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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, the State of Wisconsin had 3.3 million active registered voters as of August 1, 2019³ 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
WHEREAS, many voters requested an absentee ballot, before or by April 3rd, that did not arrive on
time, which left them no options other than to vote in-person or not vote at all; and
WHEREAS, responses to the COVID-19 Pandemic forced the closure and relocation of hundreds of
polling locations less than a week before the election; and
WHEREAS, the changes in and reduction of polling locations affected voters in every county
throughout Wisconsin which contributed to long wait times and lower voter turnout; and
WHEREAS, allowing in-person voting endangered and potentially exposed voters and poll workers
to COVID-19, due to the large numbers that gathered at the polls; and
WHEREAS, Eau Claire County Clerk reports voter turnout was 34.2% across the county of over
100,000 residents, which was 13% lower than expected;
NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, UW-Eau Claire Student Senate condemns the overturn of
Executive Order 73 by the Wisconsin Supreme Court that re instituted in-person voting during the COVID-
19 pandemic; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate condemns the lack of proactive and preventative
measures by elected officials to ensure a fair election during the COVID-19 Pandemic; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate supports non-partisan collaboration for fair access to
elections for all members of its community and the State of Wisconsin; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate encourages the elected representatives of Wisconsin
to recognize and consider all constituents, especially historically underrepresented perspectives, including
students, when making decisions; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Student Senate condemns past, present, and future acts of voter
suppression; and
BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that upon passage of this resolution, President Johnson will transmit a
copy to Dr. James Schmidt, Chancellor; Dr. Patricia Klein, Provost and Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs;
Dr. Warren Anderson, Vice Chancellor, Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Student Affairs; John Haven III, Vice
Chancellor, Finance and Administration; LaRue Pierce, Dean of Students; Wisconsin State Supreme Court:
Chief Justice Patience D. Roggensack, Justice Ann Walsh Bradley, Justice Annette Kingsland Ziegler, Justice
Rebecca Grassl Bradley, Justice Daniel Kelly, Justice Rebecca Frank Dallet, Justice Brian Hagedorn;
Representative Jodi Emerson; Senator Jeff Smith; Governor Tony Evers; Olivia Woodmansee, UW System
Traditional Student Regent; Torrey Tiedeman, UW System Non-Traditional Student Regent; Teresa
O’Halloran, Director, Affirmative Action; Miranda Ricci, Student Body President, UW-Eau Claire Barron
County; Michael Rindo, Assistant Chancellor, Facilities and University Relations; Evan Weiher, Chair,
University Senate; Kelly Holzer, Chair, University Staff Council; Abbie Wagaman, Chair, UW Student
Representatives;

https://www.weau.com/content/news/Polls-closed-in-Wisconsin-spring-primary-569461491.html
SUBMITTED BY:

Anna Ziebell, Vice President
Stephanie Hoeksema, Senate Equity Director
Austin Gulbrandson, Intergovernmental Affairs Director
Mary Stoutenburg, Student Organizations Director
Grace Luloff, Intergovernmental Affairs Intern and On-Campus Senator
Sophia Spittlemeister Off-Campus Senator