



AMERICAN CIVIL LIBERTIES UNION OF UTAH

(801) 521-9862 • WWW.ACLUUTAH.ORG • ACLU@ACLUUTAH.ORG

Thursday, March 5, 2026

Dear Governor Spencer Cox:

The **American Civil Liberties Union of Utah (ACLU of Utah)** urges you to veto House Bill 209, Voting Amendments. HB209 requires voters to provide proof of citizenship to vote, potentially disenfranchising thousands of eligible voters in Utah who lack easy access to required documents, such as a U.S. passport or a birth certificate. This bill will have a heightened impact on eligible senior, youth, female, low-income, and rural voters across Utah.

HB209 places the burden on eligible voters to procure documents that take both time and money to obtain. Notably, the bill will make it harder to vote for married women and other Utahns who have changed their names because they would need additional documents sufficient to prove their name change, like a marriage certificate, adding extra time and cost to simply register to vote. According to the [Center for American Progress](#), as of 2024, nearly 700,000 Utah women have a birth certificate that no longer matches their current name, the vast majority of whom changed their name after marriage. It would have a similar effect on lower-income voters, young people, seniors, and anyone else who does not travel internationally or who does not have the time or means to obtain a passport or copies of their birth certificate. Indeed, over 1 million people—40% of Utahns—did not have a valid passport as of 2024.

HB209 is a sweeping, significant change to our voting laws that could prevent tens of thousands of Utahns from exercising their fundamental right to vote. When Kansas enacted a similar law, 31,000 eligible voters were prevented from voting, and the law was ultimately found to be an [unconstitutional burden on voting rights](#). Supporters of HB209 say that the bill will prevent non-citizens from voting, which is virtually non-existent and already illegal. Moreover, Utah's county clerks have effective procedures in place to guard against illegal voting. In fact, a recent [review](#) of all 2.1 million people on the state's voter rolls by the Lieutenant Governor's office did not find a single instance of a non-citizen voting. In addition to the barriers to voting, HB209 will also impose a burden on administrative clerks in our county clerks' offices that is redundant to the processes they already have in place.

Governor Cox, vetoing HB209 would send a clear message: Utah supports voters. This bill makes it harder to participate in elections and undermines participatory democracy. Vetoing this unnecessary bill would help ensure that every eligible vote is counted and eliminate unnecessary barriers that would disproportionately affect certain voters.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brittney Nystrom", written over a horizontal line.

Brittney Nystrom
Executive Director, ACLU of Utah

CC:
Lt. Governor Deidre Henderson
Jon Pierpont
Neil Abercrombie