

Here's what people have said in response to these new laws and voter ID requirements



“The Morrison-Joyce Government’s proposed requirement for voters to provide identification is a cynical and racist attack on the fundamental rights of First Nations peoples”

Senator Pat Dodson, Yawuru man
29 October 2021



“This is a calculated and deliberate plan by the Government to weaken our democracy and make it harder for First Nations people to vote.

These are racist laws – and Labor opposes them.

Many First Nations people do not have a birth certificate or easy access to approved identification.”

Linda Burney MP, Wiradjuri woman
28 October 2021



“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attempting to vote may feel intimidated by the requirements to fill in extra paperwork and being treated differently to other voters...

...may also have the effect of making people without identification feel further marginalised and may make them reluctant to complete the process.”

Mick Gooda
Former Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Social Justice Commissioner
Gangulu man
2014 – in response to the introduction of similar provisions in Qld



...voter identification requirements would “create a barrier for people who lack identification documents from exercising their right to vote, leading to further disenfranchisement”.

Australian Human Rights Commission
September 2021

What do these laws do?

These laws mean that people will need to prove their identity before being able to vote, rather than what occurs now, which is simply having their name crossed off at the polling booth. Those who can't prove their identity risk having their vote discarded.

Why is the Morrison Government introducing changes to our voting system?

There is zero evidence that this measure is required – with the independent Australian Electoral Commission dismissing the suggestion and stating any vote discrepancies are 'vanishingly small.'

The Morrison Government cannot even properly explain why these changes are required. They have suggested that they're concerned about people voting more than once, but after the 2019 federal election in which more than 15 million votes were cast, not one person was prosecuted for doing so.

To put it simply – there is no need for these laws. Our Australian system is one of the best in the world, and worth protecting.

Why is this bad for First Nations communities?

No one should be prevented from exercising their right to because they don't have ID.

Scott Morrison knows full well that First Nations people have always struggled to obtain identification documents as basic as a birth certificate, because of an absence of records or because of difficulties in accessing and navigating official services – difficulties that are often exacerbated because of remoteness and language and communication disadvantages.

What happens if people don't have ID, will they be fined?

Failure to vote in an election can attract a fine. There is genuine concern that people will be turned away from voting on election day because they don't have the right identification documents. People may also be discouraged from voting if they're required to make a declaration vote or face long queues and wait times at polling booths.

What happens if a person's address on their ID doesn't match up with electoral roll?

If a person's identity cannot be confirmed or there are discrepancies such as different addresses, there should be an option for them to complete a declaration vote, which requires additional paperwork and verification. This will ultimately mean increased wait times and long queues with people simply giving up not bothering to vote, resulting in the disenfranchisement of thousands of Australians.

What happens next?

The new laws will be debated during the next sitting of Parliament which commences on Monday 22 November 2021. We have until then to convince the Senate crossbench to oppose these laws and vote against them in Parliament.

Ways you can help

- **Publicly oppose the law:** Let people know that your organisation opposes the law. This could include issuing a press-release or statement or posting on social media. You can also sign and share this [petition against the bill](#).
- **Write to Crossbench Senators:** You can email cross-bench Senators Jacqui Lambie (Senator.Lambie@aph.gov.au), Rex Patrick (Senator.Patrick@aph.gov.au) and Stirling Griff (Senator.Griff@aph.gov.au) to tell them why these new laws are unfair and ask them to vote against them in Parliament.