



PRESS RELEASE

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Analysis: Voter Photo ID Bill Could Cost State \$5.5 Million Over Three Years

ALBUQUERQUE—Legislation that would require citizens to show a photo ID in order to vote would cost New Mexico taxpayers an estimated \$1.8 million per year, or \$5.5 million over three years. Three such bills are currently working their way through committee hearings in the state Capitol. The expenses would come from administration and implementation of such a law, ad campaigns to educate the public and avoid confusion on election day, and the cost of the actual IDs.

“Very little election fraud has been found by the New Mexico Secretary of State’s Office, so this is the proverbial solution in search of a problem,” said Gerry Bradley, Research Director for New Mexico Voices for Children and report author. “Since voter fraud is so rare, we consider voter ID laws an attempt at voter suppression.”

The groups most adversely affected by voter ID laws include the elderly, persons with disabilities, veterans, voters in rural areas, and racial and ethnic minorities.

“Even if the state pays for the photo ID—which it should—it still puts an unnecessary burden on people who have to find a way to get to a Motor Vehicle Division office in order to apply for the ID,” Bradley said.

States that have implemented voter ID laws but have required voters to pay for the IDs have found themselves the subject of lawsuits. “If you require the voter to pay for an ID they would not otherwise need, it can amount to a poll tax, which is a violation of civil rights laws,” said Bradley. “Voting is a constitutionally protected right and the state should make it easier for people to participate in elections, not more difficult.”

The report draws on cost estimates from other states that have implemented voter photo ID laws.

The report, *Analysis: Voter ID Laws are Costly*, is available online at

<http://www.nmvoices.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Voter-ID-Cost-2-12.pdf>.

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New Mexico Voices for Children is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization advocating for policies to improve the health and well-being of New Mexico's children, families and communities.
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