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Voting Bills Adversely Impact People with Disabilities

People First Wisconsin opposes the following bills included on this week's proposed Assembly calendar: AB192, SB 204/AB 201, SB 205/AB 179, SB 212/AB 198.

"Voting is one of our most important democratic rights. It is wrong to try and limit our rights as citizens. If these measures are passed, you are purposely excluding our voices. Please do not try to silence our voices and limit our participation.

SB 205/ AB 179 would make it harder for voters who live in nursing homes and groups homes to vote. Many people with intellectual disabilities live in group homes and nursing homes. It's important that staff are able to tell them when an election is coming up and ask if they want to register to vote or request an absentee ballot. How would you feel if you had a family member who lived in a nursing home or group home and they wanted to exercise their right to vote. If a family member wanted to assist them, would they also face a felony? It is a violation of the ADA

We have worked very hard as an advocacy group to teach others about their voting rights. It's so sad that you won't listen to the people of Wisconsin.

Our motto is "Nothing about us, without us". Cindy Bentley-People First Wisconsin

While amendments have slightly improved some of the voting bills, the proposed legislation will create new barriers that may leave behind many voters with disabilities. Disability advocates remain available and willing to work with policy makers to share how these bills would negatively impact voters with disabilities and to offer recommendations to address accessibility barriers for people with

disabilities and older adults to improve their full participation in the electoral process.

A significant number of Wisconsin voters have a disability. As state policy makers consider changes to voting laws, they must proceed with caution to avoid creating new barriers that could impact the voting rights of hundreds of thousands of state residents with a disability, including disabilities acquired through aging. We encourage legislators to slow the process down and work with us to craft legislation supporting accessible and inclusive elections.

- **About the organization**

People First Wisconsin is a statewide self-advocacy organization for people with disabilities. By joining together in groups, individuals with disabilities learn to speak up for themselves, share ideas, friendships and information. Our mission is to provide opportunities for people with disabilities in Wisconsin to speak up and be heard about healthcare, voting, employment, housing and transportation issues.

<http://www.peoplefirstwisconsin.org>