



Testimony:

Senate Privileges & Elections Committee

Tuesday, January 16, 2024

[SB 32](#)

Voter registration; verification of social security numbers, provisional registration status.

The League of Women Voters opposes SB 32. The bill requires matching voters to the Social Security Administration database, a system that is not directly available to state governments because of the risks of revealing personal information of American citizens. Virginia already uses the detailed information collected by the Department of Motor vehicles, a more efficient and reliable process. This proposal would have a significant fiscal impact and would impose significant burdens on election administrators and using this database and process could increase the chance of even more Virginians being inadvertently disenfranchised than has happened in recent months

Note: The Committee voted to “Pass by Indefinitely” – meaning it will not proceed

[SB42](#)

SB 42 Absentee voting; availability of voting in person.

The League of Women Voters opposes SB 42. The bill unduly restricts early in-person voting to 21 days. Since ballots must be ready 45 days before an election for mailing to military and overseas voters, there is no reason to make voters at home wait longer. Many of those voters work long hours, multiple jobs, care for

children, care for elderly people, have disabilities and/or have long commutes. Yet, they prefer to vote in person. They should not be deprived of the opportunity they already have to vote conveniently.

Note: The Committee voted to “Pass by Indefinitely” – meaning it will not proceed

[SB 45/SB81](#) Almost identical bills. They were combined into SB81

SB 81 Voter identification; identification containing a photograph required.

This bill would reverse important current law that doesn't require every voter to present a photo ID in order to vote in person. A photo ID rule existed in Virginia between 2014 and 2020, only six years in the Commonwealth's long history. Voters have voted without incident both before and since that time. Many older voters and those who do not drive lack a photo ID; and getting one, even a free one, would create a hurdle for these voters to overcome. Voters in cities who don't have driver's licenses and work in jobs that do not allow for much time off during the working day – would be unable to get an alternate ID. This bill disenfranchises too many citizens. We urge you to vote no on SB 45/SB81.

Note: The Committee voted to “Pass by Indefinitely” – meaning it will not proceed

[SB 92](#)

SB 92 Voter registration; registering in person up to the day of the election.

The League of Women Voters urges you to vote no on SB 92. Same day registration is a success. It was first implemented for the 2022 general election. Thousands of eligible voters were able to register to vote and cast their ballots without incident for the past two election cycles. Because newly registered voters cast their ballots provisionally, the registrars were able to verify the voters, weeding out any who were, for example, in the wrong precinct. The system works, permitting eligible citizens, who would otherwise be disenfranchised, to cast their ballots on Election Day.

Note: The Committee voted to “Pass by Indefinitely” – meaning it will not proceed.

[SB167](#)

SB 167 Candidates; declaration of candidacy for primary and write-in votes.

This bill would let the two major political parties decide who can or cannot be on a ballot, effectively limiting voters’ choices. The parties should not be able to dictate that a candidate who was not nominated in a primary election cannot run as an independent. The League of Women Voters opposes SB 167 because it limits the number of candidates from which voters can choose.

Note: The Committee voted to “Pass by Indefinitely” – meaning it will not proceed

[SB188](#)

SB 188 Election of certain governing bodies; conversion to single-member districts.

The League of Women Voters supports SB188. The League believes in representative government at all levels and supports electoral systems that elect policy-making bodies that proportionally reflect the people they represent. [State code](#) forbids drawing districts in such a way that members of a minority group are dispersed into districts in which they constitute an ineffective minority of voters. The city of Virginia Beach provides evidence that converting to single-member districts can immediately double the minority representation on a city council. We believe that SB188 will result in local governing bodies that more closely reflect the people they represent.

Note: This was reported out of the Committee.

[SB301](#)

SB 301 Campaign finance, required reports, extension of deadlines and appeal of fines.

While the League of Women Voters of Virginia generally supports the need for updating current rules for candidates' filings, including the passage of a more rationale system for allowing candidates to utilize exceptions for catastrophic problems, we are concerned that some on the terms in this bill, such as "reasonable considerations" are not defined. We welcome an opportunity to work with Senator DeSteph on this important issue.