

HB 09-1115 - Identification for Voting Purposes

House Sponsor: Rep. Ken Summers

"Voters are increasingly concerned about all kinds of ways to undermine ballot-box integrity. A new Rasmussen poll finds that 17% of Americans think large numbers of legitimate voters are prevented from voting - and 23% believe many illegal votes are cast."

-- John Fund "Wall Street Journal" January 17, 2008

"Colorado makes voting simply; indeed ours is one of the more forgiving systems in the country...confusion could be reduced in future elections if the state simply required voters to present a valid, government-issued ID when registering and at the polls."

- Vincent Carroll, Rocky Mountain News October 19, 2008

Premise and Background: All qualifying individuals should have available and exercise their right to vote without concern over a system that lacks the safeguard to ensure the integrity of the system.

The U.S. Supreme Court in April 2008 upheld an Indiana law that requires an ID containing a photo as the primary form of identification for voting purposes. It is prudent for Colorado to clarify its loose standards that at this point allow an individual's identification to be verified by a paycheck, or telephone bill.

Key Concepts:

- (1) The state has an interest in deterring and detecting voter fraud
- (2) The state has an interest in safeguarding voter confidence. The electoral system cannot inspire public confidence if no safeguards exist to deter fraud or detect fraud or to confirm the identity of voters.
- (3) The ability to obtain a free ID for low income and elderly as Colorado provides addresses the economic concerns about obtaining a required ID.
- (4) The option of casting provisional ballots provides open access to polling place, even if ID is not presented.
- (5) Consideration of an alternate government ID's (i.e. social security number/card) provides consideration for the limited number of individuals who can not obtain photo ID.

HB 09-1115 endeavors to address this issue and set the parameters for voter registration and verification through a focus on documents that include a photo ID.