

# Common Cause Wisconsin: Tell your legislators to oppose these hyper partisan anti-voter measures

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We hope you will help us speak out against the anti-voter bills that have been introduced into the Wisconsin Legislature that will make voting more complicated and difficult, especially for voters who vote by absentee ballot which, in Wisconsin, has continuously been a common way for older voters and voters with disabilities to cast their ballots. This has also been the voting option a majority of Wisconsin voters used in 2020 during the pandemic. [1]

Policy should not be written to make voting more difficult. Rules should not be created because politicians didn't like the outcome of an election.

Every eligible American should have access to the ballot, and our democracy works best when our citizens vote in high numbers, as Wisconsinites tend to do for Presidential elections. But these bills will create steep barriers to voting.

**Your voice is needed. [Contact your state senator and your state representative and let them know that these anti-voter bills need to be defeated!](#)**

Here is a list of the most odious, onerous and obnoxious measures and what they will do to damage democracy:

[SB203](#) / [AB192](#): This bill would prohibit any individual from helping more than one non-family member return their absentee ballot.

[SB209](#) / [AB177](#): This bill says that absentee ballot drop boxes must be attached to the building where the office of the clerk is located.

- Why these are bad: Taken together, these bills make it harder for voters to return their completed ballots to have their votes counted. Voters should have access to needed assistance from trusted friends, neighbors, care providers or community groups. Many voters with disabilities who vote absentee are non-drivers and ask someone they trust to deliver their absentee ballot. If their

usual driver has already delivered a ballot for someone, the voter would have to find another way to get it returned. Reducing the number of drop boxes in high populated areas (particularly Milwaukee, Madison and other larger cities) that span miles and service thousands of voters to only one box, disadvantages the voters who do not live near the one box.

[SB204](#) / [AB201](#): This bill would no longer allow voters who are indefinitely confined or overseas to receive absentee ballots automatically. Instead, they would need to fill out an absentee ballot request every election and they would need to show an ID. In addition, this bill would prohibit the Wisconsin Elections Commission (as well as municipal or county clerk or local elections board) from sending absentee ballot applications en masse, as it did in 2020 to 2.7 million Wisconsin voters.

- Why this is bad: Forcing indefinitely confined voters to fill out an absentee ballot request “every election” is extremely burdensome. Wisconsin has multiple elections every year. The mass mailing of absentee ballot applications gives the voters the choice about how and when they vote. Election administrators should have the authority and flexibility to make voting easier by being able to mail absentee ballot applications.

[SB205](#) / [AB179](#): This bill would require the administrator of a retirement home or residential care facility to notify relatives of the occupants as to when the special voting deputies will be coming to the facility to assist in the casting of absentee ballots.

- Why this is bad: Most people in these homes and facilities make decisions for themselves every day of the week. They don't need a relative next to them when they are voting and fulfilling their duty in our democracy. They shouldn't have their right to the privacy of their vote violated. This bill goes so far as to make it illegal for employees of a retirement home or residential care facility to even encourage a resident to vote!

[SB206](#) / [AB180](#): This bill makes anyone who is indefinitely confined jump through several hoops in order to vote, including the voter making a statement under oath affirming the fact of being indefinitely confined. If the indefinitely confined voter is under 65, that sworn statement would need “to be signed by a physician, physician assistant, or advanced practice registered nurse who has primary responsibility for the treatment and care of the voter.” In addition, the bill specifies that the existence of an epidemic does not qualify a voter as being indefinitely confined, and kicks people off the indefinitely confined list who signed up March 12 thru

November 3, 2020.

- Why this is bad: For many elderly and disabled voters and those with preexisting conditions who have been home-bound for their own safety because of COVID, this bill is heartless. It would put voters at risk while voting for the duration of this pandemic and during any future pandemic. No other voter has to submit a sworn and signed statement under oath such as this requirement sets out to do. This is a crude, blanket invalidation of the status of tens of thousands of voters, and without evidence, it implies that they all misrepresented themselves. This presumption of guilt flies in the face of free, fair, and accessible elections.

[SB207](#) / [AB173](#): This bill prohibits anyone who is a member of a political organization or issue advocacy group from being a poll worker.

- Why this is bad: This would reduce the current poll worker pool significantly in communities across the state. Any member of any political party or any member of an advocacy organization like Common Cause WI, NAACP, Conservation Voters, The Heritage Foundation, The League of Women Voters, AARP, etc. would not be able to serve as poll workers.

There can be ways to make election administration better and to increase access to voting, like enacting automatic voter registration that citizens can opt-into when conducting business at the DMV. But these hyper-partisan bills do not do this. They look to make the process of voting more challenging for citizens and municipal clerks who run our elections.

**Instead, voting should be clear, secure, and fair for all eligible voters.** And our legislators should be passing bipartisan bills that further increase our voting numbers, not suppress the vote.

**[Your legislators need to hear from you that this attempt to restrict election participation is not acceptable and these bills need to be defeated. Can you take action today?](#)**

Wisconsinites need to rise up and make it clear to every member of the Wisconsin Legislature that they should be expanding voting opportunities and making it easier for more Wisconsinites to be able to participate in elections.

I hope you'll join me in speaking out today. And thank you for caring about fighting for real democracy and against voter suppression in Wisconsin!

Stay well, keep safe and Forward!

Jay Heck - CC/WI Director (since 1996!)