



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

City Hall, 200 E. Wells Street, Milwaukee, WI 53202 • www.city.milwaukee.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 28, 2020

Wisconsin municipalities should be able to count mail-in ballots early

Statement from members of the Milwaukee Common Council – Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, Alderman Cavalier Johnson, Alderman Nik Kovac, Alderman Robert J. Bauman, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Alderman Khalif J. Rainey, Alderwoman JoCasta Zamarripa, Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderman Michael J. Murphy, Alderman Mark Borkowski, Alderman José G. Pérez, Alderman Scott Spiker, Alderwoman Marina Dimitrijevic and Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II

During yesterday’s “UPFRONT” television program, U.S. Senator Ron Johnson stated his support for the Wisconsin Legislature passing a bill that would allow mail-in ballots to be counted prior to the November 3rd election.

Senator Johnson in the interview stated, “I think we should change the law so the ballots can be counted well before Election Day, so that Wisconsin results are known by 9, 10, 11 o'clock on Election Day, so Wisconsin isn't part of the problem.” We couldn't agree more with this sentiment and are calling on the Legislature to act on this matter soon and have Wisconsin join the dozens of states that already allow for early ballot tallying. Such a bill has already passed in the Assembly, but the Senate did not take it up before the session adjourned.

Because of the continued COVID-19 pandemic, a record influx of mail-in ballots is expected and current Wisconsin law does not allow election clerks to unseal and count such ballots until 7 a.m. on Election Day when polls open. It is paramount that the public have faith in our democratic process, and current law could severely hamper the ability of municipalities to report results in a timely manner, possibly casting doubt on results, and allowing some politicians to stoke fears about those results.

It's time for the Legislature to listen to Senator Johnson, local election clerks and the many others calling for this change. The vote is sacred and partisanship should never get in the way of our elections.