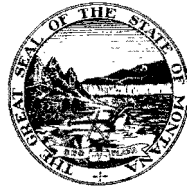


OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
STATE OF MONTANA

BRIAN SCHWEITZER
GOVERNOR



JOHN BOHLINGER
LT. GOVERNOR

May 5, 2011

The Honorable Linda McCulloch
Secretary of State
State Capitol
Helena MT 59620

Dear Secretary McCulloch:

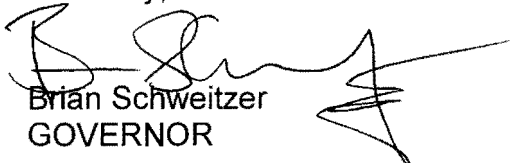
In accordance with the power vested in me as Governor by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Montana, I hereby veto House Bill No. 152, **"AN ACT REVISING PROOF OF RESIDENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTER REGISTRATION AND PROOF OF IDENTITY REQUIREMENTS FOR VOTING; AND AMENDING SECTIONS 13-2-110, 13-13-114, 13-13-201, AND 13-13-602, MCA."**

House Bill 152 would require Montana voters to produce a government-issued photo ID when they appear at a polling location to cast their vote. This requirement would create an unacceptable and unnecessary burden on many elderly voters, low-income voters, disabled voters and students. Many of these citizens do not have drivers' licenses and live on low or fixed incomes. If these citizens are required to obtain a photo ID, it will cost them each \$8, every four years. The elderly and the disabled, many of whom are seriously impaired in their mobility, would now be required to make a trip to the Department of Justice's Motor Vehicles Division to obtain a photo ID, or else become automatically ineligible to vote.

The state has for many decades recognized several forms of valid identification even though these items do not contain photographs. For example, the Registration Confirmation Card, mailed to every citizen who registers to vote, has long been recognized under the law as a valid form of identification. A significant number of voters—perhaps as many as several thousand per election—routinely come to the polls with no form of identification but these registration cards. If HB 152 were to become law, many of these same persons would be turned away for lack of a photo ID.

Finally, I would note that over the course of two extensive hearings, the proponents of HB 152 cited "voter fraud" as the impetus for this legislation, but could not produce a single example of any such fraud. Thus HB 152, like other election bills that I have vetoed this session, seeks to interfere with fundamental rights of Montana citizens by imposing new and unnecessary regulations. Categorically, such a bill must not be allowed to become law.

Sincerely,


Brian Schweitzer
GOVERNOR