

Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition

Advocacy Opportunity – Time Sensitive

New State Bills Would Make It Harder for People with Disabilities and Older Adults to Vote

Wisconsin legislators are being asked to co-sponsor some voting bills that will make it harder for many people with disabilities and older adults to vote.

If these issues are important to you, tell your legislators about your concerns.

- Let them know how co-sponsoring the voting bills listed below will impact you and will make it harder for many Wisconsinites with disabilities and older adults to vote. These bills are LRB 428, 1935, 1537, and 2032 and are briefly explained below.
- Ask them to work with the disability and aging communities to address barriers to voting and protect voter rights.

Summary of Voting Bills

- LRB 428: Would limit voting rights of voters who certify as “indefinitely confined”. These voters would be required to provide statements under oath. Voters under 65 would also need to have their statements signed by their doctors. A false statement would be a felony. Voters would need to renew their status every two years. Currently, these voters receive an absentee ballot for every election for as long as they need it.

What is an Indefinitely Confined Voter? If a voter has a hard time getting to the polls on Election Day due to age, illness, infirmity, or disability, he/she may request an absentee ballot for every election and certify he/she is “indefinitely confined because of age, illness, infirmity, or disability”. An indefinitely confined voter does not need to show a Photo ID when voting by absentee ballot.

- LRB 1935: Would limit voting rights of nursing home and group home residents, and conflict with federal law which requires that nursing homes support the right of residents to vote. If staff offered to provide a resident with assistance, this would be a felony. Care facility residents under 65 would need to reapply every two years to automatically receive absentee ballots.
- LRB 1537: Would limit options to obtain and return absentee ballots. For example, many voters with disabilities who vote absentee are nondrivers and ask someone else to deliver their absentee ballot. This bill would limit who can return the voter's absentee ballot to the voter's immediate family or legal guardian, with some very limited exceptions.
- LRB 2032: This bill makes it more difficult to absentee vote. For example, it would require indefinitely confined voters to provide a photo ID with their absentee ballot request. Clerks, the Election Commission, and other groups would no longer be allowed to mail absentee ballot applications to all eligible voters; this bill makes it a felony to mail absentee ballot applications to anyone who has not requested one.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR LEGISLATORS

To find contact information for your legislators, you can call the Legislative Hotline at 1-800-362-9472 or enter your home address in the "Who Are My Legislators?" box on the [Wisconsin State Legislature Home Page](#)