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MILELE A. COGGS

6th District Alderwoman

Voter ID law injunction: a significant victory

Statement of Alderwoman Milele A. Cogg March 6, 2012

A Dane County judge's granting of a temporary injunction today halting the state's "Voter ID Law" is a significant victory for thousands of state voters who would have been disenfranchised in April's local spring general and presidential primary elections.

Additionally, I am pleased to learn that information generated by Common Council legislation I sponsored along with co-sponsors Alderman Ashanti Hamilton and Alderman Terry Witkowski (requiring the city Election Commission to track data on persons turned away from or not able to register at the polls for voter identification reasons) and provided to the plaintiffs in the case – the Milwaukee Chapter of the NAACP and Voces de la Frontera – was entered as evidence in the case and was part of a body of material that was considered prior the judge's decision.

The data on people turned away from the polls or not allowed to register because of the ID issue was critical in demonstrating the potentially powerful negative impact of the ill-conceived Voter ID Law. The fact that the judge likely considered that data in making his decision is proof positive of the important role our city's legislative branch plays in ensuring good, equitable decisions are made when considering our citizens' sacred right to vote.

Also, the leadership and legal teams of Voces de la Frontera and the Milwaukee Chapter of the NAACP deserve credit for stepping up and challenging this potentially harmful new law.

I will continue working to make sure "solutions in search of a problem" – such as the Voter ID Law – do not negatively impact or disenfranchise Milwaukee residents.

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