizens earning less than \$35,000 per year do not have a valid government-issued photo ID.
  - Hispanics, Native Americans and African Americans are less likely to have photo identification.
  - 25% of African-American voting-age citizens have no current government-issued photo ID, compared to eight percent of white voting-age citizens.
- Voters in rural areas would be particularly burdened. Getting to the closest MVD office to obtain an ID can be 75 mile round trip for rural New Mexicans.

### Photo Voter ID laws waste our precious tax dollars

- Voter ID laws could cost the state significant money to implement. In the 2011 Legislative session, the Fiscal Impact Report for HB 577 estimated a cost of \$1,000,000 to implement a photo ID law in New Mexico.

Tax-dollars and other state resources should be allocated to priorities such as education, health care, social service, public safety, and transportation, not to a problem that doesn't exist.

Contact Information:

Josephine Porter

(505) 259-3811

[jporter@nmia.com](mailto:jporter@nmia.com)