

September 17, 2024

Dear clerks,

We're writing to address the dis- and misinformation circulating online and in common council meetings regarding the reliability of ballot drop boxes and the attempts to dissuade clerks from offering drop boxes as a safe, accessible avenue for voters to return their absentee ballots ahead of the November presidential election.

Those discouraging the use of ballot drop boxes are using lies and conspiracy theories to limit voter access and silence Wisconsin's voices. In 2020, 66 of Wisconsin's 72 counties used ballot drop boxes, as did 39 U.S. states, all [without significant issues](#). Nonetheless, these baseless attacks on important and popular voting methods like ballot drop boxes can erode voter confidence in our election processes and, ultimately, in our election results. That's why we're asking you to stand up for the use of drop boxes and dispel disinformation about them in your municipality in order to give voters an additional avenue to the ballot box that is proven to be secure.

We recently became aware that the [Dodge County sheriff](#) has implored several municipal clerks not to use ballot drop boxes citing "the appearance of fraud." This is following a [Muskego alderperson's inquiry](#) on whether the most recent drop box ruling "squares with any laws on the books in Wisconsin on ballot harvesting" and suggested a person could stuff 100 ballots into a dropbox at once. However, he failed to mention that secure drop boxes actually provide at least as much protection against such conduct as do ordinary USPS blue boxes and that drop boxes in WI may even be under surveillance.

As you are aware, the [Wisconsin Supreme Court's most recent ruling](#) affirmed that Wisconsin state statutes "allow the use of ballot drop boxes." The court also clarified the ruling "does not force or require that any municipal clerks use drop boxes."

**We affirm the court's decision that municipal clerks, the top election official in each municipality, should make the decision whether or not voters will have access to a drop box to return their absentee ballot.**

We also remain steadfast in our commitment to ensuring every eligible voter is able to safely and conveniently cast a ballot. These drop boxes make voting more accessible for older adults, persons with disabilities, families with young children, third-shift workers, and rural voters by allowing them to conveniently drop their absentee ballots into a secured box maintained by their trusted municipal clerk at any time during the early voting period.

*“For some voters with disabilities, voting absentee is their only option to cast a ballot. While the ability to cast an absentee ballot helps alleviate many barriers for voters with disabilities, other barriers such as transportation and availability of an assistor to return an absentee ballot continue to limit their power to return a completed absentee ballot to the clerk’s office in a trusted and timely manner. The reinstatement of the municipal clerks’ capacity to allow access to drop boxes has helped these voters have an equal opportunity to return their ballot in a manner that is safe and secure by providing greater accessibility to them and those who may be assisting them.”*

– Anna Anderson, Voting Rights Coordinator, Disability Rights Wisconsin

On behalf of All Voting is Local Wisconsin and our partners, we’d like to thank you for your public service and dedication to fundamental democratic processes like voting. Without the important work of our municipal clerks, it would be much harder for Wisconsin voters to let their voices be heard at the ballot box.

If we can be of service, please do not hesitate to reach out to us or any of the co-signers below. We will continue to advocate for municipal clerks’ autonomy in the workplace and voter access to the ballot box, as well as continue to respond to dis- and misinformation regarding secure voting structures.

Warmly,

Sam Liebert  
Wisconsin State Director  
All Voting is Local  
Former municipal clerk (2017-2022)

<p>Anna Anderson Voting Rights Coordinator Disability Rights Wisconsin</p>	 <p>disabilityrights   WISCONSIN</p>	<p>Nick Ramos Executive Director Wisconsin Democracy Campaign</p>	
<p>Jay Heck Executive Director Common Cause Wisconsin</p>		<p>Jenelle Ludwig Krause Executive Director GROWW</p>	
<p>Rhonda Lindner and Matt Kendziera WI Interfaith Voter Engagement Campaign (WIVVEC)</p>		<p>Souls To The Polls Bruce Colburn Sr. Advisor, Special Campaigns</p>	
<p>Karen Voss and Kim Vlcek Co-Coordinators Chippewa Valley Votes</p>		<p>Chioma Chukwu Interim Executive Director American Oversight</p>	
<p>Wendy Strout Wisconsin State Director Human Rights Campaign</p>		<p>Dr. Melinda Brennan Executive Director ACLU of Wisconsin</p>	
<p>Tanya McLean Executive Director &amp; Founder Leaders of Kenosha</p>		<p>Allison Keeley State Coordinator Wisconsin Alliance for Civic Trust</p>	

<p>Jonathan Miller Chief Program Officer Public Rights Project</p>	 <p>The logo for Public Rights Project features a blue outline of a staircase with three steps. To the right of the staircase, the words "Public Rights Project" are stacked vertically in a sans-serif font.</p>	<p>Bob Brandon President Fair Elections Center</p>	 <p>The logo for Fair Elections Center consists of a stylized graphic of three overlapping, curved shapes in shades of blue, teal, and orange, resembling a flame or a leaf. Below the graphic, the words "Fair Elections Center" are stacked vertically in a sans-serif font.</p>
<p>Jeff Mandell General Counsel Law Forward</p>	 <p>The logo for LAW FORWARD features a stylized orange exclamation mark icon on the left. To its right, the words "LAW FORWARD" are written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font, with "LAW" on the top line and "FORWARD" on the bottom line.</p>	<p>Jenna Lowenstein Executive Director Informing Democracy</p>	 <p>The logo for Informing Democracy features a dark grey diamond shape on the left. To its right, the words "Informing Democracy" are stacked vertically in a bold, black, sans-serif font.</p>