

Election Laws provide a fair, transparent, timely, accessible, uniform, and efficient process for all involved in the voting process. HB-6066 continues this process.

In 2005, the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform, presented a report with recommendations to build confidence in U.S. elections. The chairs of the commission were Jimmy Carter and James Baker. The organizations supporting this commission included: Carnegie Corp; Ford Foundation; Knight Foundation; Omidyar Network; Pew; Center for Democracy.

Many of their reforms have been adopted in Michigan. However, section 2.5 of the commission's report addresses an area we still need to strengthen in Michigan, which HB-6066 addresses – the use of envelope Provisional Ballots when Voter ID is not available at the voting precinct.

With regards to require or eliminate ID, the commission's response:

*'...we believe that citizens should identify themselves as the correct person on the registration list when they vote.'*

They were divided on the extent of voter fraud but all agreed it occurs, to which they determined:

*'it is not the magnitude of the fraud. In close or disputed elections, and there are many, a small amount of fraud could make the margin of difference. And second, the perception of possible fraud contributes to low confidence in the system. A good ID system could deter, detect, or eliminate several potential avenues of fraud... and thus it can enhance confidence.'*

When it came to tabulating a ballot, which was obtained without ID, the commission recommended:

*'...voters who do not have their valid photo ID could vote, but their ballot would only count if they returned to the appropriate election office within 48 hours with a valid photo ID.'*

Note that HB-6066 extends the commission recommendation from 48 hours to ten days! And all Michiganders know an ID is required. And they have all year to obtain that ID.

Bottom line, we all want to know that our votes count. The surest way to invalidate our vote is to allow an ineligible vote to cancel it. One of the key tools to prevent ineligible votes cancelling eligible votes is using valid photo identification to affirm the person voting is indeed who they say they are.

I have worked many elections as a precinct chair. The precincts are staffed with members of both parties. Inevitably we have someone come in without ID, sign the affidavit, and their ballot is currently sent through the tabulator. The response from both democrat and republican precinct workers is one of shock. They think I am doing something wrong because I have allowed a ballot to go through the tabulator without proof of who the voter is. They agree with the process in HB-6066, the ballot should be an envelope ballot and verified at the clerk's office prior to being tabulated.

We have no verification, other than their affidavit, if they are who they say they are. Surely the integrity of the voting system requires us to verify their identity before they possibly cancel your eligible vote. Envelope provisional ballots provides this verification opportunity while allowing citizens the opportunity to cast their vote.

Please support HB-6066

Thank you,

Deborah O'Hagan

West Bloomfield resident and precinct delegate