

**UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-EAU CLAIRE
STUDENT SENATE RESOLUTION**

**CONDEMNING THE STATE OF WISCONSIN’S ROLE IN VOTER SUPPRESSION
DURING THE 2020 PRIMARY ELECTION AMIDST THE COVID-19 PRECAUTIONS**

1 WHEREAS, the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire (UW-Eau Claire) Student Senate is the official
2 voice of the student body; and

3 WHEREAS, Student Senate believes that civic engagement is an important value that should be
4 instilled within students¹, and one of the main objectives for the Intergovernmental Affairs Commission
5 is to serve as a presence for education on voter registration; and

6 WHEREAS, COVID-19 has been declared a global pandemic by the World Health Organization
7 (WHO); and

8 WHEREAS, the Center for Disease and Control Prevention (CDC) recommends no more than 10
9 people gathering at a time to delay the spread of COVID-19; and

10 WHEREAS, responsive changes to university functions, such as the suspension of in-person
11 courses and the closure of residence halls, have unexpectedly relocated students to their hometowns
12 which may be out of state or far from Eau Claire; and

13 WHEREAS, on March 24, 2020, Governor Tony Evers issued Emergency Order #12 Safer at Home
14 Order for “all individuals present within the State of Wisconsin [...] to stay at home or at their place of
15 residence” with exceptions only for essential circumstances to reduce the spread of COVID-19, outlining
16 “those who are vulnerable as a result of underlying health conditions should take additional precautions”;
17 and

18 WHEREAS, voter suppression is defined as “any effort, legal or illegal, by way of laws,
19 administrative laws and/or tactics that prevents eligible voters from registering to vote or voting”; and

20 WHEREAS, the cumulative total of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the State of Wisconsin as of the
21 end of April 7th, 2020 was 2,578²; and

22 WHEREAS, Governor Tony Evers declared Executive Order 73 suspending in-person voting on April
23 7th deeming “necessary to protect the security of the people of Wisconsin and slow the spread of COVID-
24 19”; and

25 WHEREAS, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overruled this Executive Order the night before the
26 election, a decision that was upheld by the United States Supreme Court; and

27 WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin had 3.3 million active registered voters as of August 1, 2019³
28 and over 1.2 million absentee ballots requested for the spring 2020 primary election; and

¹ <https://www.uwec.edu/student-senate/get-involved/voter-registration/>

² <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/index.htm>

³ <https://elections.wi.gov/node/6549>

29 WHEREAS, many voters requested an absentee ballot, before or by April 3rd, that did not arrive on
30 time, which left them no options other than to vote in-person or not vote at all; and

31 WHEREAS, responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic forced the closure and relocation of hundreds of
32 polling locations less than a week before the election; and

33 WHEREAS, the changes in and reduction of polling locations affected voters in every county
34 throughout Wisconsin which contributed to long wait times and lower voter turnout; and

35 WHEREAS, allowing in-person voting endangered and potentially exposed voters and poll workers
36 to COVID-19, due to the large numbers that gathered at the polls; and

37 WHEREAS, Eau Claire County Clerk reports voter turnout was 34.2% across the county of over
38 100,000 residents⁴, which was 13% lower than expected;

39 NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, UW-Eau Claire Student Senate condemns the overturn of
40 Executive Order 73 by the Wisconsin Supreme Court that reinstated in-person voting during the COVID-
41 19 pandemic; and

42 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate condemns the lack of proactive and preventative
43 measures by elected officials to ensure a fair election during the COVID-19 Pandemic; and

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate supports non-partisan collaboration for fair access to
45 elections for all members of its community and the State of Wisconsin; and

46 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate encourages the elected representatives of Wisconsin
47 to recognize and consider all constituents, especially historically underrepresented perspectives, including
48 students, when making decisions; and

49 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate condemns past, present, and future acts of voter
50 suppression; and

51 BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution, President Johnson will transmit a
52 copy to Dr. James Schmidt, Chancellor; Dr. Patricia Klein, Provost and Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs;
53 Dr. Warren Anderson, Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Student Affairs; John Haven III, Vice
54 Chancellor, Finance and Administration; LaRue Pierce, Dean of Students; Wisconsin State Supreme Court:
55 Chief Justice Patience D. Roggensack, Justice Ann Walsh Bradley, Justice Annette Kingsland Ziegler, Justice
56 Rebecca Grassl Bradley, Justice Daniel Kelly, Justice Rebecca Frank Dallet, Justice Brian Hagedorn;
57 Representative Jodi Emerson; Senator Jeff Smith; Governor Tony Evers; Olivia Woodmansee, UW System
58 Traditional Student Regent; Torrey Tiedeman, UW System Non-Traditional Student Regent; Teresa
59 O'Halloran, Director, Affirmative Action; Miranda Ricci, Student Body President, UW-Eau Claire Barron
60 County; Michael Rindo, Assistant Chancellor, Facilities and University Relations; Evan Weiher, Chair,
61 University Senate; Kelly Holzer, Chair, University Staff Council; Abbie Wagaman, Chair, UW Student
62 Representatives;

⁴ <https://www.weau.com/content/news/Polls-closed-in-Wisconsin-spring-primary-569461491.html>

SUBMITTED BY:

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