**VOTING RIGHTS**

The right to vote is fundamental, and one that defines the United State and represents a broader freedom that is promised to the American people. Throughout Lena’s tenure in the State Legislature, she’s fought diligently to expand voter’s rights, participation, and civic engagement. In recent years, it has become clear that the battle for voting rights is far from over. Wisconsin has deviated from its tradition of transparent, open, and accessible democracy that has allowed it to thrive in the past. Lena knows that by making it harder for some of the most vulnerable voters to participate in the political process, Wisconsin will inevitably be left with policies and policymakers that do not represent everybody’s interests.

President Lyndon B. Johnson said before signing the Voting Rights Act that “the vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.” Lena introduced legislation that seeks to establish the fundamental right to vote as a part of Wisconsin’s Constitution (2015 SJR 32: <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2015/proposals/sjr32>).

She also voted against the Voter ID law, which will effectively disenfranchise 300,000 voters and voted for the Government Accountability Board, which has been praised as one of the nation’s most effective election authorities due to its nonpartisan nature and its impartial decision-making regarding election and campaign financing laws. Fair elections are fundamental to ensuring democracy works and Lena strives to preserve measures guaranteeing everyone’s voice is heard. Additionally, Lena introduced or co-sponsored the following bills to improve access to the right to vote:

-**2013 SB 404**: Extends the accommodations available to electors who, as a result of a disability, are unable to enter a polling place on Election Day or a site used for absentee voting in person. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2013/proposals/sb404>

-**2011 SB 311**: Puts in places measures to prohibit intimidating, suppressing, or deterring a prospective voter from exercising their right to vote. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb311>

-**2011 SB 481**: Permits an unexpired identification card issued by a technical college to be used as proof of identification for voting purposes. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb481>

-**2011 SB 553**: Use of veterans identification cards as proof of identification for voting. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb553>

-**2011 SB 329**: Restoring the right to vote to certain persons barred from voting as a result of a felony conviction, changing the information required on voter registration forms, and changing voting procedure for certain persons who are convicted of felonies. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb329>

-**2011 AB 738**: Requires DOT to operate mobile DMV service centers at which DOT receives applications for operator’s licenses and identification cards. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/ab738>

-**2011 SB 162**: Requires DOT to include, on application forms for identification cards, a statement that there is no fee for the initial issuance, renewal, or reinstatement if the purpose of the card is for voting. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb162>

-**2011 SB 256**: Exempts the issuance of a duplicate identification card by DOT from fee collection if the purpose is for voting. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb256>

-**2011 SB 165**: A resident of Milwaukee County may obtain a free birth certificate for a period of time if the resident needs the birth certificate to obtain a driver’s license or identification card for the purpose of voting. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/proposals/sb165>

-**2009 SB 240**: Wisconsin Democracy Restoration Act; Restoring the right to vote to certain persons barred from voting as a result of a felony conviction and changing the information required on voter registration forms. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2009/proposals/sb240>

-**2009 SB 528**: Methods of voting by members of a cooperative. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2009/proposals/sb528>

-**2009 SB 645**: Electronic voter registration. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2009/proposals/sb645>

-**2007 AB 530**: Leave provided to employees for voting on election day and grating certain state employees a holiday on the day of the general election. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2007/proposals/ab530>

-**2005 AB 865**: Restoring the right to vote to a person barred from voting as the result of a felony. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2005/proposals/ab865>

-**2005 SB 249**: Allowing absentee voting and voter registration at satellite locations, requiring DOT to include a voter registration application as part of each operator’s license and identification card application and renewal application. <http://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2005/proposals/sb249>

Voting Rights Clips

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l1AyG2hm48s>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k3Mg8SrmfzQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DJb-dvfLQ3k>