



MA4FairElections.org

7/24/2025

News Release for Immediate Distribution:

BOSTON – A Massachusetts voter integrity citizens group that tried to get a ballot question mandating voter ID on the 2024 ballot has just appealed a ruling on its 2024 lawsuit against the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The citizens group charged that the ruling does not support the objective and purpose of federal National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) to allow the public to inspect and audit voter rolls.

US District Court Judge Nathaniel M. Gorton ruled on July 2 that the NVRA does not require the Secretary of the Commonwealth William F. Galvin himself to produce the consolidated, statewide voter rolls, and that the Secretary can delegate the piecemeal delivery of voter rolls to individual cities and towns.

“The Committee for Massachusetts Voter Identification Ballot Question strongly believes that the intent of NVRA is for the centralized distribution of the voter rolls, not a fragmented distribution,” said Co-director Jeff Cohen. “Also, the Committee believes that under the NVRA the Secretary of the Commonwealth cannot delegate the responsibility of providing voter rolls to the 351 individual municipalities in the Commonwealth. Offloading this critical responsibility prevents a comprehensive citizen audit of the voter rolls that is contrary to NVRA.”

The citizens group sued Secretary Galvin in 2024 and cited sections of the NVRA that require state governments to make voter registration data available for public inspection. The grassroots political committee had sought to analyze the voter rolls to determine whether the Commonwealth had fulfilled its responsibility to maintain the lists as accurate and reliable. Requiring the citizens group to independently ask each of the 351 communities in Massachusetts for their separate voter rolls, and then forcing the citizens group to combine those separate rolls into a statewide list, makes the analysis virtually impossible.

The lawsuit says that the NVRA's Public Disclosure Provision "convey[s] Congress's intention that the public should be monitoring the state of the voter rolls and the adequacy of election officials' list maintenance programs. ... Accordingly, election officials must provide full public access to all records related to their list maintenance activities, including their voter rolls."

In a similar lawsuit filed in Maine in 2022, the US Court of Appeals for the First Circuit in Boston confirmed in February 2024 that Maine's voter list and maintenance activities are subject to disclosure.

The Committee for Massachusetts Voter Identification Ballot Question asserts that it should be able to inspect voter rolls to identify errors and violations of law that expose elections to the risk of voter fraud. Violations might include having duplicate registrations for voters, deceased voters who are still registered, or voters living at addresses that do not exist.

The lawsuit is *The Committee for Massachusetts Voter Identification Ballot Question v. the Hon. William Francis Galvin, in his official capacity as Secretary of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts*, Case No. 1:24-cv-12029-NMG, filed in U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts.

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