

# Priorities USA and Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans: File legal challenge to absentee ballot restrictions in Wisconsin

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**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Today, Priorities USA and the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans filed a legal challenge to three provisions of Wisconsin election law that place unnecessary restrictions on casting absentee ballots. The filing seeks to provide relief to voters impacted by the following restrictions:

## **Wisconsin's requirement that absentee ballots be witnessed**

The lawsuit challenges Wisconsin's requirement that every absentee ballot be signed by an adult witness regardless of whether a voter lives alone, is homebound, or faces other barriers to satisfying the provision. The filing argues that as a result of the unnecessary requirement, the right to vote by absentee ballot is unfairly based on the ability to find a willing third party.

## **Wisconsin's prohibition on ballot drop boxes**

The filing also challenges a Wisconsin law that has been interpreted to prohibit the use of drop boxes for collecting absentee ballots. Drop boxes have consistently been proven as a secure and convenient way to submit absentee ballots and were widely used without issue in the 2020 election. Despite this, a recent court decision eliminated the use of drop boxes in 2022 which led to a significant increase in late-arriving absentee ballots.

## **Wisconsin's election day deadline for curing defects with absentee ballots**

Finally, the legal challenge seeks relief for voters from the arbitrary deadline to cure defects in their ballot. While the current law allows voters to cure nonmaterial

defects in their absentee ballots, it must be done before 8 p.m. on election day. In the filing, it is noted that the deadline not only deprives countless voters of the right to cure their ballots, it also serves no purpose. In comparison, the deadline to correct provisional ballots is the Friday following election day yet there is no reason why absentee ballots should be treated differently.

“Seniors in Wisconsin take their constitutional right to vote seriously. We are also the most likely to need to vote absentee because of health issues or transportation challenges,” said Ross Winklbauer, Sr., President of the Wisconsin Alliance for Retired Americans. “We are asking the Court to remove these unnecessary barriers so all voters in Wisconsin, especially older voters, can cast a ballot that will actually be counted.”

“Previous campaign cycles have put a much needed spotlight on the blatant attempts to use restricted access to absentee voting as a means of voter suppression,” said Aneesa McMillan, Deputy Executive Director of Priorities USA. “As a result of this, vulnerable communities, including people of color, face extraordinary barriers to casting their ballots. We hope this legal effort will bring relief to Wisconsin voters while expanding access to the ballot for every eligible voter in the state.”