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From: "CA Republican Party" <communications@cagop.org>

Reply-to: communications@cagop.org

To: rming@hismusicplace.com

Subject: Senator Cox's Common-Sense Measure Falls Short in Committee



Senator Cox's Common-Sense Measure Asking Voters to Show ID At the Polls Falls Short in Committee

April 6, 2005

SACRAMENTO – Senator Dave Cox (R-Fair Oaks) said today that he was disappointed that his common-sense proposal to ask voters to show one of six possible forms of identification when going to their local polling place to vote in an election did not get enough votes to pass out of the Senate Elections Committee.

“I will re-introduce this bill again next year, because it’s simply the right thing to do,” Senator Cox said. “People are required to show identification in order to board an airplane, drive on our roads, rent a movie or cash a check – it is not unreasonable to be expected to show proof of identity in order to vote in an election.”

“The only people who would be inconvenienced by this measure are those who are unregistered and ineligible to vote,” Senator Cox said. “Any voter who could not show proof of residency would have still been able to vote using a provisional ballot. Even if they did not have a driver’s license, my bill would have permitted using a military ID, a birth certificate, a utility bill, a phone bill, or a sample ballot with their name and current address on it. It just makes sense that you would want to have every assurance that your vote is accurate. Who wouldn’t want to protect against voter fraud?”

Currently, 18 states and countries throughout Europe, Central America and the Dominican Republic require voters to present identification in order to receive a ballot. Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina and South Dakota require voters to show photo ID. Due to requirements of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), most states now require first-time voters who register by mail to show identification at the polling place.

A Rasmussen Research poll found that 82% of Americans, including 75% of Democrats, believe that “people should be required to show a driver’s license or some other form of photo ID before they are

allowed to vote.”

Senator Cox’s proposal needed four votes to pass, but only two Senators supported it – Senator Jim Battin (R-Palm Desert), and Senator Chuck Poochigian (R-Fresno.) Senate Elections Committee Chair Debra Bowen (D-Torrance) and Senator Kevin Murray (D-Los Angeles) both voted “No,” and Senators Joe Dunn (D-Santa Ana), and Gloria Romero (D-Los Angeles) abstained from voting.

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