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HB 152
SEN

TO: Members of the Senate State Administration Committee
FROM: Joy Bruck, State President AARP Montana
RE: Opposition to HB 152

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the record, I am Joy Bruck, State President of AARP Montana, a non-partisan organization with approximately 155,000 members in Montana. We believe we must have a voter registration system which encourages people to vote, not discourages them as we think HB 152 will do.

The Department of Transportation estimates that between 6-12% of voters, nationally, do not have government issued photo IDs. This means a significant number of people would be required to get a Montana ID under 61-12-Part 5 or a tribal ID. Obtaining a Montana ID takes time and costs \$8 every four years. This could be a burden for seniors on low fixed incomes, who do not drive and have no easy access to transportation.

Under the current law, we can register using any photo ID, a utility bill, paycheck, government check or other government document showing our name and address in Montana. This gives voters more opportunity to register, but still requires adequate proof of identification. HB 152 will make it much more difficult to register, especially for seniors who are very faithful voters.

Our current system of voter identification is working well. Fraud is not a problem in Montana, and if we are aware of fraud, it is our responsibility to report it, not put unnecessary restrictions on registering in case it might happen. Again, we need to encourage, not discourage voters, so we urge you to table HB 152.