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# PATRICK SNYDER

STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 85<sup>th</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

## Testimony in Support of Assembly Joint Resolution 1

Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections

January 8, 2025

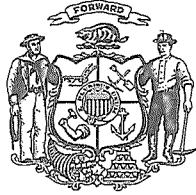
Chairman Maxey and members of the Committee:

I authored this amendment to the Wisconsin Constitution to ensure that the people of Wisconsin have full confidence in the security and integrity of Wisconsin elections. This Joint Resolution would amend the State Constitution to require valid photographic identification when voting. Under the amendment, the State Legislature would still be able to create exceptions to the requirement in statutes and qualified electors who lack valid identification on elections day would still be able to cast a provisional ballot. This proposal does not change any current statutory exceptions to existing voter ID requirements.

Ensuring that each voter casts the proper ballot is central to the integrity of any election. Wisconsin's voter ID requirement has been widely successful in preserving election integrity and ensuring that citizens are confident that the ballots cast are legitimate. Polling has consistently shown that voter ID requirements are widely popular with one 2024 poll by the Pew Research Center showing nationwide support of voter ID at 81%.

As with all amendments to the State Constitution, this proposal requires adoption by two successive legislatures and ratification by the people in a statewide vote. This would be the second consideration of this amendment. Ensuring that voter ID is required under the State Constitution will go a long way towards preserving confidence in the electoral process.

Thank you for taking the time to hear my testimony today. I am happy to answer any questions you may have.



# Van H. Wanggaard

Wisconsin State Senator

## Testimony on Assembly Joint Resolution 1

Thank you, committee members, for attending today's hearing on Assembly Joint Resolution 1, which would codify Wisconsin's photo ID requirement for voting, or Voter ID law, in the Wisconsin Constitution.

It is no secret that liberal activists and Democrats are filing court cases left and right trying to overturn laws that have been previously found constitutional by the Wisconsin Supreme Court and/or Federal Courts.

Following the election of Janet Protasiewicz to the Supreme Court, it took less than 24 hours for liberal activists to file their first case of this sort. A lawsuit challenging Wisconsin's school choice program – a law that has been declared constitutional by both the Wisconsin and United States Supreme Courts was filed shortly thereafter. Just a month or so ago, a Dane County Judge found Act 10 unconstitutional on grounds that had previously been found constitutional in another case. If I did more research, I'm sure I could find more legal attempts to overturn laws that had been previously determined to be constitutional.

Now, Democratic activists on social media are openly asking someone to challenge Wisconsin's Voter ID law in the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Like school choice, Wisconsin's Voter ID law has already been declared constitutional by state and federal courts. But we can be sure that a new lawsuit challenging its constitutionality is coming to the Wisconsin Supreme Court.

I cannot say for certain how the Wisconsin Supreme Court would rule on Voter ID laws, but I'm also not willing to risk a Wisconsin Supreme Court unburdened by precedent and the Wisconsin Constitution declaring Voter ID laws unconstitutional. They've already thrown *stare decisis* out the window. The chosen liberal Supreme Court candidate in this spring's election has repeatedly referred to Voter ID as "Draconian" and "punishing". She celebrated when it was briefly struck down. The only way to ensure that this or our future Supreme Courts will not overturn Voter ID is to enshrine this basic election integrity law in Wisconsin's Constitution.

Contrary to claims made when Voter ID was passed, the law has not resulted in voter suppression. In fact, voter participation has increased since being implemented in 2014. In November elections in particular, voter participation increased significantly. When the law was passed, the League of Women Voters claimed the law would complicate and make elections harder, but following the 2016 and 2018 elections, the League of Women Voters stated that the elections went smoothly and without problems.

To be clear, this bill does not change any of the current Voter ID laws. What is considered a valid ID would still be considered a valid ID if this amendment would be ratified. Consistent polling shows 75-80% support for voter ID laws. This proposed amendment ensures that this basic, and constitutional voter integrity law remains the law of the land.

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**Testimony of Nick Ramos**

**Executive Director, Wisconsin Democracy Campaign**

**Public Hearing Before the Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections in  
Opposition to AJR1/SJR2**

**January 8, 2025**

Chairperson Maxey, Vice-Chair Krug and other distinguished members of this Committee,

My name is Nick Ramos, and I am the executive director of the Wisconsin Democracy Campaign, which since 1995, has been tracking and exposing the money in Wisconsin politics and advocating for a full range of pro-democracy reforms.

I want to thank you all for taking the time to listen to the folks who have gathered here with you all today.

I must tell you; this is frustrating as hell to be here with you all right now.

From your fast-tracked actions in scheduling this public hearing on such short notice and immediately following the holidays, it's clear that you all feel that time is of the essence to try and get this amendment on the April ballot.

I know Speaker Vos wants this badly, but I must ask you all, why?

Don't we already have a Voter ID law in place?

In fact, it was passed back in 2011, and it was fully implemented during the 2016 presidential election.

It passed in the Assembly along party lines on a 60 to 35 vote and in the Senate, 19 to 5.

Vice Chair Krug, you were there when it passed.

And you were there when Act 43 passed in July of 2011.

2011 Act 43 was the bill where behind closed doors, state lawmakers worked with a private law firm to create the heavily rigged, gerrymandered maps that we had to live with for years until recently.

Here in Wisconsin, our elected officials would rather strong-arm the other side into submission than talk to each other like human beings and listen to the voice of common sense and reason.

If you all were serious about voting and encouraging eligible voters to participate in our democracy so that Wisconsin could lead the nation in voter turnout, why would you continue to move the goalpost and make it harder for people to vote?

You all can sit here and say that Voter ID laws ensure that only legal voters can cast legal votes with this quote-on-quote safeguard that you all artificially created.

But let's face facts, you either know these pieces of legislation cut certain people out of the democratic process or you are ignorant to the fact that these types of measures disenfranchise specific populations of voters.

Just a quick show of hands, how many of you worked in a full-time job to help Wisconsinites acquire the underlying documents they need so that they can get an ID?

I have.

Did you know that approximately 10% of the voting-age population does not have a valid, government-issued ID?

Applying that number to our voting population here in Wisconsin, that's about 460,000 people who don't have what it takes right now to go cast a vote here because of the very law that we have lived under since 2016.

I hear folks like you say, well everyone ought to have an ID, right? How hard can it be? Guess what, your privilege is showing.

I traveled the entire state helping Black, White, Hmong, Hispanic, disabled folks, recovering drug addicts, homeless, elderly, students, low-income Wisconsinites and more to either get their underlying documents like their birth certificate, social security card, or help them get an ID so that maybe one day they might choose to vote.

Can any of you tell me how much an average birth certificate costs?

Can any of you tell me what happens when one of our elderly citizens doesn't have any of the documents that it would take to get an ID in Wisconsin?

It's insane that the game plan for you all is to legislate through the constitutional amendment process.

But I see why.

The twisted and terrible laws that have been created in this building can be cemented for all of eternity by going this route.

You all saw the effect that fairer maps have on the makeup of the legislature. You say why not try and pass as much bad public policy as we can before 2026 when the party ends alongside the gerrymandered seats that you have enjoyed for years?

This isn't the way.

Why can't we have real, meaningful discussions about election integrity? We all want the same thing; it's just the vehicle with which we conclude that is vastly different.

We need to get out of the habit of weaponizing the constitutional amendment process here in Wisconsin.

It's a binding document that ought to be amended ONLY when there is a problem that needs to be fixed.

Last time I checked, there wasn't a problem that needed to be fixed. What more are you going to gain by taking a law that is already effective, and making it a constitutional amendment?

This is a waste of your time, Wisconsin taxpayers' time, our time.

Seriously, I want to work with all of you so we can deliver victories for the people of Wisconsin.

But this isn't the way.

Enough already with trying to change our constitution. We did five times last year, which was five times too many if you ask me.

Let's work together for a change instead of this "fly by the seat of your pants" and scorched earth politics people have grown tired of here in Wisconsin.

Thank you all for taking the time to hear our thoughts on this important issue.

Please vote NO on this resolution.

Citizen  
Voter -  
Ashley  
Host

Steve Books, Madison  
Photo ID already a law

Bay Creek Neighborhood - Monona Bay  
Bay Creek,

Don't fix what's not broken.  
→ Politicized

Author's  
Does  
not  
change  
anything

nearshore riparian buffer zone, the bank zone and the open water or littoral zone. Results show that the shoreline ranks poorly for a healthy shoreline habitat. Thirty percent of the riparian zone has manicured lawns, with half of each parcel on average in manicured lawn; one quarter is covered by impervious surface, and one-quarter has shrubs and vegetation. Ten parcels had point source discharges, such as stormwater pipes to the lake. Surveyors also found channelized flow, bare soil, 184 staircases and other issues with 35 feet of the lake. About 54% of the shoreline is riprapped, with an additional 4% in seawall, but few properties have planted aquatic vegetation to buffer the riprap. About 400 human structures such as buildings, boats on shore, and fire pits were recorded in the riparian zone. In the littoral zone just over 1,000 piers, boat lifts and swim rafts were counted. The extensive public lands with natural shorelines show that habitat conditions are better than that of the average privately-owned parcel.

Requires 2 x's Voter Confidence

The system works.

Many plans over the past 50 years have guided efforts to address the concerns of the interactions between land use and water quality to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff. Computer models used in 2024 in developing this plan allow for a better understanding of both rural and urban inputs. Modeling results indicate opportunities to significantly reduce the amount of pollution being delivered to Lake Waubesa by implementing various stormwater control practices and BMPs in rural areas. Millions of dollars and thousands of hours of effort have been used to address the issues that are identified not just for Lake Waubesa, but for the entire watershed.

agree with

Rep. Snodgrass

New issues have overshadowed many of the past efforts, so the ultimate goals remain a moving target. These issues include climate change with increased rainstorms in short periods of time; intensification of dairy animal agriculture, increased urban development, the introduction of aquatic invasive species, and the presence of PFAS in the lakes.

and, Rep. Anderson

## Recommendations Ask about Donating Salary?

Each chapter of the plan makes recommendations on how to improve Lake Waubesa and its tributaries. The following are a few highlights of from recommendations.

### Goal 1: Increase community engagement and organizational capacity

- Build on existing momentum from recent public education and volunteer efforts. Engage with neighborhood leaders, conduct water quality monitoring, rake aquatic plants for county pick-up, develop and share educational materials.
- Conduct workshops to target improvements within 35 feet of the shoreline to reduce the area of manicured lawns by increasing native vegetation. Increase plantings in the riparian zone to reduce negative impacts of riprap.
- Build relationships with agricultural producers in the Waubesa subwatershed.
- Increase membership in LWCA and encourage their subsequent involvement.

Paranoia - will destroy you.





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January 8, 2025

To: Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections

Re: OPPOSE AJR 1

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin opposes moving the question of whether or not the Voter ID requirement in Wisconsin statute should be moved to the people to decide if this requirement should be codified in the Constitution.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin believes that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed. Participating in our democracy by voting should be a safe, accessible and positive experience for all eligible Wisconsin residents. Lawmakers should avoid measures that place undue burden on the voter or erect barriers to voter participation.

The League believes that good government depends on the informed and active participation of its citizens, and that voting is a fundamental citizen right which must be guaranteed. Wisconsin election laws should provide citizens with maximum opportunity for registration, voting at the polls and absentee voting. Further, election administration should be adequately coordinated and funded to achieve statewide standards uniformly applied, verifiable results and local municipal effectiveness.

Since its founding in 1920 the League has supported the Constitutionally guaranteed right of eligible citizens to vote. This legislation would write into the state constitution the current requirement to present a voter photo ID in order to cast a regular ballot and have it counted. Such a requirement has been shown to place a heavier burden on certain groups of citizens, including those who are disabled, elderly or low-income.

At yesterday's Senate Hearing we heard a number of truths and a number of false statements.

First, at the heart of this action is the false presumption that Voter ID solve a problem. There is no problem in Wisconsin having to do with voter impersonation. No fact support this assumption. But what we do know is forcing voters to produce an ID does disenfranchise those who don't already possess one. We heard that 30% of eligible voters in Wisconsin do not possess a drivers license. This is a chilling reality for any voter advocate.

We heard that "anyone" can access the state ID since it is free. This, too, is patently false. Accessing the DMV to secure a state ID is not equally available to all eligible voters. Some voters face barriers such as a lack of public transportation, long distances, shortened hours and ADA barriers that the DMV is aware of, but has failed to correct in all the years since the law was passed.

We heard that voters without an ID can be issued a provisional ballot. The League's statewide Election Observation program reports otherwise. First, 40% of eligible voters that would qualify to be issued a provisional ballot are not offered one. For those that are, clerks are not always consistent in uploading the provisional ballot voter information, so organizations like the League and Vote Riders can work to assist these provisional voters to cure their ballots by 4:00 pm on the Friday following the election.



The League also knows that for eligible voters in Wisconsin's jails, the ID Law is a huge obstacle. Justice involved individuals cannot just leave jail to go to the DMV as was asserted yesterday. Yet, these voters are often left disenfranchised because our system does not support their right to cast their ballot.

We ask that you all read our report, coauthored with All Voting is Local and the ACLU of Wisconsin:

[Getting There is Half the Battle: Wisconsin's Photo ID Law, Access to DMV Services, and the Fight for Our Freedom to Vote](#)

You can find this report linked at the bottom of the League in Action Webpage on our website.

Wisconsin's voters elected you to represent them. Wisconsin's voters expect you to uphold their voting rights and to defend their right to vote as it is currently defined in the Constitution. It is unimaginable to me in the face of so many real problems facing this Legislature that this is your first priority. There is much to be done in Wisconsin - let's get to the work of governing.

*AVR E Full funding of elections*

To: Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections  
From: Disability Rights Wisconsin (Contact: Lisa Hassenstab, Public Policy Manager, [lisah@drwi.org](mailto:lisah@drwi.org))  
Date: January 8, 2024  
Re: AJR-1, Requiring photographic identification to vote in any election (second consideration)

Disability Rights Wisconsin (DRW) is the federally mandated Protection and Advocacy system for the State of Wisconsin, charged with protecting the rights of individuals with disabilities and keeping them free from abuse and neglect. DRW is charged with protecting the voting rights of people with disabilities and mandated to help ensure full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities (Help America Vote Act, 42 U.S.C. § 15461 (2002)). The issue of voting rights strongly impacts Wisconsinites who are eligible to vote and have a disability; the CDC indicates 26% of adults have some type of disability, making up a significant portion of the Wisconsin voting population. However, people with disabilities are underrepresented at the polls; the Rutgers University Fact Sheet on Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2022 Elections noted a 11.7% gap in Wisconsin voter turnout between citizens with and without disabilities, up from 10.4% in 2018!

DRW opposes AJR-1, which would create a state constitutional amendment to require photographic identification for Wisconsin voters.

Many Wisconsin residents who have a disability do not drive; they do not have a driver's license and may not have other acceptable photo ID required to vote. By positioning the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as the primary place for Wisconsinites to get a photo ID, Wisconsin's voter ID law created inherent barriers for these individuals. Acquiring a photo ID requires access to transportation to the DMV, which is limited for people with disabilities who are non-drivers. While public transportation, where available, must be made accessible for people with disabilities pursuant to Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), there are many parts of the state where no public transportation is available, particularly in rural areas. In these places, many people with disabilities have few or no transportation options. WisDOT's 2024 public transit systems map<sup>i</sup> demonstrates there is effectively no public transit in Northern Wisconsin, and 14 counties have no form of public transit.

Where volunteer transportation is available it typically is not lift-accessible. Accessible transportation provided by specialized medical vehicles is available only for medical and dental appointments, not for getting to the DMV. The cost for a specialized medical vehicle to transport them to and from the DMV is not affordable to the majority of people with mobility disabilities on a fixed income. Limited locations can also lead to long travel times.

In addition, the initial application for a Wisconsin photo ID is challenging for people with disabilities who do not have the needed documentation. The application process requires supporting documentation including proof of name and date of birth (certified U.S. birth certificate, valid passport, or certificate of naturalization), proof of identify documents, proof of Wisconsin residency, proof of U.S citizenship, and the voter's social security number. Individuals with disabilities often struggle to obtain the documents needed to apply for photo ID due to many factors, including time, cost, and effort when already working to maintain their physical and/or mental health and meet their daily needs. If people with disabilities are able to travel to the DMV and source the required documentation, they often face another set of accessibility-related challenges.

Community members with disabilities have shared concerns with Disability Rights Wisconsin regarding the lack of ADA accessibility at some DMV locations. Based on data from the DMV customer service centers webpage<sup>iii</sup>, 11 DMV service centers provide limited access for people with disabilities; this includes service centers in four of the 100 most populous municipalities in Wisconsin: Fort Atkinson, Platteville, New Richmond, and Sturgeon Bay<sup>iv</sup>. And for those attempting to navigate information online, the DMV online system is not fully accessible to screen readers, limiting access for people with print disabilities.

While the proposed constitutional amendment would allow the legislature to establish exceptions to the photo ID requirement, this would not fully address the myriad barriers faced by many people with disabilities in Wisconsin in accessing required photo ID for voting that have been identified since Wisconsin's voter ID law was enacted. Enshrining this inequitable requirement into Wisconsin's state constitution would further disenfranchise people with disabilities, who will make up an increasing number of Wisconsin voters in the coming years as the percentage of our population over the age of 60 continues to grow.

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<sup>i</sup> [Fact Sheet on Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2022 Elections](#)

<sup>ii</sup> [Wisconsin Public Transit Systems 2024 Map](#)

<sup>iii</sup> [Wisconsin DMV Official Government Site – DMV customer service centers](#)

<sup>iv</sup> Additional locations are Keshena, Luck, Oconto, Peshtigo, Sauk City, Shawano, and Wittenberg.

January 8, 2025

Chair Maxey, Vice-Chair Krug, and Honorable Members of the Assembly Committee on Campaigns and Elections:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin appreciates the opportunity to provide written testimony in opposition to Assembly Joint Resolution 1, which proposes to enshrine specific photo identification requirements for voting in the state constitution.

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the fundamental right upon which all our civil rights and liberties rest.

Wisconsin's voter ID law is one of the strictest in the country, requiring photo identification that many voters do not have and that many voters cannot easily obtain. Your constituents with disabilities experience the barriers created by this law, the elderly folks in your districts, students and first-time voters, low-income and unhoused voters, and Native, Black, and Latino voters who you represent.

#### **Many Wisconsinites Lack Compliant Photo ID for Voting**

In 2020, nearly 3 million voting-age U.S. citizens in Wisconsin, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee—states with strict photo ID laws—lacked a driver's license, and of those, over 1.3 million did not have the identification needed to vote.<sup>1</sup> Recent data from the Wisconsin Department of Transportation estimates that 31% of Wisconsinites are non-drivers.<sup>2</sup>

According to a 2021 report analyzing the impact of Wisconsin's photo ID law and access to DMV services on voting, “[o]f the 80 permanent DMV service centers in Wisconsin, only 23 operate Monday through Friday, and only seven offer Saturday hours.”<sup>3</sup> Because many DMVs are not located on public transit lines or take hours and significant costs to reach via public transit, inequitable access to DMV services presents enormous barriers to exercising the fundamental right to vote for nondrivers and people with disabilities in both rural and urban areas.

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<sup>1</sup> “Who Lacked Photo ID in 2020?: An Exploration of the American National Election Studies,” University of Maryland Center for Democracy and Civic Engagement (March 13, 2023), [https://www.voteriders.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CDCE\\_VoteRiders\\_ANES2020Report\\_Spring\\_2023.pdf](https://www.voteriders.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/CDCE_VoteRiders_ANES2020Report_Spring_2023.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> “Wisconsin Geography of the Non-Driver,” Wisconsin Department of Transportation (October 2024), <https://wisconsin.gov/Documents/projects/multimodal/geography-non-driver-flyer-oct-2024.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> “Getting There is Half the Battle: Wisconsin's Photo ID Law, Access to DMV Services, and the Fight for Our Freedom to Vote,” All Voting is Local, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, and Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition (2021), [https://allvotingislocal.org/wp-content/uploads/05192021-WI\\_DMV\\_Access.pdf](https://allvotingislocal.org/wp-content/uploads/05192021-WI_DMV_Access.pdf).

In his 2023-25 Executive Budget, Governor Evers proposed increasing funding to the DMV general operations appropriation for costs associated with expanding hours of operation at DMV service centers; however, this provision was removed from the budget by the Joint Committee on Finance.

If the proposed constitutional text is enacted as currently drafted, the legislature would be precluded from permitting additional categories of photo identification for voting purposes in the future, such as an ID for a federally recognized tribe outside of Wisconsin; an out-of-state driver's license or identification card; employer IDs; a membership or organization ID; or municipal IDs. The permanency of a constitutional amendment also ties the hands of the legislature to respond to future advancements in technology as methods of identification evolve.

### **Strict Photo ID Requirements Are a Solution in Search of a Problem**

In-person voter fraud is vanishingly rare. A study found that, from 2000 to 2012, there were only 31 credible allegations of voter impersonation – the only type of fraud that photo IDs could prevent – during a period of time in which over *1 billion* ballots were cast.<sup>4</sup> That's 0.0000031%.

Meanwhile, research has shown that strict photo ID requirements impact whether eligible voters are able to cast a ballot. One study published in the *Election Law Journal* estimated that thousands of registered voters in Wisconsin were deterred or prevented from voting either because voters did not have a permissible ID to vote under the law or due to confusion over whether an existing ID would comply with the law—which the analysis found disproportionality impacted Black and lower-income Wisconsinites.<sup>5</sup> Research from other states also highlights racially disproportionate access to valid forms of identification under voter identification laws<sup>6</sup> and indicates voter ID laws may reduce voter turnout.<sup>7</sup>

Please consider the consequences of implementing Assembly Joint Resolution 1. Democracy works best when eligible voters are not subject to additional barriers that make participating more difficult. The ACLU of Wisconsin opposes this measure and asks that you respect the rights of your constituents by voting no on a measure that would make it harder for them to participate in the voting process.

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<sup>4</sup> Justin Levitt, "A Comprehensive Investigation of Voter Impersonation Finds 31 Credible Incidents Out of One Billion Ballots Cast," *Washington Post* (Aug. 6, 2014), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2014/08/06/a-comprehensive-investigation-of-voter-impersonation-finds-31-credible-incidents-out-of-one-billion-ballots-cast/>.

<sup>5</sup> Michael G. DeCrescenzo and Kenneth R. Mayer, "Voter Identification and Nonvoting in Wisconsin—Evidence from the 2016 Election," *Election Law Journal* (2019), <https://elections.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/483/2021/02/Voter-ID-and-Nonvoting-in-Wisconsin.pdf>.

<sup>6</sup> Alex Vandermaas-Peeler, Daniel Cox, "American Democracy in Crisis: The Challenges of Voter Knowledge, Participation, and Polarization," PRRI (2018), <https://www.prrri.org/research/American-democracy-in-crisis-voters-midterms-trump-election-2018/>.

<sup>7</sup> "Issues Related to State Voter Identification Laws," U.S. Government Accountability Office (Sept. 2014), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-14-634.pdf>.