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CHICAGOLAND

Voter ID laws

Unfortunately, your Jan. 23 editorial "The truth about voter ID laws" fails to tell the whole truth. Indiana only decided to provide free IDs after a dozen nuns and many students were turned away from the polls in 2008, but many other states with voter ID laws still make citizens pay for an ID and they often must travel long distances to get one.

The editorial selectively omitted hundreds, perhaps thousands, of other voters who have been disenfranchised by these voter suppression efforts; the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law profiles no fewer than 50 voters from Indiana, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Wisconsin who were denied the American right to participatory democracy because they didn't have an ID.

This isn't an impediment, like you suggest. It is an outrage. Isn't even one "legitimate" voter "impeded" one too many?

When it comes to voting — such a core American right — there should be no victims. The likelihood of whether a person may vote is irrelevant. Every adult citizen should have the unobstructed opportunity to cast their ballot if they so desire. Further, cherry-picking turnout statistics tells a slanted story, especially when quoting Robert Popper, a Bush-era Justice Department appointee who made his reputation trying to dismember voting districts drawn to comply with the Voting Rights Act.

The true test of voter ID laws is this: When passed, do they immediately make thousands of current voters ineligible to vote? The answer is unequivocally yes.

— David Orr, Cook County Clerk, Chicago



TIM BRINTON