

Office of Governor Tony Evers
115 East State Capitol
Madison, WI 53707



April 1, 2020

Dear Governor Evers:

As Chair of the City of Milwaukee Equal Rights Commission (ERC), I work with my fellow Commissioners to educate and enforce equal rights throughout the city. I write to appeal and insist -- **that as Governor, you use the authority given to you as the chief executive of the state and postpone the elections to a later date to ensure equal access to the polls.** The ERC is in total support of the recent Amicus Brief the City filed in United States District Court Western District of Wisconsin.

Regardless of the cause or state of the emergency, voting is a right that **must be protected.**

Regardless if Wisconsin has the proper election contingency plans written into its state constitution, **we must maintain and uphold civil rights.**

Understandably you have issued a state-wide Stay-at-Home order to protect the health of all Wisconsinites. For this, thank you for these efforts. Bold, decisive, and well-informed leadership is what we all need during these uncertain times. In this spirit, I also applaud Mayor Barrett and especially Health Commissioner Kowalik for efforts maintaining safety with integrity on a local level.

The integrity of the spring election – which decides our local, state, and nation’s leadership is at the utmost importance and should be done without question or any imposed restrictions.

Elected leaders must take into consideration accessibility for voters who have historically faced barriers to the ballot, including Black, Latino, Asian, Native American, persons with disabilities, students, and the Trans community.

Due to the below circumstances, the election must be postponed as they are burdensome and another form of a poll tax:

- **In-person early voting and election day locations being closed.** This blatantly disenfranchises voters by forcing them to register online and by a certain date. This assumes that voter’s own a computer and internet access. Many do not, nor have access as public libraries and government buildings are closed.
- **While curbside voting is innovative and responsive to voting needs, requiring a vehicle to utilize this option imposes an undue burden.** This assumes that voters own or have access to a vehicle, possess a valid driver’s (not voting) ID, can afford to pay for an Uber / Lyft, or taxi to cast their ballot. Many do not.

Again, I call on you as Governor to postpone these elections as several other states have already done to ensure every registered voter has the opportunity to choose our republic, fairly.

Sincerely,

Chez Ordoñez
Chair, Equal Rights Commission



Board of Commissioners

Chez Ordoñez, Chair
Tony Snell, Vice Chair
Martha Collins
Jessica Boling
Mayhoua Moua
Jennifer Bennett
William Crowley
Nathan Guequierre

City Hall
Equal Rights Commission
200 E. Wells Street, Room 606
Milwaukee, WI 53202
414-286-5532
erc@milwaukee.gov
milwaukee.gov/erc