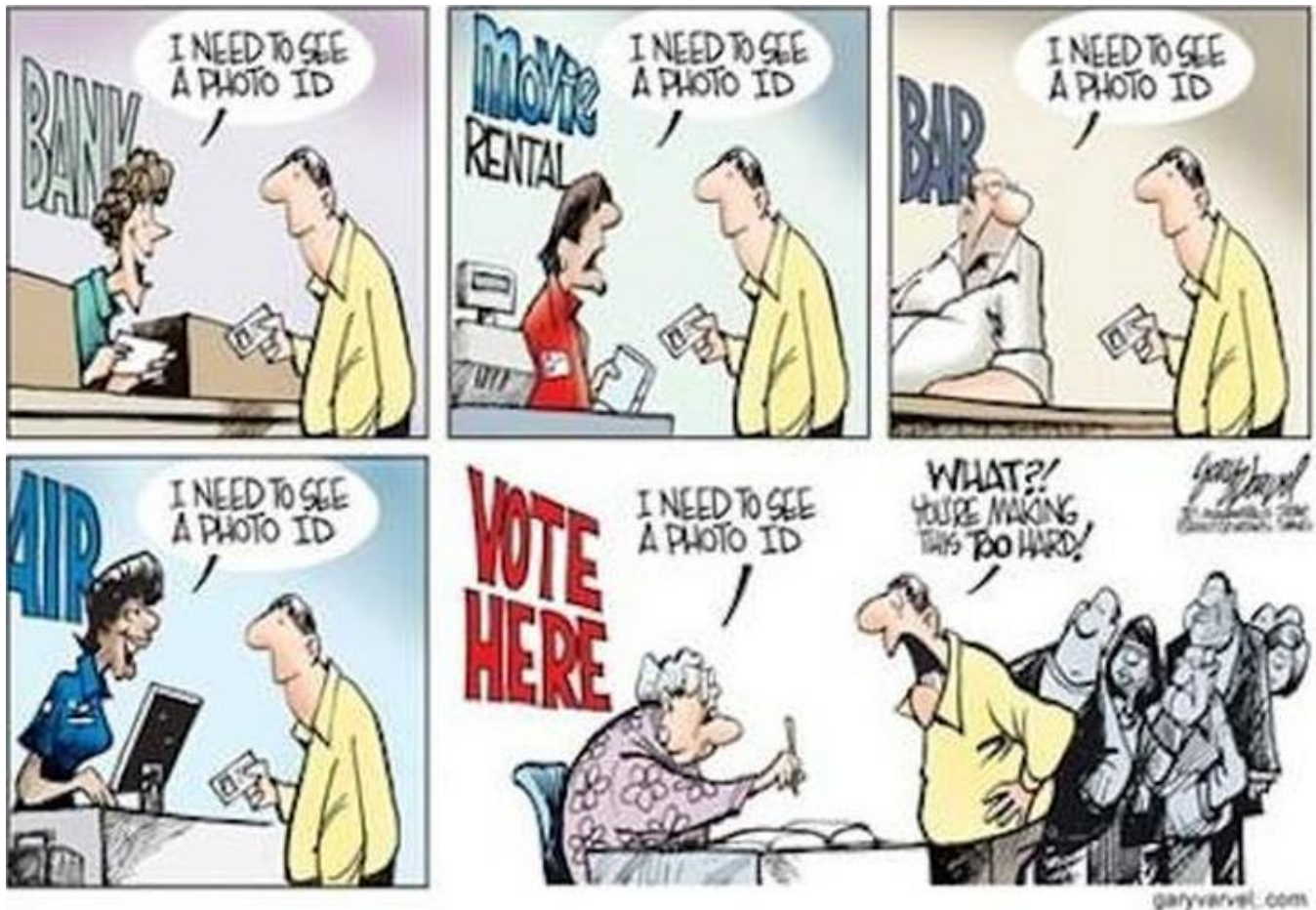


If you don't regularly receive my reports, request a free subscription at steve_bakke@comcast.net!
Visit my website at <http://www.myslantonthings.com> !

The “For the People” Act: Does it provide election integrity?

By Steve Bakke  April 20, 2021



As I discussed previously in “The battle for election integrity,” the 2020 “COVID election” was conducted using “adjusted” rules and processes based on public health concerns. Election controls were relaxed, sometimes officially and sometimes not, for voting and the counting of ballots.

My analysis emphasized two elements of controls that transcend the passage of time and technology changes – “voter identification” and ballot control. Weaknesses and loopholes in election security are an invitation for future election mischief. Eventually bad things will happen.

Now we have HR1, the “For the People’s Act,” recently passed by the House and awaiting Senate action. According to democrats, anything that doesn’t make voting easier is voter suppression, and HR1 seeks to codify into law many controversial shortcuts followed in 2020. This federalizes elections by seizing from states the responsibility for setting election rules. Some consider this to be unconstitutional.

As we evaluate HR1 in the context of election integrity, we must remember several realities:

- This is 2021, not 1921, and with technological developments, some old-fashioned voting techniques no longer apply. We must accommodate those changes.
- Democrats should accept the fact that controls are necessary.
- Republicans must stop the fruitless jousting at the windmills of “stolen elections.”
- Our goal should be confidence in election integrity by ensuring a fair and accurate voting process.

Let me explain one additional item that I’m adding to this list. Democrats insist that “COVID election” rules should become “law of the land” because they believe voter fraud wasn’t present. On the contrary, if material fraud hasn’t happened, that’s precisely the time when fair, reasonable, and effective controls should be installed. Controls should always be established before mischief or fraud occur.

HR1 stretches over 800 pages and my attempt to understand it came to a halt after stumbling through limitless cross referencing and punctuation instructions. Thankfully, there’s general agreement about what the legislation says, even if its implications will be bitterly debated.

My goal here is to point out what I consider the most important danger-signals in HR1. I’ll remain true to my priorities that any process should provide assurance of voter eligibility and control of ballots and the counting process. These priorities transcend the passage of time and technology changes, whether voting in person, by mail, or on the internet.

Consider the fact that HR1 establishes automatic voter registration using state databases. That would include auto registration records, welfare benefits, Social Security, Department of Labor, Medicare, The bureau of prisons, and so on. This guarantees the registration of many ineligible voters such as underage residents, undocumented immigrants, and incarcerated individuals.

I want to point out something very bewildering. As mentioned, HR1 would allow underage residents, 16- and 17-year-olds, to be registered to vote. This could happen in several ways, including the automatic registration process. Without any way to check voters’ identification, there would be no way to prevent ineligible underage voters from affecting election results.

Unfortunately, we will be automatically registering many ineligible voters, while at the same time preventing election officials from checking eligibility or identity. Requiring IDs or signature verification will be essentially eliminated. The veracity of registration lists is thereby degraded, and officials would be prevented from efficiently correcting the problems. Public databases would be used for automatic registration, but severely restricted as a tool for correcting those lists.

There are other procedures that give rise to concerns if controls and checks are not implemented, such as: online voter registration without even signature verification; permitting voters to vote outside their precinct invites (probably successful) attempts to vote multiple times; and, permitting mail-in ballots without providing identification makes verification of ballot validity virtually impossible.

Weaknesses and loopholes in election security are an invitation for fraud, and HR1 is a melting pot of opportunities for manipulation. Human nature is such that combining opportunity with a righteous desire to win, makes mischief inevitable.

Our goal must be to have an election system that provides convenience for all eligible voters. There's no reason we can't, at the same time, establish controls that assure voters they are participating in fair elections.

Watch for more from me on the topic of election integrity.