



May 12, 2021

The League of Women Voters of Michigan continues to question the need for this legislation after one of the safest and most secure election in Michigan's history took place in November 2020. There is no need for these bills.

The League of Women Voters of Michigan opposes, SB 300, 301, 279, SB 290-295, and SB 309.

- 1) SBs 300 and 301 add early voting for one day prior to the election, but they do not go far enough. The amount of time for early voting is completely inadequate and adds additional costs for local units of government.
- 2) SB 279 greatly increases the number of challengers and only makes the work of the absentee counting board more difficult.
- 3) SBs 290-291 ban nonpartisan challengers and allow all candidates to appoint challengers. These new definitions only serve to increase the partisanship of the election process and do nothing to assure accuracy and transparency of the election.
- 4) SBs 292 – 293 prohibit nonpartisan challengers and require training with no penalty for noncompliance. The training would be good for three years that seems unrealistic.
- 5) SB 294 adds the ratio of partisan election inspectors in every community. That may be a problem for some communities to meet.
- 6) SB 295 requires election workers to be trained to match tabulator counts to voter counts hourly which may not result in an accurate count. There is no penalty for not balancing and could result in more challenged elections.
- 7) SB 309 gives poll challengers more rights than poll workers and could greatly increase harassment of voters. The challengers would be able to use a smart phone, tablet, laptop, or other electronic devices in a polling place or at a counting board which could result in slowing down elections, intimidate voters and violate the secrecy of a ballot.

The League is still concerned why this package of bills is necessary. Last year the Legislature passed with a bipartisan vote SB 757, now PA 177 of 2020, sponsored by Senator Ruth Johnson. The new law made changes such as requiring video monitoring of drop boxes installed after October 2020 and allowing election inspectors to work in shifts. None of these 39 bills were considered then.

The League of Women Voters urges you to work on legislation that will increase voter turnout in the next election, so all voters are heard. If you really want to secure and improve elections, we urge you to invest in upgraded equipment and expand staffing for election administrators.

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