



March 29, 2017

Legislative Activity

Voter ID

ARKANSAS: The governor signed a measure March 24 requiring voters to show photo identification before casting a ballot, reinstating a voter ID law that was struck down by the state's highest court more than two years ago. Unlike that measure, the latest version allows voters with a photo ID to cast a provisional ballot if they sign a sworn statement confirming their identity. The legislation is one of two efforts by lawmakers to revive the voter ID requirement. Earlier this month, they voted to put a proposed constitutional amendment imposing the requirement on next year's ballot.

<http://fortune.com/2017/03/25/arkansas-voter-id-law/>

IOWA: Voter ID and other election-related reforms advanced through the state Senate, approving GOP-changes on March 23 that proponents say will improve election integrity. The Senate approved the House-passed bill on a 26-21 party-line vote.

<http://www.thegazette.com/subject/news/government/iowa-senate-passes-election-law-changes-20170323>

MISSOURI: Secretary of State Jay Ashcroft says he feels confident that his office will get \$1.4 million to implement the state's photo ID requirement to vote. He says the legislature and governor agree with that figure.

<http://www.missourinet.com/2017/03/24/missouri-sos-confident-voter-id-funding-request-will-be-honored/>

NEBRASKA: Governor Pete Ricketts is supporting a proposed constitutional amendment requiring photo IDs to vote. Bill sponsor Sen. John Murante of Gretna said the photo ID would help an election process he says is under threat from people casting votes illegally. Governor Ricketts told KNEB News the amendment will emphasize to voters, "they can have faith their vote matters and that elections are conducted fairly and freely."

<http://kneb.com/regional-news/ricketts-supports-proposed-voter-id-amendment/>

NEW HAMPSHIRE: The state Senate committee voted 3-2 along party lines on March 21 to recommend that the full Senate pass revised legislation to tighten ID requirements for people who register to vote within 30 days of an election or on Election Day. The revisions did nothing to close the wide partisan divide on the voting issue. Committee Republicans said they are trying to tighten the process to be sure that those who vote in New Hampshire actually live in New Hampshire. Democrats insist that the bill is intended to intimidate and discourage new voters.

<http://www.wmur.com/article/divided-senate-panel-narrowly-recommends-passage-for-revised-voting-reform-bill/9165528>

NORTH DAKOTA: Lawmakers consider changes to the state's voter ID laws.

<http://www.valleynewslive.com/content/news/Lawmakers-considering-changes-to-the-states-voter-ID-laws-416486963.html>

OKLAHOMA: As a court challenge continues, Oklahoma looks to solidify its voter ID law with a constitutional amendment.

<http://oklahomawatch.org/2017/03/23/as-court-challenge-continues-oklahoma-looks-to-solidify-voter-id-law/>

The Oklahoma Senate passed a bill to require a special election on the voter ID constitutional amendment.

http://webserver1.lsb.state.ok.us/cf_pdf/2017-18%20ENGR/SRES/SJR34%20ENGR.PDF

TEXAS: A bill updating Texas' photo voter ID law passed unanimously out of committee following its first public hearing on March 20 and is now headed to the Senate floor. SB 5, authored by State Sen. Joan Huffman (R-Southside Place) and the entire Senate Republican caucus, was reported favorably out of the Senate State Affairs committee on a bipartisan 9-0 vote. The bill modifies SB 14, the state's original voter ID law passed in 2011 and under legal challenge ever since, by incorporating recommended remedies from a 2016 federal court opinion that Huffman says "provided Texas a roadmap" to cure what the court ruled were "discriminatory effects" of SB 14.

https://empowertexans.com/under-the-dome/texas-voter-id-update-unanimously-passes-senate-committee/?utm_source=dlvr.it&utm_medium=twitter

WEST VIRGINIA: The West Virginia House Judiciary Committee sent a bare-bones, edited version of a new voter ID law to the chamber floor on March 23 for consideration by the full West Virginia House of Delegates.

<http://www.wvgazettemail.com/news-politics/20170323/wv-house-committee-sends-watered-down-voter-id-bill-to-floor>

Automatic Voter Registration

ILLINOIS: A Republican files alternative legislation to an automatic voter registration bill.

<http://www.altodailynews.com/news/details.cfm?clientid=17&id=239799#.WNkO8IWcHmJ>

Citizenship Verification

TEXAS: Texas state Sen. Van Taylor sponsors a bill to require verification of citizenship for voter registration.

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/tlodocs/85R/billtext/pdf/SB00136L.pdf#navpanes=0>

Judicial Elections

NORTH CAROLINA: The legislature overrode Governor Roy Cooper's veto of a bill that makes state judicial elections partisan. House Bill 100 (HB100) will make all judicial elections partisan beginning in 2018, marking a return to partisan judicial elections unseen in North Carolina for nearly 20 years. Party primaries will now elect judicial nominees, and their party designations will appear next to the candidates' names on the ballot. Many see this veto override as an effort by the Republican legislature to further restrict the power of the newly-elected Democrat governor to shape state policy. The North Carolina House overrode the veto on March 22 in a 74-44 vote, and the Senate overrode the veto in a 32-15 vote, both nearly exclusively along party lines.

<http://www.jurist.org/paperchase/2017/03/north-carolina-lawmakers-override-veto-to-make-judicial-elections-partisan.php>

Same-Day Registration

TENNESSEE: A Democratic state senator filed a bill to enable Election Day registration.

<http://www.capitol.tn.gov/Bills/110/Bill/HB0954.pdf>