



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

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August 12, 2005

TO THE HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE SENATE:

I am vetoing SB 42 in its entirety. Like AB 63, which I vetoed earlier this year, this bill would require voters and persons registering at the polls on Election Day to show state issued or military 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 SB 42 for the same reasons that I vetoed AB 63: it unfairly restricts the right to vote at the expense of far too many of Wisconsin's law-abiding, elderly citizens. Two months ago, the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee released a study showing that over 177,000 elderly persons in Wisconsin aged 65 and older do not possess a driver's license or state photo identification. Thus, under this proposal, nearly one-quarter of Wisconsin's elderly population could be disenfranchised. I cannot allow that to happen.

As I pointed out in my message vetoing AB 63, Wisconsin has a proud tradition of ensuring maximum access to the right to vote. In the 2004 election, Wisconsin was third in the nation in voter turnout, while South Carolina – the only state to have such a restrictive photo ID law – ranked near the bottom. When it comes to voting rights, South Carolina should be following Wisconsin's example, not the other way around.

I agree that Wisconsin's election system needs reform. Earlier this year, I introduced a comprehensive package of election reforms drawing on the best ideas of Republicans and Democrats. It provides commonsense solutions on everything from mandatory training for poll workers to preventing ineligible felons from voting to reducing lines at the polls. The proposal also includes provisions designed to clean up voter registration drives by prohibiting compensation based on per-voter formulas. My proposed reforms will help elections run more smoothly and protect the integrity of the election process, while still guaranteeing access at the ballot box for eligible voters. The package has been introduced in both houses of the Legislature, but for purely political reasons, the Republican leadership has never scheduled it for a vote.

While SB 42 does include provisions aimed at preventing ineligible felons from voting – an issue I agree that needs addressing – the Legislature cynically attached those provisions to a photo ID bill that it knew I would veto because it disenfranchises 177,000 seniors. Moreover, the election reform bill that I have introduced more

completely addresses the felon voting issue. Like SB 42, my proposal will equip poll workers with poll lists that include notations next to the names of felons who are ineligible to vote. But unlike SB 42, my proposal also will require all voters to specifically affirm that they are not felons ineligible to vote – a key provision that helps district attorneys prove intent when prosecuting ineligible felons. My proposal will also require a post-election audit to double-check whether any ineligible felons were allowed to vote. If it turns out that an ineligible felon did in fact vote, my proposal would require municipalities to notify their district attorneys. SB 42 contains no similar provision.

I am willing to work with Republicans on a voter ID bill that won't disenfranchise seniors, but Republicans have been totally unwilling to work with me. I still believe a reasonable compromise is possible, but if Republicans keep sending me a bill over and over that disenfranchises 177,000 seniors, my only choice is to veto it. Hopefully, they will realize that if they actually want to get something done, they will have to work together in a bipartisan way.

Respectfully submitted,

JIM DOYLE  
Governor