



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®

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Same Day Voter Registration in Wisconsin Needs to be Protected

Over the weekend, it was reported that at the Wisconsin Republican State Convention passed a resolution to abolish same day (Election Day) voter registration among other restrictive proposals targeting students and other eligible voters.¹ The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin opposes any such proposals that would eliminate same day voter registration.

“Eliminating same day registration is reckless and costly. It does nothing to protect the integrity of our electoral process and would only disenfranchise voters,” says Erin Grunze, League of Women Voters of Wisconsin’s Executive Director. “Same day registration helps ensure that democracy works in Wisconsin.” In the November 2016 election, over 380,000 voters registered on Election Day.²

Currently, the Wisconsin Election Commission (WEC) is navigating the problem of voter registrations deactivated in error as a result of the ERIC postcard mailing process in fall 2017. In the Spring 2108 Elections, a number of Wisconsin voters came forward claiming they had been deactivated and had to re-register on Election Day. “Without same day registration, these voters would not have been able to participate in the election through no fault of their own. Wisconsin needs same day registration as a safeguard against error,” noted Grunze.

Also, eliminating same day voter registration in Wisconsin would cost the state at least \$13.1 million, according to the WEC (formerly, Government Accountability Board).³ Because Wisconsin has same day registration, the state is exempt from having to comply with parts of the National Voter Registration Act. Upon elimination of same day registration, Wisconsin would be required to offer voter registration services at the Department of Motor Vehicles and other public agencies.

Same day registration ensures that, should any error in entering or processing a voter’s registration, voters can still exercise their constitutional right to vote by going to the polls and registering on Election Day. The League of Women Voters strenuously opposes any attempt to eliminate same day registration and other efforts that increase barriers for voters and roll back opportunities to vote.

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The League of Women Voters of Wisconsin is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization that advocates for informed and active participation in government. There are 20 local Leagues in Wisconsin. Learn more at www.lwvwi.org

¹ 2018 Republican Party of Wisconsin Proposed Resolutions.

<https://jwyjh41vxje2rqecx3efy4kf-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/180514GOP.pdf>

² According to the Wisconsin Election Commission’s 2016 General Election Summary Statistics, 381,444 of Wisconsin’s 2,996,886 voters (12.7%) registered on election day.

http://elections.wi.gov/sites/default/files/publication/2016_general_election_summary_statistics_pdf_15354.pdf

³ Wisconsin Election Commission “G.A.B. Releases Final Report on Election Day Registration.” February 18, 2013

<http://elections.wi.gov/node/2758>