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WI Board for People with Developmental Disabilities :Applauds U.S. District Court Western District ruling on ballot return assistance for people with disabilities

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The Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities is thrilled with today's order from Chief U.S. District Judge James Peterson in Carey v. WEC. Judge Peterson confirms the federal rights of the four plaintiffs and all Wisconsin voters with disabilities to receive assistance in returning their absentee ballots so that they can vote without fear that their ballots will be rejected.

This order confirms that needing assistance from a person of their choice with completing and returning a ballot is a right that is protected by federal law. Therefore, the Wisconsin Election Commission is now required to issue guidance to municipal clerks to clarify their obligation under federal law to uphold the rights of Wisconsin voters with disabilities to have absentee ballot return assistance.

BPDD has heard from numerous voters with disabilities who feared their right to vote would be jeopardized if they could no longer receive assistance from a person they trust. We thank the four voters with disabilities and Law Forward who represented them for speaking up for themselves and on behalf of all Wisconsin voters with disabilities. These citizens can now feel confident that their rights are protected and assured that their votes will count.

Voters with disabilities who have questions or need assistance with voting can contact the Disability Rights Wisconsin Voter Hotline: 844-347-8683

or info@disabilityvote.org. Information is also available at www.disabilityvote.org.

Resources: Wisconsin Voters speak out: "Our Voices, Our Votes: Disabled Voters Speak Out on Voting Rights and Ballot Return Assistance."

For more information, contact Jenny Neugart, Disability Vote Coalition Co-Lead at 608-266-7707 or jennifer.neugart@wisconsin.gov.