

Rep. Crowley: Proposes new state holiday

Posted on Tuesday, Nov 5, 2019

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MADISON, WI – State Representative David Crowley (D-Milwaukee), issued the following statement regarding proposed legislation for Democracy Day:

“Happy Democracy Day! Today is the future of Democracy Day in Wisconsin – a state paid holiday in honor of our system of government, the role that each of us plays within it, and all those who fought to secure and maintain that democracy.

“We should all be unsatisfied that in a country that guarantees us the right to vote, only a fraction of us actually use our voices to take advantage of that paramount privilege. Turnout in low-income areas is especially dismal, because people cannot afford to take time off work to go to the polls – or when they do they are discouraged and disenfranchised by the long lines. My proposed legislation, Democracy Day, can raise these dire figures and make our state truly representative by enabling every citizen to practice the foundational right of every democracy: the right to vote.

“We must not forget that this is our state, these are our communities, and our lives. We deserve to choose how best to govern, and we make that choice through our vote. It is long past time to ensure that everyone is able to make their voice heard. The fact of the matter is that not everyone is able to cast their vote. We all lead intricate and busy lives. Many people simply cannot afford to take time off work to vote – or simply cannot find the time to amidst their busy schedules. Whatever the reason, a paid holiday devoted to voting would allow countless more people to vote without the fear of hindering their daily lives, families, or finances.

“This paid holiday, Democracy Day, is not merely for voting. Its purpose and significance is further reaching. Democracy Day celebrates our system of government—a system of government devoted to giving power to its people. We would have far less to celebrate without the tireless and courageous undertakings of our Wisconsin Veterans, yet Wisconsin is the only state in the union that does not recognize Veteran’s Day as a paid state holiday. Democracy Day gives us a day not only to vote, but also to give necessary recognition to our valiant veterans.

“Wisconsin would observe Democracy Day on the first Tuesday after the first Monday of each November. This will enable people to realize fully their democratic freedom, while recognizing and commending the bravery and valor of our nation’s veterans who have fought to protect the right to vote around the world.