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Franklin County Recorder

Press Release

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Veteran ID Cards Excluded from Restrictive New Voter ID Law

Veteran ID Cards distributed by County Recorders to former service members appear not to be valid voter identification under Ohio's sweeping new voting restrictions.

Columbus, OH – The latest update to Ohio election law, which requires government issued photo-identification cards to be used as voter identification on election day, appears to render the free veteran ID cards issued by County Recorders useless at the ballot box.

Despite reports stating [“The bill would require voters to present a state-issued photo ID, U.S. passport, passport card or military ID to cast their ballot in person.”](#)¹ the text of the bill, H.B. 458, limits eligible military identification documents to [“A United States military identification card, Ohio national guard identification card, or United States department of veterans affairs identification card.”](#)² Due to the language of the bill specifying that only the forms of photo identification listed within the legislation are eligible, the absence of the Ohio County Recorder’s veteran ID card appears to invalidate its usage as voter ID.

“The promoters of these new voting restrictions, Secretary of State LaRose, Governor DeWine, and Ohio Senator Gavarone, have failed to inform Ohioans that the County Recorder’s free state-issued veterans photo identification card is no longer valid for the next election cycle,” stated Franklin County Recorder Danny O’Connor. **“If we didn’t look into the fine print of the bill and attempt to notify Franklin County veterans on our own, they could have been turned away at the polls for using the same Recorder-issued veteran ID card they presented on Election Day last November.”**

Recorder O’Connor continued, “It’s bad enough that in the middle of the night, the Ohio legislature decided to target our right to vote. But specifically invalidating the free state-issued ID our office provides to retired service members is unacceptable, and I will not stay silent about it.”

The new law was pushed through the Ohio Legislature’s Lame Duck session in December 2022 and signed by Governor Mike DeWine on January 6, 2023. The legislation already faces legal challenges in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Ohio – one aspect of the legal suit targeting the changes to voter ID requirements.

Ohio County Recorders’ Offices have the ability to issue veteran identification cards when veterans record their DD-214 discharge forms with the office, as ascribed by the [Ohio Revised Code, Section 317.241.](#)³

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¹ <https://www.dispatch.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/12/13/ohio-senate-passes-election-bill-that-imposes-photo-id-requirement/69724780007/>

² Sub. H.B. 458, 134th Gen. Assemb., (Ohio 2022). <https://www.legislature.ohio.gov/legislation/134/hb458/documents>

³ <https://codes.ohio.gov/ohio-revised-code/section-317.241>