

## **Jodine Mayberry Column Continued**

It is provably untrue that the former administration allowed immigrants to flood the U.S. so they could register and vote for Democrats. It takes 10 years to become a citizen and obtain the right to vote.

Elections are run by each state and no state – not even the bluest – permits noncitizens to vote in statewide or federal elections.

It IS true that some states and cities – most notably Vermont, Maryland, San Francisco and the District of Columbia-- allow non-U.S. citizens to vote in municipal or school board elections. This is the kernel of truth on which conspiracy theorists have built this particular big lie.

The SAVE Act may discourage millions of Americans – Democrats, Republicans and Independents alike – from voting, all to solve a problem that does not exist.

Presidential elections are now decided by 1 or 2% margins so discouraging a few million legitimate voters would be decisive. Millions of registered voters did not vote in the 2024 election when no impediments were put in their way.

The bill requires people registering to vote or changing their registration due to a change of address or name to produce documentary evidence of U.S. citizenship.

It specifies the only acceptable, stand-alone documents that prove U.S. citizenship, are passports or REAL IDs, that state place of birth.

But here's the kicker – while passports do state place of birth, only five states issue REAL IDs that do so. Pennsylvania is not one of those five.

If you cannot produce identification that states your place of birth, you must provide another valid, government-issued form of identification AND a birth certificate proving you were born on U.S. soil.

The birth certificate must match your current legal name. Thus, an estimated 69 million women who have married and taken their husband's names must also produce marriage licenses showing both their maiden and married names. Most can do that, but some can't.

A friend of mine married twice but kept her first husband's name because she is an academic who published under that name. The first husband died many years ago and she will be hard pressed to produce that marriage certificate. She has the resources to do it and she values voting, so she will do it if she has to. How many others will not?

The League of Women Voters strongly opposes this bill because as one League member said, “We didn’t work 80 years to secure the right to vote to have it taken away from us more than 100 years later.”

Millions of Americans do not have or cannot readily produce a birth certificate, including people born on farms prior to 1950, Native Americans, and people born in Puerto Rico or the American territories.

Poor Americans may not have the time or money to obtain a birth certificate or know how to do it, and passports are very expensive, upwards of \$135. This is an unconstitutional poll tax.

Third-party registration drives like the ones the League routinely conducts, Motor-Voter, online registration and registration by mail would be prohibited. People would have to take a day off from work, travel to their election bureaus and present their documents in person.

That may be very difficult for elderly, disabled and rural Americans. Have you seen what it takes to get to the Delaware County Election Bureau in the Government Building? No convenient nearby parking, several steps, a half-block walk. I’ve seen people on walkers do it because they were determined to vote.

Whether currently registered voters will be affected by this bill depends on how each state implements it or is required to implement it.

Here in Pennsylvania, it is likely, but not certain, that most current registered voters will not have to comply with the SAVE Act unless they are changing their name or address.

Most PA voters have already verified their citizenship when they obtained a driver’s license but some citizens do not have driver’s licenses.

Please email or phone your U.S. senators, John Fetterman and Dave McCormick, and ask them, no, beg them, to vote against this bill. The Senate Switchboard number is (202) 224-3121.

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