



MISSOURI SENATE

JEFFERSON CITY

Delbert Scott
28th Senate District

CAPITOL BUILDING, ROOM 221
JEFFERSON CITY, MO 65101

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**Contact: Debbie Poire
(573) 751-8793**

Missouri Voter Protection Act

JEFFERSON CITY – The Missouri Voter Protection Act is designed to protect the right of all Missourians to vote in fair and honest elections. The measure, Senate Bill 1014, has been filed in response to numerous problems at the polls during the 2000 and 2004 elections.

The legislation would improve Missouri's election process by protecting voters from intimidation at polling places, cracking down on election fraud, reforming the voter registration process, and extending provisional balloting to all ballot issues.

The Missouri Voter Protection Act says that anyone who harasses or intimidates a voter with the intent of preventing them from exercising their constitutional right to vote will be subject to criminal prosecution. The act also would make it a felony to use violence or knowingly provide false information to keep a Missourian from voting. The measure also expands the "no electioneering" perimeter at polling places from 25 feet to 50 feet to protect voters as they go to the polls.

In an effort to restore confidence in the election process, SB 1014 would require all voters to provide a photo identification before casting a ballot. More than 95-percent of Missourians already have an acceptable form of photo I.D., such as a driver's license. For those who don't, the state would provide one for free and without hassle. If a voter forgets to bring a photo I.D. to the polling place, they would be allowed to cast a provisional ballot that can be verified later.

The act also expands the rights of voters who cast provisional ballots by allowing them to cast a provisional ballot in all races, not just the currently allowed statewide and congressional elections. This will allow voters who must cast a provisional ballot to vote on all issues and in all races in their voting precinct.

The legislation also brings accountability to the process of voter registration. SB 1014 would require voter registration solicitors to register with the Missouri Secretary of State. It also prohibits paying a “bounty” for voter registration forms. It’s important to eliminate the incentive that has led to voter registrations submitted in the names of the deceased, dogs, and comic book characters.

We must ensure that voters can trust that elections in Missouri are fair. The Missouri Voter Protection Act will help make it easy to vote, but tough to cheat.

If you have questions or comments about this or any other issue, please feel free to contact me at 573-751-8793 or by e-mail at: delbertscott@senate.state.mo.us

Senator Delbert Scott represents the people of Barton, Benton, Cedar, Dallas, Henry, Hickory, Pettis, Polk and St. Clair counties in the Missouri Senate.