

SEIU, Souls to the Polls: Rev. Greg Lewis condemns 7th Circuit ruling to block voting rights relief

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WISCONSIN — The 7th Circuit ruled today to block Judge William Conley's late-September ruling to extend the date through which postmarked ballots could be counted. Mail ballots will now need to be returned by November 3.

Over a strong dissent, two judges on the 7th Circuit panel blocked all the relief Judge Conley had ordered. In dissent, Judge Rovner made clear that the relief Judge Conley had ordered was a "limited, reasonable set of modifications ... designed to address the very problems that manifested in the April election and to preserve the precious right of each Wisconsin citizen to vote."

Judge Rovner went on: "The inevitable result of the court's decision today will be that many thousands of Wisconsin citizens will lose their right to vote despite doing everything they reasonably can to exercise it. This is a travesty."

Following is a statement from Rev. Greg Lewis:

"Here in Wisconsin, the most important election of our lifetimes is already underway. Over [500,000 voters in our state have already voted by mail](#). And we're just getting started. The people of Wisconsin understand that our vote is our power, and we're joining together — rural and urban, young and old, Black, white and brown — to use our voice in democracy and elect leaders that will stand with us in the fight for justice.

"Working people have the power to decide this year's election. Our votes matter. This is precisely why Republicans are trying so hard to keep us from voting. But no

court ruling will stop Wisconsinites from turning out in historic numbers, even in the middle of a pandemic.

“Republicans are shameless and transparent in their goal to make it harder, not easier, to vote in this pandemic election. Today’s 7th Circuit ruling is just their latest attempt to undermine democracy and suppress votes as a way to hold on to power. Just this year, Republicans in Wisconsin already tried to purge hundreds of thousands from the voter rolls, forced us to hold our primary at the height of Covid-19, and tried their best to suppress Black and brown votes.

“As our state sees a renewed Covid spike, and our communities suffer the consequences of Trump Republicans’ failure to protect us from the virus, we need to do everything we can to make sure everyone can vote safely in this election and that their vote will be counted.

“Wisconsin voters should not be alarmed: when we vote, we win. Vote early, either from home or in-person, and make your voice heard in our democracy.”