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Disability Advocates Speak Out on Voting Rights

Today, the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition shared recommendations to improve the accessibility of Wisconsin elections with the Wisconsin Election Commission.

The Legislative Audit Bureau report affirmed the accuracy and security of the 2020 general election. The report also suggested opportunities for improvements. The Coalition offered a number of recommendations to Commissioners, and also recognized the work done to date by WEC to improve accessibility and address disability rights.

The Disability Vote Coalition recommends that new election inspectors and Special Voting Deputies be required to complete training on core competencies before serving, and attend a minimum of one training program annually thereafter. "Training should cover ADA accessibility requirements and disability related accommodations," stated Jenny Neugart, Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, "to support people with disabilities to have a full and equal opportunity to vote."

The LAB report did not address to what extent election officials are complying with laws that protect the rights of voters with disabilities and safeguard the accessibility of our elections. "We call on policymakers to ensure consistent enforcement of laws that protect the rights of voters with disabilities and ensure the accessibility of our elections," stated Barbara Beckert, Disability Rights Wisconsin.

Disability Vote Coalition public comments including comprehensive recommendations are posted on our [website](#).

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition thanks the Wisconsin Election Commission and Wisconsin clerks, poll workers, and other volunteers who worked so hard to make our elections safe, fair, and accessible in spite of the difficult conditions caused by the pandemic.

We stand ready to work with policymakers to improve the accessibility of Wisconsin elections, and ensure every eligible voter has the opportunity to participate in our democracy.

About the Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

The WDVC is a non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the entire electoral process of voters with disabilities, including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places. Members include people with disabilities, and community agencies including Access to Independence, Wisconsin Council of the Blind and Visually Impaired, NAMI Wisconsin, People First Wisconsin, Mental Health America, Wisconsin Association of the Deaf, Wisconsin Coalition of Independent Living Centers, and many others. The Coalition is coordinated by Disability Rights Wisconsin and Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities.