



The League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham

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League of Women Voters to host public discussion of new voter identification rules

Birmingham, AL -- New rules for voting will soon be implemented in the state of Alabama. On Monday, January 27, the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham will host a public discussion of the new rules and the Secretary of State's plan for implementation. The program will begin at 6:00 p.m. in the auditorium of the Homewood Public Library. Probate Judge Alan L. King, Chief Election Officer of Jefferson County and President of the Probate Judges Association of Alabama, will be the guest speaker. Much of the discussion is expected to focus on the new requirement that the voter must present a valid form of photo identification in order to vote.

The new voting regulations were passed by the Alabama legislature in 2013. Photo voter identification will be required for the first time at the Alabama party primary elections on June 3, 2014. Many citizens, particularly in low-income and elderly populations, do not have a valid driver's license or other photo identification. These citizens will be required to obtain acceptable photo voter identification before they will be allowed to vote. The voting rules state that a free photo identification will be provided by the state of Alabama to any voter who does not have one and who meets certain criteria.

Voters were first required to present valid identification in order to vote in 2003. Those regulations provided an extensive list of allowed identification. Acceptable forms of identification included such items as a current driver's license, utility bill, bank statement, social security card, Medicaid or Medicare card, and several state and federally issued government licenses. Many of the previously accepted forms of identification do not show a photograph of the person identified. Photo ID will be required under the new regulations.

Nancy Sales, Voter Service Chairperson of the League of Women Voters of Greater Birmingham, said "We are particularly concerned for the rights of those from traditionally underrepresented or underserved groups, including first-time voters, non-college youth, new citizens, minorities, the elderly and low-income citizens in our communities. We want to ensure that they have the opportunity and the information they need to exercise their right to vote. We encourage all eligible voters to become educated about these new voting requirements."

Sales continued, "We want to make sure that all voters have the valid ID they need when they go to the polls. If a citizen does not have valid ID, we want to assist the citizen in getting that." But, what is a valid photo voter ID? If a voter does not have one, where and how can the voter get one? Although the voter is entitled to a free photo voter identification, will this cost the voter in any indirect way? Will it make voting in the state of Alabama more difficult?

These questions will be addressed by Judge King. Sales concluded, "We encourage both League members and the public to attend this meeting. Get the information you need to be an active and informed participant in our democracy." The Homewood Public Library is located at 1721 Oxmoor Road.

Find out more about the League of Women Voters at <http://www.lwvgb.org>. Follow LWVGB in social media: [LWVGB](#) on Facebook, [@LWVGB](#) on Twitter.

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League of Women Voters Education Fund Mission Statement: "The League of Women Voters, a nonpartisan political organization, encourages informed and active participation in government, works to increase understanding of major public policy issues, and influences public policy through education and advocacy."

If you do not wish to receive LWVGB press releases, please notify Jean Johnson at jjohnson@lwvgb.org or contact the League at 205 583-5000.