

WisDems: Statement on Martin Luther King Jr. Day

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MADISON, Wis. — Democratic Party of Wisconsin Chair Ben Wikler issued the following statement in observance of Martin Luther King Jr. Day:

“Martin Luther King Jr. Day is a moment of remembrance and tribute—and, even more importantly, of action and service. All of us are called to continue the work to which Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. dedicated his life. Especially in Wisconsin, one of the states with the greatest racial disparities in America and a state in which Black citizens face notoriously harsh barriers to full participation in our democracy, we must dedicate ourselves to the ongoing struggle for civil rights—and against voter suppression in all forms.

“Dr. King rightly recognized access to the ballot as fundamental to the freedom and equality of Black Americans, and critical to the project of holding our nation to its highest ideals. But in the last week, we’ve learned that a sitting Commissioner on the Wisconsin Elections Commission, Bob Spindell, celebrated the drop in votes by Black and Hispanic Wisconsinites in 2020, and attributed the drop to a ‘well thought out multi-faceted plan’ by Republican Party leaders, ranging from litigation to ‘Republican paid election judges.’

“Spindell should have resigned long ago—and absent his resignation, his appointment needs to be rescinded by Majority Leader Devin LeMahieu. In Wisconsin and nationally, Republicans must end their focus on voter suppression as a political strategy, and commit to bipartisan voting rights legislation that addresses the gutting of the Voting Rights Act in *Shelby County v. Holder*, and goes further to ensure that all Americans, regardless of the color of their skin, have equal voice and true representation at all levels of government.

“Dr. King’s work went far beyond equal voting rights, and his vision—and the work we must carry forward—sought a much deeper transformation. As we celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day, Wisconsin Democrats are dedicated to the great work of Dr. King’s life —to build a beloved community, a free, just, peaceful, and righteous America.”