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Elections are the lifeblood of democracy, and the "One Man One Vote" principle supporting our elections is there to ensure that every vote counts. For these reasons, it is our duty here in the House to protect the integrity of our elections and the principles on which they are based. This week, we took a step toward this goal by passing HB 1104 as part of our Blueprint for Missouri.

Voter fraud is not a mythical issue. The U.S. Supreme Court, in its majority opinion upholding Indiana's Voter Id law, recognized that flagrant examples of voter fraud are real and could affect the outcome of a close election.

If we continue to let this problem go unchecked, our election principles will erode and legitimate voters will be disenfranchised. HB 1104 takes steps to protect the integrity of our elections by requiring voters to prove their identity. This ensures that each eligible person can vote without having their voice diluted by lawbreakers.

Critics of the bill argue that requiring voters to show a photo ID will suppress elderly, minority and poor citizens, keeping them from the polls. They say that these groups are less likely to have photo identification, and it is more difficult for them to obtain it.

In an effort to alleviate these concerns, HB 1104 allows all citizens without the proper photo identification to obtain one free of charge from the state or their local license bureau. However, if the voter cannot afford to pay for the documentation required to obtain an ID, they can still vote by casting a provisional ballot.

It is our goal in the House to make our politics work better by protecting the core of our democracy. We will continue working hard to ensure that all eligible citizens can vote without having their voice muted by fraud. It is the right thing to do.

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