

Power to the Polls Wisconsin: Plans to host canvassing event, launch renewed push to engage, educate voters after ballot box ban

Posted on Thursday, Mar 17, 2022

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Coalition of Voters, Clergy, Advocates, Joined by Acting Mayor Johnson, Unite for Day of Action Educating, Engaging Black Voters

Milwaukee, WI – Members of Power to the Polls Wisconsin are hosting a [community kick-off and canvass event](#) Saturday, March 19 to engage and educate Black Wisconsinites on how to vote following recent GOP-driven or supported changes to the state's voting process. Acting Mayor Cavalier "Chevy" Johnson will join voters for Saturday's day of action that will see canvassers fan out across Milwaukee's Black neighborhoods.

Local voters, clergy and advocates will come together at the iconic Gee's Clippers, one of the Midwest's most notable Black-owned barbershops, to rally together and launch a community canvass to engage Milwaukee's Black community ahead of April's special election and additional opportunities to vote this year. They'll raise the importance of voting to enact change and condemn local Republican-led or supported attempts to limit voting options as clear voter suppression.

Canvassers will venture out across the city's Black communities to educate voters on how to safely vote following the recent [WI Supreme Court](#) ruling to ban ballot drop boxes in April's special election—a decision that prevents senior citizens, people with disabilities, Black and brown voters, shift workers, and people without cars from using a vital, popular option for voting. Canvassers will also engage with voters on issues at stake in this election, including GOP-led or supported policies to

silence voters, the need to invest in local communities, and economic and racial justice.

“We will knock on every door and engage with every eligible voter who is willing to listen, in order to ensure that we all count on Election Day. We refuse to surrender to those trying to suppress our votes in April and November. Our canvassers are working hard so that every Wisconsinite knows how to advocate for themselves and their communities through a fair, safe, equal democratic process,” said Power to the Polls member Rev. Greg Lewis.

EVENT DETAILS

WHAT: “Power to the Polls Wisconsin” Kick-Off & Canvass Event, to engage with and educate Black Wisconsinites on how to vote following the WI Supreme Court April ballot box ban.

Action to follow current COVID-19 safety protocols.

WHO: Community leaders with Power to the Polls Wisconsin

Acting Milwaukee Mayor Cavalier “Chevy” Johnson

Members of the Wisconsin Voting Rights Coalition – including SEIU

Wisconsin, Fight for \$15 and a Union, Voces De La Frontera, MASH, Poor People’s Campaign, and more

Local voters, clergy and community allies

WHEN: Saturday, March 19, 2022 at 9:30am CT

WHERE: Gee’s Clippers

2200 N Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Milwaukee, WI 53212

VISUALS: Participants holding large letters that read, “I Am A Voter”; “VOTERS

DECIDE”; “Our Voice, Our Vote.”

BACKGROUND

On January 13, Judge Michael Bohren of Waukesha County sided with the right-wing, anti-voting rights institution Wisconsin Institute for Law and Liberty (WILL) in ruling that absentee ballot drop boxes are illegal under Wisconsin state law. The decision came as Republicans and their allies aim to further restrict access to the ballot and roll back voting rights ahead of the 2022 election.

Judge Bohren announced his plan to issue his written order that formally put this ban into effect during a January 19 hearing and ordered the Wisconsin Elections Committee to comply with this decision by January 27. On January 24, the Wisconsin Appeals Court [decided to stay](#) this lower court ruling that banned the use of ballot drop boxes in the state.

But on February 11, the Wisconsin Supreme Court voted 4-3 to remove the stay and allow the lower court order to go into effect that bans ballot drop boxes in the state’s April election. The legality of ballot drop boxes in the November election remains uncertain.

The Supreme Court ballot drop box ban presents an ominous sign for the future of voting in the state. Key local Republicans have been ruthless in their attempts to upend Wisconsin’s nonpartisan elections ahead of the midterms, filing over a dozen bills to modify the way our elections are run, many targeting the Wisconsin Elections Commission.

Voters from across Wisconsin recently united to protest voter suppression outside of the state GOP’s Annual Reagan Day Dinner. Bearing signs that read, “Voters Decide,” “Our Voice, Our Vote,” “Radical Rebecca: Hands Off Our Votes,” and a 9-foot-tall puppet of gubernatorial candidate Rebecca Kleefisch, members of the Wisconsin Voting Rights Coalition joined State Sen. LaTonya Johnson, State Rep. Christine Sinicki (District 20), Senate Candidate Tom Nelson, local voters, and community and faith leaders, in condemning the Republican politicians who have led the party’s charge to limit the voting rights of Wisconsinites.