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Friday Voter ID Update

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WEEKLY HIGHLIGHT

A federal judge on Thursday upheld Virginia’s voter identification requirement, dealing a blow to a national push by Democrats to remove laws they say disenfranchise minority and poor voters.

[*Virginia Democrats lose lawsuit over voter ID*](#)

J. Christian Adams, President of the Public Interest Legal Foundation, said, "We’re happy that the court dismissed this attack on Virginia’s common sense Voter ID law. It’s a shame civil rights groups are wasting so much donor money in failed efforts to block a law most people like and that stops nobody from voting," he added. The group filed a friend of the court brief in the case supporting the Virginia ID law.

[*U.S. judge upholds Va. voter ID law*](#)

NATIONAL

Stevens discussed *Crawford v. Marion County Election Board* in a “conversation” with his successor, Justice Elena Kagan, at the judicial conference of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 7th Circuit. . . . The Supreme Court said in the 2008 case that the lower courts “correctly concluded that the evidence in the record is not sufficient to support a facial attack on the

validity of the entire statute.” . . . Stevens, who was joined by Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. and Justice Anthony M. Kennedy, mentioned a dozen times in the opinion that it was based on “the record” in the case.

[*Stevens says Supreme Court decision on voter ID was correct, but maybe not right*](#)

With two more states moving to pass laws requiring voters to prove their identity with a photo ID, liberal interest groups that have been trying to block ballot-security measures are on their heels. Both sides see partisan advantage in the debate, with Republicans believing photo ID laws benefit them by reducing fraud and many Democrats convinced the laws hurt them by disenfranchising poor and minority voters who tend to vote Democrat. But the overwhelming evidence is that both sides are wrong, or at least largely exaggerate the impact.

“The numbers are fairly low,” said Donald Palmer, a former secretary of the Virginia State Board of Elections and a fellow at the centrist Bipartisan Policy Center.

[*The Left's Assault on Voter ID*](#)

STATES

Missouri

Nixon must decide whether [a constitutional amendment to allow photo voter ID] will be voted on in August or November. He hasn't decided which ballot he'll put it on but says he wants it to be when the most people are expected at the polls, so the greatest number of voters possible will have a say.

[*Missouri Gov. weighing voter photo ID: 'It is a concept I disagree with.'*](#)

North Carolina

A federal appeals court has scheduled a hearing next month to review a lower court ruling that upheld North Carolina's major 2013 rewrite of its voting laws, including a photo identification requirement to vote in person.

[*4th Circuit sets June 21 date for arguments in voter ID case*](#)

Texas

On Apr.29, the Supreme Court has declined to block the state's use of the law, which requires residents to show one of the seven valid forms of identification in order to vote. The law first went into effect in 2011, but was blocked during the 2012 election amid fears of disenfranchisement.

Area election administrators aren't sure a similar block will happen again.

[*Supreme Court ruling poses problems for Texas voters*](#)

Wisconsin

Not only did voter turnout far exceed expectations, but confusion and chaos at the polls were minimal. In fact, most long lines were attributable to new voter registrations. Overall, the election went relatively smoothly despite the election boasting the highest turnout in a Wisconsin presidential primary since 1972.

[*April Election Goes Smoothly as Voter ID Fears Fail to Materialize*](#)

More than two dozen Assembly Republicans have asked the Legislature's budget-writing committee to consider approving money to educate the public on the state's law requiring voters to show photo identification.

[*34 Republicans ask budget committee to fund voter ID education campaign*](#)

A federal judge heard testimony Tuesday from Wisconsin residents who have faced difficulties obtaining photo IDs for themselves or family members on the second day of a trial challenging several of the state's voting laws.

[*Witnesses detail difficulties obtaining IDs in Wisconsin voter ID case*](#)

A federal trial on Wisconsin's voter ID law will begin in Madison on Monday. The trial is one of two legal challenges to the state's voter ID law making its way through the courts.

This week, arguments will begin in the suit brought on by liberal group, One Wisconsin Institute, which alleges the law intends to make it more difficult to vote in Wisconsin, particularly for minorities, young people and voters who tend to support Democratic candidates.

[*Federal Lawsuit Challenging Voter ID, Other Election Changes Begins*](#)

Former U.S. Attorney General Eric Holder did more than just give words of wisdom when he spoke to the University of Wisconsin Law School graduating class in Madison Friday. He also waded into the debate over Wisconsin's controversial voter ID law.

. . . "I think that an examination of the laws that exist here and other parts of the country should be subject to federal scrutiny," he said. "We're talking about the most fundamental of American rights."

[*Former AG Eric Holder Says DOJ Should Examine Wisconsin Voter ID Law*](#)

MANDATORY VOTER REGISTRATION

Connecticut

Connecticut is getting automatic voter registration, and it didn't even have to pass a bill.

That's because the Secretary of State's office announced yesterday that they had entered into an agreement with the state's Department of Motor Vehicles to change the way they comply with the federal motor-voter law on an administrative level.

[*Connecticut Secretary of State to implement automatic voter registration through unique agreement with the DMV*](#)

Secretary of the State Denise W. Merrill and Department of Motor Vehicles Commissioner Michael Bzdyra said the streamlined motor-voter system will automatically register eligible citizens to vote when they go to the DMV for license or state-issued identification card services. The new system will take two years to develop.

[*CT introduces first-in-nation automatic voter registration*](#)

Illinois

Illinoisans would be automatically registered to vote when they visit a driver services facility under legislation approved by the state Senate Thursday.

[*Illinois Senate approves automatic voter registration*](#)

State Sen. Jim Oberweis, a Sugar Grove Republican, said the plan should be paired with fraud controls like a law that requires a photo ID to vote. "I have at least been told that they have buses of people going from precinct to precinct, voting multiple times," Oberweis, who said he was told about it during his statewide campaigns, said in a Senate floor speech.

[*Why lawmakers split on automatic voter registration*](#)

Oregon

Importantly, the mandatory voter registration system in Oregon demonstrates that not only will mandatory voter registration likely not help with voter turnout and engagement, it may actually disenfranchise a portion of newly registered voters who do want to exercise their right to vote.

[*Oregon's Mandatory Voting Law Backfires, Could Lead To Primary Disenfranchisement*](#)

Oregon's landmark new automatic voter-registration system added nearly 52,000 voters in just four months this year, more than double what the state has normally seen for an entire year.

That sounds impressive, but there's a hitch. The so-called "motor voter" law — a first in the nation widely hailed as a way to boost voter participation — hasn't made it much easier to participate in Oregon's closed primary on Tuesday.

[*Oregon automatic voter registration a success, with a hitch*](#)

Oregon's motor voter law has its opponents. During a length floor debate Republican state Rep. Julie Parrish called it an invasion of privacy.

"Democracy is also about choosing not to participate," she said. "And when we forget that, and when we opt people in, I really try to avoid yes votes on anything that takes away choice from a citizen. And this bill does that."

[*Oregon's Primary Is 1st Test For Automatic Voter Registration Law*](#)

Compiled by Andrew Bennett & Lisa Dixon. If you have an item for a future voter ID update, please email lawyersdf@gmail.com. For the latest news on

election integrity issues, check the [LDF website](#) or [LDF Twitter feed](#).

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