



The Honorable Phil Murphy
Office of the Governor
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June 30, 2022

RE: Election Bills A3820/S2869 and A3823/S2867

Dear Governor Murphy,

The League of Women Voters of New Jersey and the New Jersey Institute for Social Justice write to express our concerns regarding certain provisions in two election bills that are awaiting your signature. Particularly concerning is the potential disenfranchisement of New Jersey voters. As a longstanding champion of voting rights, we know that you do not wish to take our state backward.

First, we would like to thank you for supporting and encourage you to sign the following election bills: A3817, A3819 and A3822. While not perfect, these bills make critical improvements, including the ability for voters to apply for a mail-in ballot online, invest in voter education and protect voter privacy at polling places.

However, there are bills recently passed by the Legislature about which we have grave concerns, and we ask you to use your power as Governor to protect our democracy.

We urge you to issue an absolute veto of A3820/S2869. As you know, in New Jersey unaffiliated voters have until the day of the primary election to decide which party to join. This is a core part of our election process. This legislation will change the law to no longer send unaffiliated vote-by-mail voters ballots during primary elections, but instead send these voters party affiliation forms. This will create a two-tier system of rights for voters. In-person unaffiliated voters will have until the primary election day to decide which party to join, but unaffiliated vote-by-mail voters will have to decide weeks in advance. Over 21,000 unaffiliated voters – roughly half of the total number of unaffiliated voters in this election – made use of mail-in ballots during this year's primary, and many thousands more would be affected by this



bill. It is important to remember that voting in-person is not possible for many mail-in voters – including people with disabilities, mobility issues, elderly voters and people who are not physically near their polling place. This provision would impact even more voters in a presidential election year, particularly if New Jersey were to hold an earlier presidential primary. We urge you to veto this bill.

We also urge you to conditionally veto A3823/S2867. This bill requires counties to update voter rolls up to 10 days before the election to remove voters who are deceased. While we support necessary voter roll upkeep when done properly, this legislation lacks an important fail-safe measure: any voter who was incorrectly removed would be unable to re-register in time to have their vote count. We recommend a conditional veto of the enhanced death record review provisions of this legislation until same-day voter registration (A1966/S247) is signed into law. Same-day registration - an issue we are grateful you support - will provide a safety net for any inadvertent voter purge. We urge you to directly express the need for same-day voter registration when issuing this conditional veto.

Sincerely,

League of Women Voters of New Jersey

New Jersey Institute for Social Justice