

# Editorial: Ballots should promote voting

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Anderson, Indiana



In last week's Indiana primary, a Lapel voter was understandably annoyed that she was given a card that designated her choice of a political party.

She was to carry the card from the registration desk over to a poll worker who guided her to the appropriate voting machine.

Local voters had the choice of a pink or green card. Some other counties have similar practices with varying colors.

But by her carrying the card for a brief distance, it announced her party choice to any of her neighbors or other voters who were at her polling site. Her vote was far from a private act of exercising her democratic freedom.

The woman called the Indiana Election Board, which also seemed a bit confused on the issue when contacted by The Herald Bulletin. In essence, party identification cards must be the same color.

Color ballots harken back to a time in Indiana when political parties had more sway over voters.

Even in past general elections, Hoosiers would choose their party, be handed a colored ballot and vote solely for candidates in that party. Now in the general election, voters receive one ballot and can switch between candidates of different parties.

That may be why some county clerks aren't sure whether to color code their ballots.

To many of us it seems simple. Don't force a voter to announce his or her choice of political parties.

An Indiana voter should be able to go the polls, register and check off the party that he or she prefers and be handed a plain, colorless ballot.

Or in Madison County, register and be handed one plain card that signifies the party; the card should not have a color so voting remains as confidential as possible.

Hand the card to a poll worker and be guided to a booth where you can vote.

Even better: have a voting booth where you don't need a party card. Just go and vote.

The process is open to change.

But one practice should remain constant: Protect every Hoosier voter's right to privacy when casting a ballot.