



**JIM DOYLE**  
**GOVERNOR**  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**

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April 29, 2005

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE ASSEMBLY:

I am vetoing AB 63 in its entirety. This bill would require voters and persons registering at the polls on Election Day to show photo identification before being allowed to vote or register on Election Day. This bill would also repeal the current law that allows individuals to register by having their residence corroborated by another elector.

I am vetoing AB 63 because it places unnecessary restrictions on voting and is inconsistent with Wisconsin's proud tradition of ensuring maximum access to the constitutionally protected right to vote. In the 2004 election, Wisconsin ranked third in the nation in voter turnout, with about 75 percent of eligible voters showing up to exercise their right to vote. AB 63 would make Wisconsin's election laws the strictest in the country and put us on equal footing with South Carolina, a state that had only a 50 percent turnout -- one of the worst voter turnouts in the nation. When it comes to voting rights and voter turnout, we shouldn't trade our laws for South Carolina's. While it is true that Wisconsin's election system is in need of reform, AB 63 is not the answer.

What is particularly troubling about AB 63 is that it in no way addresses the problems that it is supposedly intended to remedy. AB 63 does not prevent felons from voting. It does not prevent individuals from voting twice or ensure that the address appearing on a photo ID card is in fact accurate and up to date. AB 63 does not make the lines at polling places any shorter or make them move any faster. And it does not make the job of poll workers any easier. In fact, AB 63 creates a host of additional administrative burdens for poll workers as they would be forced to interpret the accuracy and authenticity of each photo ID card and also determine whether individuals appearing without the required photo ID fall into one of the exemptions or whether their ballots should be marked and treated as provisional. AB 63 creates more problems than it solves.

In addition, AB 63 would disenfranchise tens of thousands of otherwise eligible, elderly voters who do not have a driver's license or valid Wisconsin photo ID card. As I have noted before, according to the Department of Transportation, there are nearly 100,000 elderly voters in Wisconsin who would be disenfranchised by this bill. I refuse to sign into law a bill that would make it harder for Wisconsin's senior citizens to exercise their right to vote.

What the 2004 election revealed is that to properly accommodate increasing voter turnout Wisconsin's election system needs improvement. We ought to be focused on making it easier for legitimate voters to vote, and ensuring that every valid vote is counted. A photo ID requirement won't achieve either objective, but it will disenfranchise tens of thousands of Wisconsin seniors who don't have drivers' licenses.

Three weeks ago, I proposed a comprehensive package of election reform that addresses the real problems – the understaffed and under-trained polling workforce, the lack of statewide uniformity in election administration, and the burdens associated with our absentee voting system. The measures that I proposed will help restore integrity to our election system and give clerks and poll workers the tools and resources they need to properly administer elections in Wisconsin. Most importantly, my proposed reforms, unlike AB 63, do not undercut our proud history of ensuring maximum access to the ballot box in Wisconsin.

The protection of our citizens' fundamental rights is of utmost importance. Any legislative attempt to restrict those rights must be carefully scrutinized. Because AB 63 needlessly strips away full and unfettered access to voting for some of Wisconsin's most vulnerable citizens – including nearly 100,000 senior citizens -- I cannot sign it into law.

Respectfully Submitted,

JIM DOYLE  
Governor