

Andrea Gyger

From: Steve Fenberg <steve@neweracolorado.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 20, 2016 2:07 PM
To: SoS Rulemaking
Subject: Comments on Rule 7.2.6
Attachments: Comments on Rule 7.2.6 from New Era Colorado.pdf

Hello,

Attached are comments from New Era Colorado Foundation regarding proposed rule 7.2.6. We oppose this rule and encourage you to withdraw it.

Thank you again for allowing New Era Colorado Foundation the opportunity to comment on this rulemaking. If you have any questions regarding our comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Thank you,
Steve

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Steve Fenberg
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January 18, 2016

The Honorable Wayne Williams
Secretary of State
Department of State
1700 Broadway
Denver, CO 80290

Re: Proposed Rulemaking Relating to Ballot envelopes, rule 7.2.6

Dear Secretary Williams,

New Era Colorado Foundation is a multi-issue organization committed to engaging, educating, and training a new generation of active citizens and young leaders in Colorado. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed rule changes.

In particular, our organization opposes proposed Rule 7.2.6 regarding the changes to the ballot envelope that would require voters to take an extra step to turn in their ballots by affirming who they are giving their ballot to for delivery.

In practice, this rule adds complications to the voting process that will confuse voters, therefore leading to some voters not participating in our democracy for fear of breaking a rule that is ripe for creating confusion and misunderstanding. Colorado already has key protections in our system that promote a free, fair, and accessible democracy. This rule is unnecessary, which makes the complications it introduces more troublesome.

Voters give their ballots to friends and family members to turn in, or to a classmate. A young voter might fill out the fields that this rule requires believing that her roommate will turn in her ballot for her, only to find that it's a friend from her English class that's already headed to the Voter Service Center. Or she might hand it to a friend while running out the door to a midterm election. Regardless of her situation, or how far she's planned ahead to turn in her ballot, she has the right to cast her ballot and should not question that right because of extra legal language placed on her ballot envelope that is unrelated to her eligibility or her selections of candidates and ballot measures.

In working with young voters, we find that it is not apathy, but access that keeps them from participating. Adding to voters' questions about access without cause makes our democracy no more free, fair, nor accessible. To put it another way: adding additional hurdles for voters dissuades participation, and for that reason we urge you to withdraw this rule.

Thank you again for allowing New Era Colorado Foundation the opportunity to comment on this rulemaking. If you have any questions regarding our comments please don't hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Steve Fenberg
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