



# THE STOUFFER REPORT

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**Capitol Building, Room 332**  
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**For the Week of:**  
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## **Voter Protection Act will Reduce Fraud and Strengthen our Democracy**

Have you ever felt overwhelmed by Election Day? The week before you have received enough mail from the variety of candidates to start a small forest fire; then you go to the polls to finally voice your opinion and you are given more literature, see more signs, or you are asked how you voted by an exit pollster. When you return home to watch the election results, you find out your vote wasn't counted, deceased people voted or someone voted twice.

Senate Bill 1014, the Voter Protection Act, requires Missourians to show their drivers licenses or other government-issued photo-identification cards to vote. Current law allows voters to identify themselves through a variety of documents, including utility bills, bank statements and paychecks. The new legislation requires voters to present a photo ID with a name that matches their voter-registration record.

Although critics of the legislation say it will discriminate against elderly, disabled and poor Missourians, provisions in the legislation should ease these concerns. SB 1014 requires the state to issue free voter IDs to Missourians who cannot obtain a driver's license. Further, the bill allows people without photo IDs to cast provisional ballots at their voting station as long as they return with a valid ID before polls close.

While this bill works to reduce voter fraud by requiring photo identification, it will also decrease voter intimidation by restricting campaigning at polling stations. The legislation increases the distance that must be kept from the voting booth by those distributing campaign literature, posting signs or conducting exit polls. These provisions are needed to ensure Missourians never have to face harassment when they go to cast their ballot.

SB 1014 makes several needed changes to Missouri election laws. The legislation follows many of the recommendations of the bipartisan Commission on Federal Election Reform, headed by former Secretary of State James Baker and former President Jimmy Carter, which was formed to strengthen the country's electoral system and build voter confidence in the political process.

This legislation is needed to reduce voter fraud, which devalues the rights of citizens who have legitimately cast their ballot, the basis of our democracy.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please call toll free (866) 768-3987 or by email at [bstouffer@senate.mo.gov](mailto:bstouffer@senate.mo.gov).

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