

## Woman, 97, Battles Voter ID Law

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**SURPRISE, Ariz.** -- A 97-year-old Surprise woman who has voted in the past 19 presidential elections said she finds herself a casualty in the voter ID battle.

Shirley Preiss cannot register in Arizona for the November elections without proof of citizenship.

"I'm a legal American," Preiss said. "I'm born here. Born and raised in America."

The Arizona law was approved by voters in 2004 as Proposition 200 on that year's general election ballot. It requires voters to produce specified types of identification when casting ballots at polling places and to provide proof of citizenship when registering to vote either for the first time or in a different county.

Preiss was born in 1910 in Clinton, Ky., before birth certificates were issued. She said she no longer has a driver's license and never had a passport.

"You can see my mother's not a national threat," said her son Nathan Nemnich. "Been voting since 1932." Nemnich produced the files documenting his attempts to get her registered.

"A delayed birth certificate," he said. "You have to have witnesses. Everybody's dead."

When the family tried to get school records from Tennessee, they found out the school no longer exists.

"We're talking about something that is so precious, that right to vote," said Linda Brown of the Arizona Advocacy Network. "How many hurdles are OK to jump through? How many barriers are we going to accept?"

State Rep. Russell Pearce spearheaded the law and said it protects the integrity of the voting system.

"To get a movie, you have to prove who you are," Pearce said. "To go rent a car, you have to prove who you are. That's part of life."

Preiss said for someone who once lived in a time when women could not vote, the law is a step backwards. The former school teacher said she has voted in every presidential election since 1932.

Nemnich said his next step is to call the governor's office for help.

Experts said it's hard to say how many other people are in the same situation as Preiss.

But the Arizona Advocacy Network said almost 40,000 voter registration forms have been rejected since the state's voter ID law went into effect.

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