



February 20, 2025

Members of the US Senate

Re: Vote “No” on the *Safeguard American Voter Eligibility (SAVE) Act*

Dear Members of the US Senate:

On behalf of the League of Women Voters of the United States (the League), we urge you to oppose HR 22/ S 128, the SAVE Act, which would require citizenship documentation to register to vote despite the fact that voters in every state are already required to affirm or verify their citizenship status when registering.

The League is a 105-year-old nonpartisan nonprofit committed to ensuring that everyone is represented in our democracy. We are a grassroots organization comprised of over one million members and supporters in all 50 states and the District of Columbia across more than 700 local and state Leagues. The League focuses on advocacy, education, litigation, and organizing to achieve our mission to empower voters and defend democracy. We base our work on our policy positions developed out of multi-year studies and derived through consensus by League membership, to ensure our advocacy reflects best practices and a nationwide perspective.

The League and the *National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)*

The League was instrumental in the drafting and passage of the *National Voter Registration Act of 1993* (NVRA), which increased opportunities for registering to vote across the country. Since its enactment, the NVRA has enabled millions of Americans to register to vote and streamlined state laws to make the voter registration process more accessible. It is a landmark piece of legislation that has helped millions of eligible Americans register to vote when seeking a driver's license or public assistance from a designated agency.

The NVRA has previously survived attempts to weaken it and its opponents should not be able to do so now. Passage of the SAVE Act would severely weaken and threaten the ability of every eligible American to register or update their registration to vote. In addition to its advocacy work, the League has repeatedly turned to litigation to protect and enforce the provisions of the NVRA. Specifically, LWVUS and state Leagues across the country have been involved in litigation to protect voters from harmful, discriminatory laws requiring documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) to register to vote—a centerpiece of the SAVE Act.

It is already unlawful for non-citizens to register and vote in federal or state elections

Processes to ensure our elections are secure and that only eligible voters are casting ballots are already in place. State election officials have systems to verify an individual voter's eligibility and ensure voter rolls are accurate. The bill's requirement of a document to prove American citizenship to register to vote in



person in federal elections is unnecessary. Further, it creates one more barrier to the voting process, as many eligible voters do not have easy access to the necessary documents. Millions of eligible voters do not have documentation to prove their citizenship. In fact, 150 million American citizens do not have a passport, one of the acceptable forms of proof of citizenship. This is especially true in rural areas. In West Virginia, Mississippi, and Alabama, over 70% of citizens do not have a passport.

Similar Legislation has already been implemented by some states and has had a demonstrable, negative impact on voters' ability to participate in elections

In 2011, [Kansas passed a law](#) that required proof-of-citizenship to register to vote. When the law went into effect in 2013, more than 31,000 eligible voters were prevented from registering. This law was declared unconstitutional by federal courts and is no longer enforced. Included in the evidence against the Kansas law was the state's record that only 39 noncitizens had registered to vote in the over a decade prior to the case's hearing, 1999-2012. Additional actions to require documentary proof of citizenship in Arizona, Alabama, and Georgia were also struck down.

The SAVE Act could prevent millions of Americans from voting

There are many communities of eligible voters who would be unnecessarily burdened by the requirements of the SAVE Act. Among them are military voters who would be required to present documentation every time they re-register to vote when their family moves. Military service members would not be able to use their military ID alone to prove citizenship- they would still need additional documentation to show their birthplace or naturalization status. Families who have been impacted by natural disasters may have lost important documentation and would be required to jump through hoops to replace these documents to register to vote, while also going through the traumatic process of rebuilding their lives. Additionally, Americans who have changed their name, like married women, would also be required to secure updated documentation to register to vote. There are an estimated 69 million American women who lack paperwork that reflects their current name.

Voters do not need MORE obstacles in having their voices heard. Congress must act to ensure that every eligible US citizen has the freedom to vote unimpeded by discriminatory rules rooted in fear and division. On behalf of the League, I urge you to vote "No," on the SAVE Act. For questions, please feel free to reach out to our staff via Jessica Jones Capparell, Director of Government Affairs at jjones@lwv.org or Kristen Kern, Federal Policy and Advocacy Manager for the League of Women Voters of the US, at kkern@lwv.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read "Celina Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Celina Stewart, CEO
League of Women Voters of the United States