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1-844-DIS-VOTE
www.disabilityvote.org

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Disability Vote Coalition Supports Postponement of Election

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition (WDVC) is a non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the electoral process of voters with disabilities. Because of the serious concerns we are hearing from voters with disabilities, we support Governor Evers' Executive Order delaying the April election due to grave public health concerns.

"Voters with disabilities and their families report unprecedented challenges that make it difficult or impossible for them to cast a ballot in this election," stated Jenny Neugart, of the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and the WDVC. "If the election moves forward on April 7th, many voters with disabilities will be disenfranchised."

"Voters who have not been able to vote absentee are fearful about jeopardizing their health by voting in person," stated Barbara Beckert, Disability Vote Coalition and Disability Rights Wisconsin. "Wisconsinites should not have to choose between their health and their right to vote." Voters are confused about where to vote, given the closure of many polling places. In addition, lack of transportation to the polls, to register to vote, or to drop off an absentee ballot has limited participation for many voters with disabilities who are nondrivers.

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*The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is a project of
Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and Disability Rights Wisconsin*

Absentee voters have experienced a range of barriers including: long delays in receiving absentee ballots; lack of access to technology to register online, request an absentee ballot online, or upload photo ID; difficulty obtaining a ballot witness signature for individuals who live alone, especially those who are quarantined; and absentee ballots that are not ADA compliant or screen reader accessible. In addition, suspension of Special Voting Deputies in nursing homes and group homes has left some residents unable to cast a ballot.

“Delaying the election will provide an opportunity to support full participation of voters with disabilities in our democracy,” said Denise Jess, Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired and the WDVC. “While many voters can successfully vote absentee, others cannot; particularly if they experience blindness, learning disabilities or physical disabilities that impact their ability to read/write. As recognized in Governor Evers’ Executive Order #73, these voters need access to accessible voting equipment to cast a private, independent vote.”

We thank Governor Evers for taking action, and urge those who have absentee ballots to return them as soon as possible, given the uncertain status of this election.

About the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

The WDVC is a non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the entire electoral process of voters with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places. Members include people with disabilities, and representatives of community agencies including Access to Independence, Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, NAMI Wisconsin, People First Wisconsin, Mental Health America, Wisconsin Association of the Deaf, and many others. The Coalition is coordinated by Disability Rights Wisconsin and Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities.