

MEMORANDUM

March 9, 2011

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Rep. Babette Josephs

SUBJECT: Co-Sponsorship of Legislation – Constitutional Amendment – Voter ID

The right to vote is one that our founders believed was paramount to the success of our democracy. It is enshrined in our Constitution, both State and Federal, as a fundamental principle that it is we who control our collective destiny by participating in the electoral process and as an acknowledgement that this government belongs to the people, not a select few.

Universal suffrage, as we practice it, inspires those in foreign lands who view this Commonwealth and this nation as a model of what is good and righteous to seek individual rights and personal liberties for themselves.

The right to vote should not be infringed.

Accordingly, voter disfranchisement must be fought head-on so that no person, no political party, no state, no instrument of the federal government, for any partisan political reason, denies citizens this most sacred of rights.

Therefore, it is my intention to introduce an amendment to the Pennsylvania Constitution that would prohibit any requirement that voters need to show photo ID to cast a vote.

For your information: Last year, the United States Supreme Court, in the case of [Crawford v. Marion County Election Board](#), upheld the constitutionality of Indiana's voter ID provision. It ruled that it was not unconstitutional to require a photo ID. The Court did not say that a state had to have such a requirement or that a state is barred from prohibiting such a requirement. The only exception is preemption by federal law; and since the federal law known as the Help America Vote Act, or HAVA, requires first time voters to produce identification, my constitutional amendment will reflect this requirement.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Jennifer Belz at jbelz@pahouse.net. If you have any questions, call 787-8529.