



REPORT/RECOMMENDATION

To: MAYOR AND COUNCIL	Agenda Item <u>Item No. VIII. B.</u>
From: Lisa Schaefer Human Resources Director	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion <input type="checkbox"/> Information
Date: September 19, 2012	
Subject: Resolution No. 2012-113 Expressing Opposition To The Proposed Voter ID Amendment	

ACTION REQUESTED:

Adopt the attached proposed Resolution Expressing Opposition To The Proposed Voter ID Amendment.

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND:

On August 28, 2012 the Edina Human Rights and Relations Commission (EHRRRC) endorsed the attached statement of opposition to the Proposed Voter ID Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution. The EHRRRC endorsed the attached resolution, after evaluating the impacts of both sides of the proposed voter ID amendment to Edina and Minnesota Residents.

Minnesota voters will be asked to vote “yes” or “no” to the question, “Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to require all voters to present valid photo identification to vote and to require the state to provide free identification to eligible voters, effective July 1, 2013?”

A 2011 study, issued by The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, shows that as many as 11 percent of U.S. citizens eligible to vote do not possess a state-issued form of identification, and that percentage is higher among certain groups including the elderly (18%), younger adults and students (18%), minorities (25% of African-Americans) and people who are low-income (15%). The EHRRRC believes that constitutional amendments should not be used to stifle, prevent, or restrict voting in any way but instead to expand and guarantee voting rights, and to encourage voter engagement and participation.

ATTACHMENT:

Resolution # 2012-113

RESOLUTION NO. 2012-113
A RESOLUTION EXPRESSING OPPOSITION
TO THE PROPOSED VOTER ID AMENDMENT

WHEREAS, voting is both a constitutionally-protected right and a civic responsibility of all qualified electors, and the ability of electors to cast their votes in free and fair elections is the cornerstone of American democracy; and

WHEREAS, the 2012 Minnesota State Legislature voted to include the following question on the election ballot in November 2012: "Shall the Minnesota Constitution be amended to require all voters to present valid photo identification to vote and to require the state to provide free identification to eligible voters, effective July 1, 2013?"; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota enjoys one of the best election systems in the United States, and there has been no evidence—either proven or anecdotal—of voter impersonation, which is the only type of fraud that could be cured by the imposition of a state-issued identification program; and

WHEREAS, Minnesota enjoys one of the best election systems in the United States, and there has been no evidence—either proven or anecdotal—of voter impersonation, which is the only type of fraud that could be cured by the imposition of a state-issued identification program; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment will end Election Day Registration as we know it. Voters without qualified ID would have to cast a provisional ballot, counted only if the voter goes to the local elections office within a few days after the election and shows a qualifying ID. This requirement will negatively impact the right to vote for citizens at the polls without qualifying photo ID, voters registering at the polls on election day, and those voting by absentee ballot including military and overseas voters; and

WHEREAS, the Minnesota State Legislature has not defined what kinds of valid government-issued photographic identification will be required for citizens to have their vote counted; and

WHEREAS, a 2011 study issued by The Brennan Center for Justice at New York University School of Law, shows that as many as 11 percent of U.S. citizens eligible to vote do not possess a state-issued form of identification, and that percentage is higher among certain groups including the elderly (18%), younger adults and students (18%), minorities (25% of African-Americans) and people who are low-income (15%); and

WHEREAS, eligible voters, without any exception for those who are disabled, young, elderly, homeless or low-income, will pay for the "free" identification as they must pay for the documents, such as birth certificates, required to receive a state-issued ID, citizenship documents; and

WHEREAS, this proposed amendment will cost millions of taxpayer dollars to implement and operate, including the start-up and ongoing costs to local governments of the new provisional voting system, the cost of producing and issuing free voter ID card, voter education about the new voting system, and many other expenses, and these new costs will fall largely on local and county taxpayers, resulting in higher property taxes or the elimination of other services; and

WHEREAS, it is the position of the City Council that constitutional amendments should not be used to stifle, prevent, or restrict voting in any way but instead to expand and guarantee voting rights, and to encourage voter engagement and participation.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by The City Council of The City of Edina:
That the City of Edina joins with the coalition of organizations which oppose the proposed constitutional amendment entitled "mandating the use of a government-issued identification by all voters" and urges Edina Residents to vote "No" on the amendment on Tuesday, November 6, 2012.

ADOPTED this 19th day of September, 2012.

Attest: _____
Debra A. Mangen, City Clerk

James B. Hovland, Mayor

STATE OF MINNESOTA)
COUNTY OF HENNEPIN)SS
CITY OF EDINA)

CERTIFICATE OF CITY CLERK

I, the undersigned duly appointed and acting City Clerk for the City of Edina do hereby certify that the attached and foregoing Resolution was duly adopted by the Edina City Council at its Regular Meeting of September 19, 2012, and as recorded in the Minutes of said Regular Meeting.

WITNESS my hand and seal of said City this ____ day of _____, 20__.

City Clerk