

Milwaukee Common Council: Statement on Wisconsin Supreme Court ballot drop box decisio

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By Common Council members: Alderman José G. Pérez, Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, Alderman Robert J. Bauman, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Alderman Khalif J. Rainey, Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa, Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderman Michael J. Murphy, Alderman Scott Spiker, Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic and Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II

Earlier today the Common Council passed a resolution expressing the City's opposition to the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling prohibiting early voting ballot drop boxes. It was just last week that the state's highest court ruled that the Wisconsin Election Commission had overstepped its authority when it issued guidance to local election clerks to allow the use of drop boxes to return absentee ballots in the 2020 election, and further ruled that voters must personally return their absentee ballots.

Simply put, we strongly and fundamentally disagree with this decision.

Ballot drop boxes make the practice of voting easier and more accessible, and we fear this decision will only further disenfranchise voters who are elderly, hospitalized, house-bound, lack access to transportation, or face other impediments to personally delivering their ballots.

Elections are a core tenet of our democracy, and we should always be striving to ensure that voting in them is as easy as possible. Sadly, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruling does just the opposite at a time when roughly 2 million Wisconsinites

voted absentee in the last presidential election, and 66 counties utilized drop boxes as an appropriate means to ensure their residents can cast their vote.