

The Voter Integrity and Transparency Act of 2024

Purpose:

This legislation aims to address and amend specific provisions of SB 202 that have raised concerns regarding the democratic process in Georgia. This act seeks to ensure a balanced, transparent, and just electoral system, emphasizing the preservation of the fundamental rights of every voter while maintaining the integrity of the democratic process.

Definitions:

- **Bipartisan Commission:** A committee comprising members from the two major political parties appointed to review, analyze, and provide recommendations for legislation or specific issues.
- **Reason to Believe Standard:** A standard requiring sufficient evidence before initiating a process or taking action against an individual or group.
- **Voter Eligibility Challenge:** A formal process by which a voter's eligibility can be questioned based on specific grounds.

Scope:

1. **Review and Revise SB 202:** Address the troubling aspects of SB 202 that may potentially undermine the democratic process.
2. **Transparent Voter Challenge Process:** Establish a process to ensure that challenges to voter eligibility are transparent, just, and based on evidence.

Provisions:

1. **Establishment of a Bipartisan Commission:**
 - A bipartisan commission shall be established within 60 days of the enactment of this act.
 - The commission's main objective will be to review SB 202 comprehensively and recommend necessary revisions to address the concerns highlighted.
2. **Threshold for Challenges:**
 - Limit the number of voter eligibility challenges a single individual or entity can initiate.
 - Define clear guidelines to ensure that small groups or individuals can only disproportionately challenge many voter eligibilities with substantial grounds.
3. **Transparent Voter Challenge Process:**
 - Before challenging a voter's eligibility, there must be a "reason to believe" based on substantial evidence that a voter may not be eligible.
 - Voters challenged based on their eligibility must receive a notification within seven days of initiating the challenge. This notification will provide details about the challenge and will give them a minimum of 30 days to present evidence of their eligibility.

Enforcement:

- The State's electoral commission shall be responsible for enforcing and overseeing these provisions.
- Penalties, including fines or other legal consequences, may be levied against individuals or entities violating this act's provisions.

Amendments to Existing Laws:

This act shall make necessary amendments to SB 202 where there is a conflict in provisions or where this act provides additional measures or guidelines.

Justification:

To understand the imperatives of this bill, one can refer to a range of sources:

Books:

- *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* by Michelle Alexander
- *One Person, No Vote: How Voter Suppression Is Destroying Our Democracy* by Carol Anderson

Articles:

- Selected articles from The Atlantic discuss voter suppression, particularly its impact on minority communities.
- Various publications from The Brennan Center for Justice delve into voter suppression and disenfranchisement.

Academic Journals:

- Bentele, Keith G., and Erin E. O'Brien. "Jim Crow 2.0? Why States Consider and Adopt Restrictive Voter Access Policies." *Perspectives on Politics* 11.4 (2013): 1088-1116.
- Ansolabehere, Stephen, and Nathaniel Persily. "Vote Fraud in the Eye of the Beholder: The Role of Public Opinion in the Challenge to Voter Identification Requirements." *Harvard Law Review* (2008): 1737-1774.

Websites and Reports:

- Resources provided by The Sentencing Project.
- The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights report titled "An Assessment of Minority Voting Rights Access in the United States."

Historical Context:

- *Give Us the Ballot: The Modern Struggle for Voting Rights in America* by Ari Berman