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**Contact:** Olyvia Armstrong  
P: 929-268-7936  
E: [oarmstrong@pavoice.org](mailto:oarmstrong@pavoice.org)

## **Senate Advances Voter ID Measure Bundled with Other Controversial Constitutional Amendment Proposals**

*The measure now goes to the House for consideration*

**HARRISBURG (Jan. 11, 2023)** --- The state Senate today advanced a package of proposed constitutional amendments that includes a voter identification provision that would disenfranchise voters, especially low-income residents, people with disabilities, senior citizens, students, and communities of color.

"It's disappointing that the Senate, in one of its first official acts of the new session, is advancing legislation that would make it more difficult for all eligible voters to vote," said Salewa Ogunmefun, Executive Director of Pennsylvania Voice, which works to break down barriers to civic participation, restore confidence in government, and bring historically marginalized populations and their issues to the center of public discourse.

["In 2012 we heard clearly from conservative legislators in Pennsylvania that the true fuel for voter ID is to create a pathway to disenfranchise enough voters to change the results of elections,"](#) Ogunmefun said. "Voting is a right guaranteed under our constitution and we should be working to remove barriers rather than making it harder for my cousin who is in college or your grandmother who no longer has a driver's license to participate."

The voter ID provision was bundled with legislation (S.B. 1) that would put questions about other controversial constitutional changes on ballot, including one that would end the governor's ability to veto the General Assembly's disapproval of a regulation and another to provide a two-year window to revive child sex abuse claims.

Proponents of voter ID are trying to fast track the measure by getting it before voters in the May primary election. The full measure now goes to the House for consideration.

The voter ID provision would require voters at every polling location to provide identification to cast their ballot, adding increased logistics to the election day load of poll workers across the commonwealth.

“Pennsylvania has the fifth largest population in the country and we’re 46th in resources for our election administration,” Ogunmefun said. “Instead of making it harder to vote I would like to see our legislature prioritize full funding and modernization policies so our elections continue to be safe and secure. Policies such as early voting that will ease voter anxieties about having limited time to vote also increase access for every eligible voter to participate. Same-day voter registration, expanded language access, and investing in systems to improve our election day experience, such as electronic poll books and increasing poll worker pay, are essential, just to name a few.”

Voter ID measures lead to voter suppression. Certain populations, including elderly and low-income residents as well as people with disabilities, may not readily have access to photo identification or two forms of non-photo ID, and they may face transportation and financial barriers to getting a government issued ID card.

“Our hope now is that the House, which is more racially and ethnically diverse than ever before—partially thanks to the work of Pennsylvania Voice partners during the recent redistricting process—takes a stand for voters and kills this attempt to silence Pennsylvanians at the polls,” Ogunmefun said.

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***With more than 50 partner organizations, Pennsylvania Voice aims to build an inclusive, just and reflective democracy in Pennsylvania. More at <https://www.pennsylvaniavoice.org/>.***