

Attorney, Rev. Lewis: Condemn Republicans' appeal of mail ballot ruling

Posted on Wednesday, Sep 23, 2020

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WISCONSIN — Republicans filed their notice of appeal today of Judge William Conley's ruling that would allow absentee ballots postmarked by November 3 to be received and counted through November 9. The Republican-controlled state legislature will shortly file an emergency motion to stay the district court's order.

Last night, Souls to the Polls led a candlelight vigil to protect democracy outside the courthouse steps, anticipating today's attempt by Republicans to undermine democracy and hang onto power.



Following is a statement from Rev. Greg Lewis:

“Whether we are Black, white, or brown, urban or rural, our vote is our power. Monday's district court decision calling for every ballot postmarked by Election Day to be counted was an essential safeguard of that power. In the middle of a deadly pandemic that has already stolen 200,000 lives, every eligible voter ought to be able to exercise their power safely from home.

“Republicans’ challenge to that decision today is the latest in a long line of attempts to undermine democracy and suppress votes as a way to hold on to power. From trying to purge hundreds of thousands from the voter rolls or cutting the early voting window, their voter suppression playbook to deny Black and brown voters is unrelenting, but we are just as relentless. Republicans know the only way they can win is to stop us from voting.

“This pandemic continues to ravage our communities. As cases grow, particularly in Wisconsin where COVID-19 cases are growing faster than anywhere in the country, we should be making it EASIER for people to vote safely.

“With so many Americans suffering because of the failures of Trump and other elected leaders to confront this pandemic, we need to do everything we can to make sure everyone can vote safely this November with the full confidence that their vote will be counted.

“We are calling on the Court to uphold this decision and demand that Republicans stop playing games with our democracy and let this ruling stand to ensure that all Wisconsin voters can vote safely and fairly this election season.

“And to all the voters out there, we have a message: The best way to defend the right to vote is to exercise it. Vote early, either from home or in-person, and make your voice heard in our democracy.”

Following is a statement from Stacie Rosenzweig, attorney for the Edwards plaintiffs in the case:

“This appeal is disappointing but not surprising, as Judge Conley himself anticipated it in staying the injunction. We are hopeful that the common-sense measures to improve access to safe and fair voting ordered by Judge Conley will be upheld on appeal. In the meantime, voters can still register online, request absentee ballots, and vote when they are received.”