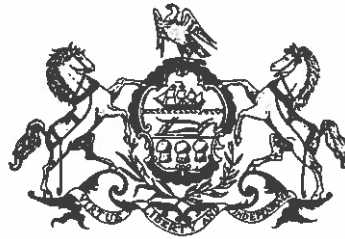


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**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** All House Members  
**From:** Representative John Hornaman  
**Date:** April 11, 2011  
**Re:** Eliminate Straight Party Ticket Voting

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In the near future, I plan to introduce legislation that will eliminate the straight party ticket voting option from voting machines.

Voter education is a topic that is often highlighted during election time, but tends to fade shortly thereafter. Basic political science argues that the average voter does not take the time to research the qualifications of each eligible candidate. Rather, qualified electors tend to rely on heuristics when casting their ballots. In addition, the "straight party ticket" voting option offers the electorate very little incentive to educate themselves and determine which candidates are the most qualified. My legislation amends the Act of June 3, 1937 (P.L. 1333, No. 320), also known as the **Election Code**, to eliminate the straight party ticket voting option from all voting machines.

While I understand the importance of voter choice, my underlying goal is to encourage voter education and to emphasize the significance of the decisions that voters make on Election Day. I contend that the straight party voting option discourages voters from learning more about candidates. Currently, only 16 states, including Pennsylvania, offer the straight-ticket voting option. In 2010, three states- Oklahoma, Rhode Island, and West Virginia- introduced legislation to eliminate straight party ticket voting. Over the past 15 years, five states, the most recent being New Hampshire in 2007, have abolished this practice.

Please join me in encouraging voter education and eliminating a practice that acts as an obstruction to true voter choice. If you are interested in co-sponsoring this legislation, please contact Carla Walker in my office via email at [cwalker@pahouse.net](mailto:cwalker@pahouse.net) or at 717-772-2297.