



JAPANESE AMERICAN CITIZENS LEAGUE / JACL

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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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JACL opposes Texas voter legislation

The Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) announced its opposition to a bill in the Texas legislature, S.B. 362, that would impose strict identification requirements for voting. In addition to a voter registration certificate, voters would also need identification such as a driver's license.

Those supporting the legislation suggest that the use of a photo identification would eliminate fraud at the polls; however, according to Richard L. Hasen, an expert in election law at the Loyola Law School, the Justice Department has not found a single case of a conspiracy to affect the outcome of a Congressional election or a statewide election but, rather, "isolated, small-scale activities that often have not shown any kind of criminal intent."

According to Ronald Katsuyama, JACL vice president for public affairs, "Current Texas election code already contains safeguards against voter fraud. Application for a voter registration certificate must be submitted 30 days prior to an election, and the certificate must be presented at the polls."

Floyd Mori, JACL National Director, says, "Texas S.B. 362 would disproportionately affect (1) Asian Americans, if their names are misspelled on precinct lists of registered voters, or (2) the poor, elderly, recent immigrants, or those with disabilities, who are less likely to have driver's licenses."

In citing the history of disenfranchisement of minority communities, including documented cases of voter intimidation and racial profiling that suppress voting, JACL President, Larry Oda says, "As a civil rights organization, the JACL has long supported measures that would enhance voter participation rather than those that would impose barriers to participation."

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