Governor McCrory Signs Popular Voter ID into Law

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August 12, 2013 - Legislation

Raleigh, NC – Governor Pat McCrory today signed HB 689, commonly referred to as Voter Photo ID, into law. This law will help ensure the integrity of the North Carolina ballot box and provide greater equality in access to voting for North Carolinians.

“North Carolinians overwhelmingly support a common sense law that requires voters to present photo identification in order to cast a ballot. I am proud to sign this legislation into law. Common practices like boarding an airplane and purchasing Sudafed require photo ID and we should expect nothing less for the protection of our right to vote,” said Governor McCrory.

North Carolina joins the majority of states in adopting this and other election reform provisions with 34 states requiring some form of ID to vote. The photo ID requirement will go into effect for the 2016 elections. North Carolinians overwhelmingly support this legislation:

- A March Elon University poll showed 72 percent of North Carolinians support photo ID at the polls.
- A March Civitas Institute poll showed 67 percent support.
- An April Survey USA poll showed 75 percent overall support for voter-photo identification.

“We have tried to make this seem to be controversial, the simple reality is that requiring voters to provide a photo ID when they vote is a common sense idea,” said Governor McCrory. “This new law brings our state in line with a healthy majority of other states throughout the country. This common sense safeguard is common-place.”

A valid North Carolina driver’s license, U.S. passport and various military IDs are among the acceptable forms of photo identification. A voter can also obtain a state-issued photo ID from the Department of Motor Vehicles at no charge. If a voter comes to the polls without a photo ID, they can still cast a provisional ballot.

The hours available to cast an early ballot remain the same and there will be 10 days for voters to cast their ballot early. The law requires county board of elections to calculate the number of early voting hours offered in the 2012 presidential and the 2014 non-presidential voting years. The same amount of early voting hours in those years must be made available in presidential and non-presidential elections going forward. Also, all early voting sites within a county must have the same days and hours of operation.

North Carolina will join the majority of states and the District of Columbia that require voters to cast a ballot for a candidate, and not for a political party, by not allowing straight-ticket voting.

This new law also aligns North Carolina with the majority of states (37) that do not allow a person to register and vote on the same day. This law will also remove the bureaucratic burden of having to re-certify the address and other identifying information for underage voters by doing away with pre-registration of 16 and 17 year olds. North Carolina was one of only eight states with the practice of "registering" teenagers too young to vote.

This law will also seek to reduce the "pay-to-play" culture of politics by placing additional campaign finance restrictions on lobbyists. Lobbyists are now prohibited from delivering even a single campaign contribution to candidates.