

## League of Women Voters of NC

A core value of the League of Women Voters (LWV) is the right and responsibility of our citizens to participate in our democracy through voting. Furthermore, educating voters on issues and candidates' positions is essential for an effective democracy. Leagues across the nation engage in voter education and voter registrations, encouraging all citizens to exercise their Constitutional right to vote.

The Voter Information and Verification Act passed by the NC General Assembly in 2013 does far more than require a photo ID to vote in 2016. It reduced the number of days for early voting, limiting access to the polls for women who have jobs with no flexibility, who work two or more jobs, who have children to pick up at daycare before returning home from work, and who lack transportation. The law eliminates registration during early voting, which had allowed a one-stop process for women who may need to change their addresses or name because of divorce or marriage, as well as those who simply had been too busy to even think about registering. It eliminates out-of-precinct voting, so that those ballots cast in the wrong precinct are thrown out, even though the vote for statewide, national, and most countywide elections would not be impacted by voting out-of-precinct. All of these measures will have the effect of reducing the number of people whose votes will count, and we anticipate that it will impact women in greater numbers because of work and family pressures that restrict their time. Thus, this is a voter suppression bill whose impact will make it **harder** for North Carolinians to vote. The League has worked for many years to make it **easier** to vote and to **increase**, not **decrease**, voter participation.

The photo ID is one of the most restrictive in the country. Student photo IDs are not allowed, so students without a valid North Carolina driver's license or passport will need to go to a DMV office to get a valid photo ID, which will require a birth certificate. Also DMV offices may not be accessible to students who don't have cars. Others who may have difficulty obtaining a photo ID are elderly women born at home who have never had a birth certificate and have no one alive to attest to the date of their birth. Women who have never had a driver's license will have to go to the DMV to obtain the photo ID—and women are more likely to have never had a driver's license than men. If the purpose is to verify that the person who is voting is the one on the voter registration rolls, then other measures should be sufficient for this purpose.

The League strongly urges the NC General Assembly to repeal the current law because its impact is to suppress, not increase, voter participation.