

Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice: Applauds the sacred work of the Wisconsin Election Commission

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MADISON: As people of faith, the members of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice believe that all of us are made in the image of God and endowed with worth and dignity and worthy of respect. Part of living a life of dignity and respect is the right to be heard and to be counted. In a democracy, that means having the freedom to vote. We believe, along with the late Representative John Lewis, that the right to vote is sacred. We applaud the tireless work the Wisconsin Election Commission and all election workers have done over the last year to ensure that our elections are fair, secure, and safe, and that everyone is able to exercise their constitutional right to vote, even in the midst of a global pandemic.

Executive Director Rabbi Bonnie Margulis said of the WEC, “the current hyper-partisan atmosphere around voting rights is deeply disturbing. Reports of election workers facing harassment and even death threats are abhorrent. If we agree on nothing else, let’s all agree that our election officials are heroes and the work the Wisconsin Election Commission does to ensure free and fair elections is sacred and praiseworthy.”

The recent report from the Legislative Audit Bureau showed once again what we already know – that the November 2020 election was the safest, most secure, election in our nation’s history. Nevertheless, some of our elected leaders continue to advocate for policies that will make it harder for people to vote, especially people of color and people with disabilities. These proposals are anathema to all who value democracy.

The best way to ensure that every vote is counted, and every voice is heard, is to ensure the ballot box is accessible to every voter, regardless of age, disability, or where they live. There are many important strategies that can be implemented to make this happen. The use of absentee ballot dropboxes is one such strategy.

The widespread use of dropboxes in 2020 was key to helping people to vote safely during the pandemic. The Election Commission should ensure that dropboxes are available 24 hours per day, and are available in traditionally low voter turnout communities, near public transportation hubs and places people frequent. The availability of dropboxes in neighborhoods is vital for voters who experience barriers getting to the polls on Election Day, whether because of job obligations, lack of transportation, disabilities, or other issues.

Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice calls upon all Wisconsin residents to support election workers and to thank the WEC for their efforts.

The mission of Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice is to draw on the wisdom, courage, and strength of our various faith traditions to advance the common good. As progressive people of faith committed to crossing religious boundaries, we uphold the dignity of all human beings. We lift the voices of those who are underserved and marginalized, through advocacy, education, and partnership. WFVJ partners with the Wisconsin Council of Churches on the Wisconsin Interfaith Voter Engagement Campaign.