



May 26, 2021

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes, SBs 284, 285, 289, 303, 304, 307, 310 as introduced. These bills harm the rights of voters and the efficiency of the election process.

Today we want to highlight our concerns about these bills:

SB 284 – requires the Secretary of State to report every contract for election activity to the Legislature and prohibits state, counties, cities and townships from accepting contributions for election activity. The League opposes this bill because it greatly constrains clerks at all levels from operating an efficient election. The state and local funds are not currently meeting the costs of the elections and obtaining funding from other sources should be permitted.

SB 285 –requires a voter to submit a copy of driver's license and state ID to get an absentee ballot, if not submitted then the voter receives a provisional ballot. It also requires the same procedure for emergency absentee ballots. The League opposes this bill because this material or other allowable materials were already used when the person registered to vote. This new requirement for additional information to be submitted would lead to voter disenfranchisement for voters who cannot easily copy the materials. There is also the possibility of materials mailed to be used to steal someone's identity, and we question how the materials are handled securely by each clerk and are disposed of properly.

SB 289 - limits use of election related federal funds, requires Legislature to appropriate and if not appropriated within 90 days or money is returned to federal government The League opposes this bill because we have seen the partisan fights over allocating money causing long delays in receiving the money.

SB 303 – requires a state ID to vote in person on Election Day and removes the option of using an affidavit if voter forgot or does not have a suitable ID. The League opposes this bill because Michigan already has a voter ID law on the books. Voters, 11,400 (.2%), in 82 of 83 counties used the affidavit option to vote in November 2020. This system has worked for decades. Removing the affidavit option makes it more difficult for citizens to vote, especially minorities and low-income voters.

SB 304 - allows elector to verify status within 6 days of the election if the voter used a provisional ballot. An ID must include address or would need a utility bill or bank statement to verify address. The League knows this is current practice, but if SBs 285 and 303 are passed 6 days may not be enough time for people to show up the clerk's office and be processed. Requiring a provisional ballot cause the voter to have to go through the voting process twice.

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SB 307 - requires the full text of ballot proposal to be printed on ballot and absentee ballot The League opposes this because the 100-word summary is sufficient information to be printed on the ballot. In addition, if a voter is reading it for the first time at the polls, it will slow up the voting process and create backup lines. There he League opposes this bill because adding more pages to the ballot will only increase the costs for mailing and printing ballots. There are many other ways for any voter to get additional information about ballot proposals.

SB 310 - prohibits the SOS from sending absentee ballots applications without a request and bans link on SOS website to application. The League opposes this ban on free speech and sees this as an effort to discourage voting by absentee ballot.

We urge you oppose this legislation because the bills could adversely impact voter turnout in our elections.

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President