

Wilmington, Delaware  
June 16, 2022

#xxxx

**Sponsor:**

**Council  
Member  
Harlee**

**WHEREAS**, House Bill No. 25 (HB No. 25), An Act to Amend Title 15 of the Delaware Code Relating to Elections, provides for election day registration for presidential primary, primary, special and general elections, and permits same day registration at polling places for eligible voters who present appropriate documentation; and

**WHEREAS**, the electoral system is the bedrock of a democratic governance system. It is the mechanism whereby citizens express their vision for the political future of their nation, state or locality, as well as the primary means through which they hold their elected officials accountable for executing the public will. Ensuring that every eligible citizen can participate in this aspect of civic life up until the polls have closed, reinforces procedural fairness and residents' trust in the democratic process; and

**WHEREAS**, Title 15, Chapter 20, §2036 of Subchapter V of the Delaware Code currently stipulates that, "The last date to register to vote for any presidential primary, primary and general election shall be the fourth Saturday prior to the date of the election." According to the Pew Research Center, from 2016 to 2020, there was a 74% increase in the number of registered voters nationally who felt that the presidential election 'really matters,' however, nearly half anticipated having difficulties casting their vote. The existing law makes Delaware's voters more susceptible to experiencing difficulties when voting. It places individuals who are less familiar with the electoral process in the State of Delaware at greater risk of exclusion and places poll workers in the precarious position of having to refuse otherwise eligible voters a chance to participate in the governance process; and

**WHEREAS**, the bureaucratic procedures associated with voting can be intimidating, particularly to new residents, young people, those with low-income, racial and ethnic minorities and individuals from other marginalized communities. Registration at polling locations, which are located within residents' communities and staffed by fellow community members, has the potential to streamline the applications to vote and improve the likelihood that those documents are complete and accurate; and

**WHEREAS**, technological advancements now allow processing of registrations and ballots to occur almost instantaneously, the logistical and recordkeeping concerns that were the basis of the existing guidelines are no longer relevant. Our laws should make every possible accommodation to ensure that those who are eligible to participate in the voting process are able to exercise their rights.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WILMINGTON** is in favor of HB No. 25, which allows for same day registration of voters at the polls with proper documentation of their eligibility.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** this Legislative body encourages the Delaware General Assembly to support to HB No. 25, which constitutes a major step in increasing the inclusivity of our State's electoral process.

Passed by City Council,

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

**SYNOPSIS:** This Resolution is in support of House Bill No. 25 (HB No. 25), An Act to Amend Title 15 of the Delaware Code Relating to Elections, which provides for election day registration for presidential primary, primary, special and general elections, and permits same day registration at polling places for eligible voters who present appropriate documentation. The electoral system is the bedrock of a democratic governance system, and our laws should make every possible accommodation to ensure that those who are eligible to participate in the voting process are able to exercise their rights.

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