

## COMMON CAUSE PENNSYLVANIA OPPOSES HR1032

Pennsylvania House of Representatives

October 1, 2020

Dear Representative:

On behalf of Common Cause Pennsylvania and our 36,000 members across the Commonwealth, we are writing today to urge you to VOTE NO on House Resolution 1032 (HR 1032). In this time of heightened political tensions and on the cusp of a generation-defining election, it is essential that we do not politicize Pennsylvania's election administration or cast doubt on the ability of Pennsylvania Department of State and county elections officials to run a safe, secure, and accessible election.

Common Cause PA has long advocated for increased transparency and accountability in government, including in our election processes. But HR 1032 as written does not provide true transparency and accountability. Instead, it creates a partisan committee appointed solely by the Speaker of the House and vests the chair with nearly unlimited subpoena power.

This body has a history of passing bi-partisan election reform to better serve our Pennsylvania voters. Act 35 of 2020, Act 12 of 2020, and Act 77 of 2019 were all passed with the bipartisan spirit of working for all Pennsylvania voters. This resolution casts a shadow over those great achievements.

Act 35 provided the General Assembly with the data necessary to make an informed decision in passing legislation aimed at improving the General Election for both county election workers and voters alike. However, the Legislature has still failed to move any bills providing for this anticipated relief. **The House should focus on passing meaningful reform measures, not participating in a political exercise that leaves voters and election officials waiting for resolution.**

The scope of powers of this committee are both too vast and too vague to not raise alarm bells, especially when paired with the attacks on the ability of the Department of State to successfully administer our elections. To call into question the position of the Department and its ability to carry out its function properly, serves only to sow doubt and distrust into our elections.

We are also very concerned with the subpoena power that is granted to the chair of the committee. Subpoenas can be useful tools for ensuring transparency in government. However, this resolution provides that the power is solely held by the committee chair and can be

exercised by them alone without consultation or agreement from the other members of the committee, including the minority party.

A fair and free election in November, where every eligible voter can vote and where the results are accurate and trusted by voters and candidates will take all of us. Passing House Resolution 1032 would do nothing but undermine our democratic process. This resolution, as it stands, is ripe for abuse and we strongly urge a NO vote. Pennsylvania voters deserve better.

