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Report:

Wisconsin DMV Restrictions Disenfranchise Voters Already Struggling to Make Their Voices Heard

[MILWAUKEE] — Since implementation of Wisconsin’s 2011 voter ID law, limited access to Division of Motor Vehicle (DMV) services has created needless and discriminatory barriers to the ballot for tens of thousands of Wisconsinites who now need an acceptable form of photo ID for voting. According to a [report](#) released today by All Voting is Local, in partnership with the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition and the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin, these barriers have disproportionately impacted Wisconsinites of color, students, people with disabilities, and older adults.

“Restrictive DMV service center hours, limited locations, confusing requirements, and language barriers discourage engagement in the election process and are hard to overcome,” said Shauntay Nelson, All Voting is Local Wisconsin State Director. “Adequately addressing the need for expanded DMV access is the first step, of many, needed to ensure the protection of our freedom to vote. Wisconsin is at an inflection point and we need to take action now to ensure that we are not putting additional burdens on the already underserved; making them work harder in order to have their voices heard.”

“Over the past 10 years, the Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) has become central to that freedom, since it is the primary space where Wisconsinites can get an acceptable photo ID to vote,” the report states. “Without equitable access to DMV services, there is no equitable access to the ballot.”

The report uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau, communications with the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT), existing research, and interviews with voters and voting rights advocates to highlight how limited access to the DMV infringes on Wisconsinites’ freedom to vote. The report notes the additional barriers for people with disabilities as they navigate accessibility-related challenges at the DMV above and beyond simply finding the time to get there.

“Ensuring voters have access to a photo ID is not solely the job of WisDOT. We’re calling on the WisDOT, Governor, and legislature to make common sense steps to mitigate the discriminatory impact of the voter ID law,” said Eileen Newcomer, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin Voter Education Manager. “It is crucial to ensure that every eligible voter is able to access their right to vote.”

“Many Wisconsinites with a disability are unable to obtain a state ID due to limited access to transportation, lack of lift equipped accessible vehicles, restrictive DMV service hours, and accessibility barriers,” stated Barbara Beckert, Disability Rights Wisconsin Milwaukee Office Director. “We urge policy makers to expand access to DMV services, improve accessibility, and co-locate photo ID services at Aging and Disability Resource Centers.”

All Voting is Local, Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition, and The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin will host a virtual event to discuss the report at 1 p.m. CT/2 p.m. ET, Wednesday June 2 - sign up [here](#).

Read the full report [here](#) and find the recording of today’s press briefing [here](#).

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All Voting is Local fights to eliminate needless and discriminatory barriers to voting before they happen, to build a democracy that works for us all. It is a campaign housed at The Leadership Conference Education Fund and The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. For more information about All Voting is Local, visit <https://allvotingislocal.org> and follow us on Twitter @votingislocal.

The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a nonpartisan political organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. There are 20 local Leagues throughout Wisconsin. More information at lwvwi.org.

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is a nonpartisan effort to help ensure full participation in the entire electoral process for voters with disabilities. It is a project of Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities. Members include people with disabilities and community agencies. More information at disabilityvote.org.