Nevada may require voters to show photo ID

By Nevada News Bureau

CARSON CITY — Secretary of State Ross Miller announced last week he is seeking legislation in the 2013 session aimed at curbing the potential for voter fraud by including photographs of registered voters at polling places on election day.

Miller said his proposal is not a voter identification measure. Instead it would be an upgrade to the current antiquated paper roster system by implementing electronic voter rosters with the enhanced feature of a photograph of each registered voter.

The requirement of a photograph in the new electronic roster would prevent ineligible voters from impersonating other, eligible voters at a polling place, Miller said. The proposed law, which is currently being drafted, will seek to import existing photographs of eligible voters from the Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles database of drivers' licenses and state identification cards.

The photographs would be part of a new "electronic poll book" as an adjunct to the existing poll books that currently use signatures for identifying voters. When photographs of the eligible voters are not available through the database, poll workers would be available to take photos at the polling place at the time of voting and verify their identity by way of an affidavit.

Voter ID laws have been passed in other states, but have frequently led to court challenges. Nevada does not now have such a law.

Sen. Michael Roberson, R-Las Vegas, proposed a voter ID law in

the 2011 legislative session, but the measure did not win approval from a Senate Committee and died without action.

Assemblyman Lynn Stewart, R-Henderson, has submitted a bill draft request for a voter identification law for the 2013 session.

"This provides a significant safeguard in our election process while simultaneously ensuring that we don't disenfranchise any voters," Miller said. "It's really just an enhancement of the existing system, by providing an electronic poll book that could include a photo to go with the already recorded signature."