



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 13, 2020

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MEDIA ADVISORY: Voting Rights Organizations to Testify at Hearing on COVID & Fall Elections Bills Tomorrow/Thursday 1pm – 5pm

Media are invited to observe the public hearing by the Joint Committee on Election Laws on bills to enable safe, accessible and secure voting in the fall elections.

WHO: Voting rights organizations including Common Cause Massachusetts, MassVOTE, the League of Women Voters, and the ACLU of Massachusetts.

WHAT: Testimony before the Joint Committee on Election Laws in support of HD 5075, An Act Ensuring Safe and Participatory 2020 State Elections in Response to COVID-19.

WHEN: Tomorrow, Thursday, May 14, starting at 1pm. Speakers are expected to give four minutes of remarks, followed by six minutes of Q&A from Committee members. Advocates will testify towards the end of the hearing and are currently scheduled from 3:15-4:15, although that could change.

WHERE: Senator Barry Finegold's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BarryFinegoldMA/>

WHY: [HD 5075 has over 80 co-sponsors](#) in the legislature and has been endorsed by over 70 organizations since it was filed by Representatives Michael Moran and John Lawn last week. Lead Senate co-sponsors include Senators Eric Lesser, Adam Hinds, and Harriette Chandler.

The bill will do the following to help voters participate in fall elections despite the coronavirus threat:

- require the Secretary of State to mail ballots to all Massachusetts voters before the November election without an application required;
- affirm coronavirus concerns as a reason to allow all voters to vote by absentee ballot in the September primary and November general elections;
- require the Secretary of State to establish a statewide online portal for voters to apply for and track the progress of absentee ballots;
- allow two weeks of early voting before the September primary, and three weeks of early voting before the November election;

- allow election officials to scan absentee and early voting ballots in the clerk’s offices when they are received – but not permit results to be calculated or announced until the polls close;
- change the deadline to register to vote or update voter registrations to 10 days before the election;
- allow general election ballots postmarked on or before November 3 to be counted, as long as they are received by November 13; and
- require the Secretary of State to issue regulations governing public health safeguards at early voting sites and polling places to protect voters and poll workers.

The hearing will also include Secretary of Commonwealth Galvin’s proposal, as well as bills filed by Senator Cynthia Creem (S2653), by Senator Rebecca Rausch (2654), by Representative Jeffrey Roy and Representative Jon Santiago (HD 5066), Representative Paul Mark and Lindsay Sabodosa (H4623), by Representative Tami Gouveia (HD 5077), Representative Jeffrey Roy (H4699) and by Senator Paul Feeney (SD 2963).

The hearing will be livestreamed on Senator Barry Finegold’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/BarryFinegoldMA/>.

Organizations endorsing HD 5075 include:

Common Cause Massachusetts
 The ACLU of Massachusetts
 The League of Women Voters of Massachusetts
 MASSPIRG
 MassVOTE
 The Massachusetts Voter Table
 1199 SEIU Massachusetts
 NAACP-Boston Branch
 Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition
 Mass Communities Action Network
 Neighbor to Neighbor Massachusetts
 Sierra Club Massachusetts Chapter
 Garrison Trotter Neighborhood Association
 Lift+Every+Vote
 Environmental League of Massachusetts
 Worcester Interfaith
 Progressive Massachusetts
 Unitarian Universalist Mass Action
 Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
 Reclaim Our Democracy
 Franklin County Continuing the Political Revolution
 Charles Hamilton Houston Institute for Race and Justice
 The Real Cost of Prisons Project
 End Mass Incarceration Together
 Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action
 Massachusetts Peace Action

Progressive Democrats of Massachusetts
Mental Health Legal Advisors Committee
Jetpac
Voter Choice for Massachusetts 2020
Small Planet Institute
Indivisible Martha's Vineyard
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Rosie's Place
Indivisible Northampton
MITvote
The Equal Democracy Project at Harvard Law School
PHENOM
Criminal Justice Reform Task Force of Congregation Dorshei Tzedek
Burlington Democratic Town Committee
MAPS-Massachusetts Alliance of Portuguese Speakers
Greater Boston Section-National Council of Negro Women
MA Association of Community Development Corporations
Arise for Social Justice
La Comunidad, Inc
Chilmark Democratic Town Committee
Progressive For Democracy in America
Clean Water Action MA
Four Freedoms Coalition
Coalition for Social Justice
Racial Justice Rising
National Association of Social Workers, MA Chapter
iVOTE
American Promise
Berkshire Democratic Brigades
Massachusetts Affordable Housing Alliance
YWCA Southeastern Massachusetts
YWCA Cambridge
YWCA Malden
American Federation of Teachers-MA
Right to the City Boston
Alternatives for Community and Environment
City Life Vida Urbana
New England United for Justice
Black Directors' Network
Somerville Democratic City Committee
Young Democrats of Massachusetts

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The Election Modernization Coalition is comprised of the ACLU of Massachusetts, Common Cause Massachusetts, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, MASSPIRG, MassVOTE, and the Massachusetts Voter Table.