

HJR 109 -- VOTER IDENTIFICATION

SPONSOR: Simmons

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Elections and Elected Officials by a vote of 5 to 2.

Upon voter approval, this Constitutional amendment requires voters to provide a valid government-issued photo identification. An exception may be provided to allow a person to vote by provisional ballot.

PROPOSERS: Supporters say that this bill goes with HB 1600. With the Supreme Court decision, we could make this HJR and corresponding bill as simple and clear as possible so that everyone who is registered can vote and the elections would be fair trustworthy elections. This bill protects the integrity of Missouri's voting system. No one is turned away at the ballot box for not having proper identification with the allowance of a provisional ballot. Sixty-three percent of voters supported voter ID on the 2016 Amendment 6. Requiring ID is a common sense thing.

Testifying for the bill was Representative Simmons.

OPPOSERS: Those who oppose the bill say that the bill is unconstitutional and problematic because it strips the fundamental right to vote from people. Lawmakers need to allow for people without photo identification. The state's outreach and education has been insufficient and confusion results in lower voter turnout. The underlying premise that our election system is poor, is wrong. This bill is fighting a battle that has no legitimate purpose. Any changes to voter identification hurts people of color and homeless more and every vote should count.

Testifying against the bill were Denise Lieberman, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition; Nimrod Chapel, Jr, Missouri State Conference National Association for the Advancement of Colored People; Empower Missouri; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; and Missouri National Education Association.