



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Contact: Rep. Mark Spreitzer, 608-237-9145**

## **Rep. Mark Spreitzer Introduces 2020 Vote By Mail Legislation**

MADISON- Today, State Representative Mark Spreitzer (D-Beloit) and legislative Democrats introduced LRB 5972, a proposal to move Wisconsin elections in 2020 to a vote-by-mail system.

“We cannot allow the confusion and fear that surrounded the 2020 Spring Election to happen again,” Rep. Spreitzer said. “Deciding now to move our elections to vote by mail for the rest of the year will give state and local officials time to plan and execute a safe, smooth, and secure election. While thousands of Wisconsinites already voted by mail in the Spring Election, it is clear that we must reinforce and improve our system ahead of the November Presidential Election. It is critical that we invest the time and resources to ensure that Wisconsinites can exercise their right to vote without risking their health.”

Representative Spreitzer has received numerous contacts from constituents, local elected officials, and local clerks who all shared concerns about Wisconsin’s usual election system during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“It is absolutely clear to me that we need to expand and strengthen our vote-by-mail system by making it easier for voters to use and giving clerks the time they need to prepare to execute a vote-by-mail election. Right now, voting in person is dangerous. I will not stand by while my family, friends, and neighbors are forced to choose between risking their health or giving up their right to vote.”

Under the vote-by-mail proposal, registered voters will be sent a ballot by their clerk. Unlike the confusing court rulings in the days that preceded the 2020 Spring Election, the bill is clear that all ballots must be postmarked by the day of the election, and have one week after the election to be received by local clerks. Because ballots are automatically mailed to registered voters, the photo ID requirements for balloting are removed, as there is no opportunity for them to be implemented under this system. To further protect voters from community spread of COVID-19, witness signatures would not be required in 2020 elections. Registration deadlines are extended to allow voters more time to register ahead of Election Day, and polling locations are open for limited use by voters who are unable to use a mail-in ballot due to disability or difficulty reading, writing, or understanding English. Finally, the bill provides funding to cover the costs of mailing

### **45<sup>TH</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT**

State Capitol: PO Box 8953, Madison, WI 53708 (608) 266-1192  
Toll-free: (888) 534-0045 FAX: (608) 282-3645 E-mail: Rep.Spreitzer@legis.wisconsin.gov  
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voters their ballots, updating the voter registration system, and implementing a public information campaign to ensure that every voter knows about these important changes.

“We must act without delay to ensure that our electoral system is ready for the remainder of our 2020 elections. I know that local clerks did everything they could given the incredible pressure and scarce resources they dealt with before Tuesday’s election. I do not want any voter or any clerk to have to deal with such a disastrous situation again,” Rep. Spreitzer said.

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