



CITY OF MILWAUKEE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Ruling on ballot drop boxes sure looks like an effort to disenfranchise certain voters

Statement from members of the Common Council: Alderman Khalif J. Rainey, Alderman Ashanti Hamilton, Alderman Nik Kovac, Alderman Robert J. Bauman, Alderwoman Nikiya Dodd, Alderwoman Milele A. Coggs, Alderwoman Chantia Lewis, Alderman Michael J. Murphy, Alderman José G. Pérez, Alderman Scott Spiker and Alderman Russell W. Stamper, II

A Waukesha County judge ruled last week that drop boxes placed by municipalities to collect absentee ballots are illegal under state law. State law requires voters to either mail back absentee ballots or deliver them to the clerk’s office in person.

A challenge to the judge’s ruling is moving forward, and it is expected that a stay or injunction will be sought to allow municipalities to continue to use the drop boxes (including for the February 15 primary election) while the ruling undergoes legal challenges.

Milwaukee’s top election official has stated that the drop box “is an extension” of her office, allowing voters across the city to exercise their right to vote without the inconvenience of needing to come down to City Hall in person during a pandemic.

We wholeheartedly agree.

Additionally, the city’s drop boxes are guarded 24 hours with video surveillance, and each box is subject to careful chain of custody procedures.

The Republican onslaught across the U.S. to change laws to curb voting rights and to suppress the vote in areas that tend to vote for Democrats is anti-democracy and anti-American. The sacred right to vote must be protected at all costs, and we strongly support the City of Milwaukee joining the legal challenges to this suspect ruling in Waukesha.

The courts and elected officials should be working to make it easier for people to vote – not throwing up roadblocks to voting.