

Sen. Darling: Evers vetoes protections for election workers, observers

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Evers Vetoes Protections for Election Workers, Observers

Governor Also Vetoes Notification for Ballot Errors

Madison –Governor Evers vetoed two bills authored by Senator Alberta Darling which restore trust and transparency in our elections. Senate Bill 210 protects both election workers and observers, and Senate Bill 212 ensures only legitimate ballots are counted, while providing voters the opportunity to correct errors on their ballot. Senator Darling says the governor’s vetoes put a cloud over future elections. “These bills do not limit anyone’s right to vote.” Darling said, “The truth is, my bills make sure ballots are counted and that the process is fair and transparent. Governor Evers is opening up our state to more expensive lawsuits and more controversy.”

In her dissent in Trump v. Evers, 2020 WI 91, Chief Justice Roggensack raised serious issues regarding ballot curing in our state. She noted that guidance issued by the Wisconsin Elections Commission directed clerks to write in missing address information. However, current law does not permit that. Senator Bill 212 creates a system for voters to check if there was a problem with their ballot and made sure outside groups weren’t allowed to alter ballots. Senator Darling says the governor’s veto continues to put ballots in jeopardy of not counting on Election Day.

“Ballot curing is based on arbitrary guidance, not the law. My bill would make that process clear,” Darling said, “Fixing problems on a ballot is a good thing. Who fixes

those mistakes is also important. Until the vote is counted, the ballot should belong to the voter, not a clerk or an outside group.”

Senate Bill 210 makes sure election observers are allowed uniform and nondiscriminatory access to all stages of the election process, including the certification of election technologies, early voting, absentee voting, voter appeals, vote tabulation, and recounts. It also includes protections for election officials so it will be easier for communities to find people to help on Election Day. Senator Darling says Governor Evers would rather use partisan rhetoric than sign common sense election integrity bills.

“When the rules are clear for everyone, our election process will be much smoother,” Darling said, “The Governor’s veto means the public might be prevented from witnessing the process, and election workers aren’t protected by law. This is an extremely dangerous and shortsighted veto.”

Senator Darling represents portions of Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, and Waukesha Counties.