LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF WEST VIRGINIA

March 18, 2025

SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY TO:
Judiciary Committee, WV House of Delegates, judiciary@wvhouse.gov

TESTIMONY in Opposition to **HB 3016**

The League of Women Voters of West Virginia and the U.S. supports voting rights and opposes all forms of voter suppression. The League also supports equal rights for all under state and federal law regardless of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, sexual orientation, or disability.

Therefore, we OPPOSE HB 3016, another voter suppression and discrimination bill.

Our state has an unusually long and generous list of voter ID options. Still, not all voters can be certain of having valid ID and may be deterred from voting.

This bill wants to substantially shorten that expansive list of acceptable IDs. For no apparent reason, HB 3016 eliminates voter ID options without photographs.

As if that weren't enough, HB 3016 requires "non-citizen" (or similar identifier, as discussed in subcommittee) to be emblazoned on IDs issued legally to non-citizen residents for purposes other than voting. Non-citizens already are prevented from registering to vote or voting. Yet, this Legislature is fixated on non-citizens, immigrants. Why are you fixated on solutions in search of problems?

History tells us that badges such as the ones described in this bill have been used to segregate an unfavored group from the rest of the population and reinforce their inferior status. There is no legitimate reason for this. Even if West Virginia had a large population of immigrants who are not citizens, which we do not. This bill is designed for discrimination, pure and simple.

The League of Women Voters is a nonpartisan volunteer organization that encourages informed and active participation of citizens in government. The League does not support or oppose any political party or candidate, but is engaged in local, state, and national issues of importance to our communities. The League works to influence public policy through advocacy and education. League membership is open to all men and women age 16 or older. More at: www.lwv.org (National) and www.lwvwv.org (WV).

The League of Women Voters urges you to vote down HB 3016.

Sincerely,



Judy K. Ball, PhD, MPA
Chair, Legislative Action Workgroup
League of Women Voters of West Virginia
LWVofWV@gmail.com
240.997.1222

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB3016
Date: Monday, March 3, 2025 8:51:29 PM

Contact Info: name - Kerstin Harper, email - kerstin.harper59@gmail.com, phone number - (301) 356-5307, org - , zip-code - 25430

Date of Submission: 03/03/2025

Please move this sensible bill towards passage. Requiring a photo ID that specifies US citizenship to vote is an obvious step to help secure our elections. No more utility bills or bank statements!

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB3016
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 3:32:51 PM

Contact Info: name - Susan Fagan, email - Toddsusan28@yahoo.com, phone number - (304) 283-7255, org - , zip-code - 25443

Date of Submission: 03/04/2025

Historically, badges such as the ones described in this bill have been used to segregate an unfavored group from the rest of the population and reinforce their inferior status.
This bill is unnecessary and mean spirited.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB3016
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:13:21 AM

Contact Info: name - Vicky L. Shears, email - vshears@comcast.net, phone number - , org - , zip-code - 26501

Date of Submission: 03/04/2025

I OPPOSE HB3016. This is just a voter suppression bill. A democracy should want more people participating through the voting process not fewer. This is worrying about a problem that doesn't exist and a waste of legislative time when you should be working on the foster care system, PEIA, WV economic growth and the budget.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB3016
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 9:31:53 AM

Contact Info: name - Suzanne Patrick, email - biltmore19@comcast.net, phone number - (484) 620-9499, org - Citizen, zip-code - 25443

Date of Submission: 03/04/2025

Please vote NO on this bill. It discriminates and causes added hardships on too many voters. Over and over it has been shown that our voting system is very low on illegal voting. We have a good system in place. Don't further complicate our lives. Move onto substantive issues like keeping our water supply safe and free from pollutates and protecting our beautiful state from foreign exploiting companies like Rockwool

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on House Bill 3016
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 12:09:53 PM

Contact Info: name - Cindy Hoover, email - clghoover01@ail.com, phone number - (304) 886-6459, org - , zip-code - 25404

Date of Submission: 03/05/2025

This is discriminatory. Perhaps you could require the Star of David. Pass something anything to make our state better, more educated, or more prepared for the future. All of you are wasting our tax money.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on House Bill 3016
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 11:23:11 AM

Contact Info: name - Marcia Daoust, email - Gmardaoust@icloud.com, phone number - (304) 840-9657, org - , zip-code - 25705

Date of Submission: 03/05/2025

In order for our country to remain a strong democracy, it is important that every eligible West Virginian and every eligible U.S. citizen has the ability to vote. This enables the government to derive "their just powers from the consent of the governed," as stated in the Declaration of Independence.

We voters need to have confidence that every election was conducted in a free and fair manner, neither permitting illegal ballots to be cast, nor preventing legal ballots from being cast.

HB 3016 attempts to prevent illegal voting by requiring the presentation of photo ID's at the time of voting. Unfortunately, this attempt to eliminate any possibility of voter fraud, HB 3016 places barriers to voting upon people of low income and those with physical problems, who are unable to obtain the required photo ID.

In order to get a photo ID, a person has to have transportation to the DMV (requiring access to a vehicle, plus the money for gasoline or a fare). The potential voter must have the ability to pay for the photo ID at the DMV and also for the birth certificate fee, if they don't have one in their possession. In order to get a photo ID at the DMV, the potential voter must be well enough and have enough physical mobility to get to the DMV and go through the ID process.

At this time, I do not believe that WV has adequate funding to provide free WV photo ID's for persons of low income or those with physical challenges.

Therefore, I urge the WV House of Delegates to vote no on HB 3016. The current Voter ID requirements are adequate.

Thank you for considering my opinions.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB3016
Date: Tuesday, March 4, 2025 10:01:36 PM

Contact Info: name - Ron Allen, email - vitrectomy3120@yahoo.com, phone number - , org - West Virginia League of Women Voters, zip-code - 26505

Date of Submission: 03/04/2025

Eliminating non-photo IDs as valid voter identification disproportionately affects certain groups of people, such as the elderly, low-income individuals, and those with disabilities. These groups may find it more challenging to obtain a photo ID, which could lead to significant portion of West Virginian, who are older, not having the ability to vote.

Requiring non-citizen status to be identified on state-sanctioned photo IDs is a form of discrimination that stigmatizes and segregates individuals based on their citizenship status. This practice has historical parallels to other forms of identification that have been used to marginalize and oppress certain groups.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on House Bill 3016
Date: Wednesday, March 5, 2025 6:19:43 PM

Contact Info: name - Dolores Gregory, email - dwgregory2008@gmail.com, phone number - (202) 550-6964, org - --None--, zip-code - 25443

Date of Submission: 03/05/2025

I have a lot of concerns about this bill. Requiring photo ID is just going to make voter registration more difficult for more and more people in West Virginia. Adding citizen status to state-sanctioned IDs seems downright creepy -- if it isn't used to establish voting rights, then why is this necessary? An awful lot of non-citizens are here legally and singling people out this way seems like an invitation for ignorant people to harrass them.

From: Julie Archer
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Oppose to HB 2013
Date: Tuesday, March 18, 2025 9:23:44 PM

Oppose HB 3016: Don't Let False Claims of Voter Fraud Make It Harder for West Virginians to Vote

Statement prepared by Julie Archer, Deputy Director, WV Citizen Action Group
Address: 1500 Dixie Street, Charleston, WV 25311 Phone: (304) 610-9094

The stated purpose of HB 3016 is "to require a photograph on all valid identifying documents used for voter identification purposes" and "to ensure no noncitizen is capable of utilizing a noncitizen driver's license, permit, or identification card to register to vote."

The current protections against noncitizen voting are effective: ballots cast by non-citizens are vanishingly rare. Requiring photo ID to vote would solve nothing, but it would make it harder for eligible voters to cast ballots.

FACT: West Virginia and every other state have numerous safeguards to ensure that only citizens vote in our elections. To even register to vote in state and federal elections, you must swear you're a citizen under penalty of criminal prosecution. Under federal law, a non-citizen could face up to five years in prison simply for registering to vote. It's also a deportable offense for noncitizens to register or vote.

FACT: The supposed scourge of non-citizen voting is a non-issue. Flawed studies have fueled false and exaggerated claims about non-citizen voting rates. Yet, every legitimate study ever done on the question shows that voting by noncitizens in state and federal elections is vanishingly rare.

The Heritage Foundation actively promotes claims about the risk of non-citizens voting and encourages states to enact restrictive voting policies. However, its own data shows how rare these instances are. A Bipartisan Policy Center analysis of the Heritage Foundation's database of election fraud cases found only 77 instances of noncitizens voting in the entire US between 1999 and 2023. Additionally, the American Immigration Council, which advocates for immigrant rights, also analyzed the Heritage Foundation data and found most noncitizen voting cases involve legal immigrants and many had been incorrectly told they could vote. That analysis found only 10 cases involving undocumented immigrants since the 1980s.

The one time in modern history that a non-citizen registered and attempted to vote in

West Virginia, he was caught, charged, and eventually deported according to testimony before this body by representatives of the WV Secretary of State's Office. Of the 35 West Virginia election fraud cases in the Heritage Foundation database (1982-2024), only one mentions registering and voting by a non-citizen.

FACT: Like non-citizens voting, voter impersonation is virtually nonexistent. A search of the Heritage Foundation database identified 31 alleged cases of voter impersonation at the polls across the US dating back to the early 1980s. The year with the most cases was 2022 with a total of nine cases in seven states. They add up to a negligible fraction of the 112,030,874 votes cast nationwide in the 2022 General Election.

Additionally, during a hearing on HB 3016 before the House Judiciary Legal Service Subcommittee, a representative of the Secretary of State's office said they were unaware of any incidents in West Virginia of the type of fraud the voter ID bill would address or of voters forging documents on our current list of voter ID options to vote.

FACT: Overly burdensome ID requirements disproportionally affect seniors, minorities, people with disabilities, low-income voters, and students; creating obstacles for eligible voters who lack the necessary documentation for photo IDs (such as a birth certificate, which can be difficult to acquire especially for vulnerable West Virginians who no longer drive or who lack access to transportation or the internet).

Seniors and people with disabilities are overrepresented in West Virginia compared to the rest of the US. Seniors are one of the most reliable voting blocks in West Virginia elections. The latest US Census data, shows that West Virginians 65 and older make up 21.5% of the population, but accounted for nearly 40% of the votes cast in the 2022 General Election according to the Kaiser Family Foundation. 13.8% of West Virginians under 65 have a disability, compared to 9.1% nationally according to Census Bureau data.

Creating barriers for eligible voters is a choice; disenfranchising numerous West Virginians to prevent extremely rare abuse would be a statement of values. The legislature should consider whether this statement would reflect well or poorly on them.

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Julie Archer (she/her/hers)
Deputy Director, WV Citizen Action Group
Coordinator, WV Citizens for Clean Elections
(304) 610-9094 (cell)
www.wvcag.org - www.wvoter-owned.org

Drew Constable

From: Public Comments
Sent: Thursday, March 20, 2025 8:50 AM
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3016

Contact Info: name - Kara Fisher Flanigan, email - kara.fish@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 614-3129, org - , zip-code - 25530

Date of Submission: 03/20/2025

I stand in opposition alongside the League of Women Voters WV to HB 3016. Requiring non-citizen status to be identified on state-sanctioned photo IDs is an unnecessary duplication in the law. Historically, these designations such as the ones described in this bill have been used to segregate an unfavored group from the rest of the population and reinforce their inferior status. I urge the committee to avoid this unnecessary measure and potential for abuse of vulnerable populations.

From: Public Comments
To: House Judiciary
Subject: Public Comments on HB 3016
Date: Sunday, March 23, 2025 12:00:59 PM

Contact Info: name - Sarah Z Umberger, email - sarahumberger@gmail.com, phone number - (304) 667-6749, org - , zip-code - 24901-2829

Date of Submission: 03/23/2025

West Virginia has very few cases of voter fraud. This is yet another bill providing a solution to something that isn't a problem. It makes it very hard for non-drivers to vote, disenfranchising more of our voters. Given West Virginia's dismal record of getting voters to the polls, I'd think. we be encouraging people to vote, but throwing up roadblocks.

Please vote against this bill.