



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 21412, **Version:** 1

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### **Fiscal Note**

No appropriation required.

### **Title**

Safeguarding the fundamental right to vote: defeat or amend Wisconsin Senate Bill 6.

### **Body**

WHEREAS, one of the most fundamental rights accorded to U.S. citizens by the constitution is the right to vote, and;

WHEREAS, the absolute and unimpeded exercise of this right is essential to a functioning democracy, and;

WHEREAS, voting rights have been used as a way to perpetuate discrimination against minorities, women, and other specifically identified categories of citizens, and;

WHEREAS, heroic struggles have occurred to ensure voting rights for all citizens, often resulting in bloodshed and loss of life, but eventually securing passage of the 15th, 19th, and 24th Amendments to the U.S. Constitution, and;

WHEREAS, there is a lack of evidence demonstrating any significant instances of fraud due to voter impersonation, and;

WHEREAS, there is no evidence that photo identification requirements would address the few isolated instances of such fraud, and;

WHEREAS, government issued ID cards can be expensive and are most often not possessed by students, minorities, low income citizens, the elderly, and the disabled, and;

WHEREAS, the National Commission on Federal Election Reform reported that a photo identification requirement would “impose an additional expense on the exercise of the franchise, a burden that would fall disproportionately on people (with limited means),” and;

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin is now considering legislation (Senate Bill 6), which requires a driver’s license, a Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) issued ID card, or a military ID card to vote; only ensures that ID cards will be offered at Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) office locations; and requires voters to include a copy of photo IDs with their absentee ballots, and;

WHEREAS, many citizens do not have a valid driver’s license and would encounter hardship in accessing DMV site locations to obtain IDs, and;

WHEREAS, absentee ballots are not opened until Election Day and could lead to last minute disqualification of votes,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Madison strongly supports the fundamental, constitutionally guaranteed right to vote by all citizens, and;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Madison opposes Senate Bill 6 or any other legislation that makes it more difficult for Wisconsinites to cast their vote, disenfranchises any categories of citizens, or results in a reduction in already low voter turnout, and;

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that should Senate Bill 6 continue through the legislative process, the City of Madison strongly urges the Legislature to expand the list of acceptable forms of identification to include passports and student ID cards, to add additional sites for issuing state identification cards (beyond DMV offices), and to change proposed absentee ballot identification rules to allow voters to show ID when they originally request absentee ballots.