



Written by [Veronika Kyrylenko](#) on August 4, 2021

Sen. Cramer: Make States Mandating Vaccine Passports Mandate Voter ID

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Senator Kevin Cramer (R-S.D.) has introduced legislation to require states that are mandating COVID-19 vaccine passports to also enact voter identification laws.

Senator Cramer issued a following [statement](#) on Tuesday:



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If states that take federal money for elections feel the need to make residents verify a piece of information as private as their vaccination status just to return to normalcy, then they should have no problem requiring people to prove they are who they say they are when they go to vote. My legislation would ensure those states are being consistent about their identification requirements and shine a light on those who hypocritically oppose Voter ID laws but support vaccine passports.

The senator added that he plans to introduce the legislation as both a standalone bill and as an amendment to the Democrats' \$3.5 trillion [spending plan](#).

Cramer's proposed legislation comes as New York City [announced](#) it was mandating proof of vaccination to enter certain indoor dining, fitness, and entertainment establishments.

Even though no states have made proof of vaccines mandatory, New York, California, and Hawaii have all created optional vaccine digital passports for residents. As the "purely voluntary phase" of vaccinations has reached its limits, as New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio [put it](#), the states switched their approach from cajoling to coercing, and started introducing various COVID-19 vaccination mandates, arguably in a bid to stop the spread of the "highly contagious" Delta Variant. There is also [Oregon](#), which is requiring retail stores, restaurants, grocery stores, and other establishments to review vaccination status cards of those consumers who refuse to wear facemasks.

Some observers pointed out that the same people that readily embrace the COVID IDs are adamantly



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opposed to voter IDs. The latter are considered “racist” and “discriminatory” against ethnic minorities, since, the argument goes, they are “disadvantaged” and have difficulty obtaining voter IDs. Yet, the statistic shows that many of the black residents in New York City have not rushed to get their COVID-19 shots, and thus will soon be unable to enjoy certain services. Independent journalist Michael Tracey pointed out that only 42 percent of black residents in New York City have received at least one dose of the jab — a threshold set by de Blasio to enter certain venues. “Looking at these figures, it seems impossible to dispute that NYC’s upcoming ‘vaccine mandate’ policy will have a racially disparate impact. Is that still the primary standard by which a policy must be judged, or not?” Tracey [tweeted](#). Yet, he added, the city’s liberals were cheering the policy, despite it violating the only standard they normally seem to care about.

Similarly, in California, about [44 percent](#) of the black population has been partially vaccinated. [Neither](#) state has voter ID requirements.

As some states work on COVID-19 vaccine electronic verification systems, there are [20 states](#), including Cramer’s North Dakota, that have already decided not to introduce a statewide vaccine-proof requirement.

When [asked](#) about the comparatively low proportion of black New Yorkers being vaccinated — as compared to the national level recorded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki responded that the objective of the Biden administration was to “close that equity gap” by working closely with local governments to make vaccines available and accessible for all. Psaki added that given the Delta Variant of COVID-19 is “spreading like wildfire” across the country, cities and local communities “should be able to take steps to incentivize more people getting vaccinated,” implicitly endorsing de Blasio’s mandate.

But since the vaccines, according to de Blasio, have long been available to be delivered directly to any New Yorker’s door, it’s unclear what Psaki meant by stating the vaccines should be more accessible.

Joe Biden has repeatedly decried voter-integrity laws such as those passed in Georgia, [calling](#) them “Jim Crow on steroids,” implying modern-day Republicans are actually worse than segregationists. The Department of Justice has even been ordered [to sue](#) the state of Georgia over its voter-ID law on the grounds that it was “racially motivated.”

At the same time, the administration sees no problem with requiring people to share their personal medical information to attend certain public venues, and, accordingly, sees no problem that access would be denied to those who refuse to do that. In addition to that, while the White House has repeatedly denied it would be supporting a system that requires Americans to carry any form of COVID-19 vaccination credential, it was [reported](#) back in May that the Biden administration has actually partnered with private companies to develop a standard way of handling credentials that would “allow Americans to prove they have been vaccinated against COVID-19.”

On July 30, CDC director Rochelle Walensky [indicated](#) the Biden administration is considering a federal vaccine mandate: “That’s something that I think the administration is looking into. It’s something that I think we are looking to see approval of from the vaccine.” She [backtracked](#) the next day. “To clarify: There will be no nationwide mandate. I was referring to mandates by private institutions and portions of the federal government. There will be no federal mandate,” Walensky tweeted.



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