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2020 Election Review Begins with First House Hearing

HARRISBURG (January 21, 2021) – The first of several hearings planned by the House State Government Committee to review the 2020 election kicked off today with lawmakers questioning Secretary of State Kathy Boockvar and Deputy Secretary for Elections and Commissions Jonathan Marks about policies and procedures in place during the Nov. 3 general election.

Pennsylvania ran a successful election during a global pandemic while instituting a completely new voting system amid record turnout, largely because of two sweeping bipartisan reform laws that the General Assembly and administration put in place.

Act 77 of 2019 was the single most sweeping election reform in Pennsylvania in decades. Before implementation could even be finalized and the first votes cast under the new system, COVID-19 hit. Pennsylvania once again acted quickly, approving Act 12 of 2020 to adopt temporary measures to ensure residents' health and safety while protecting the integrity of elections.

Keystone Votes, a nonpartisan coalition comprising 42 civil rights, civil liberties, and good government groups, said that work should continue.

“Strengthening bipartisan election reforms that Pennsylvania enacted over the last two years is an opportunity to unite rather than divide us, especially if we keep the will of the voters front and center,” said Ray Murphy, state coordinator for Keystone Votes.

“Lawmakers should be proud of the changes they made. But even with those sweeping reforms, Pennsylvania is still behind the vast majority of states when it comes to making sure that all voters --- rural, suburban, and urban, as well as Republican, Democrat, and independent --- can count on 21st century convenience and security at the ballot box,” he said.

“It is our hope that these hearings, under Chairman Seth Grove’s leadership, lead to an even better election system for all Pennsylvania voters,” Murphy said.

“Passions have run high following the 2020 election, but as these hearings proceed, we remain hopeful that the work will be productive, not partisan,” he said. “The reality is that the foresight

of the General Assembly and administration, and the hard work done by county election officials, county commissioners and professionals at the Department of State, got us through one of the most difficult elections in state history.”

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Keystone Votes, a nonpartisan coalition comprising 42 advocacy and community organizations working to update Pennsylvania’s election system, has been urging the state to start working now on reforms that would modernize the state’s election system, help counties buy modern machines, and update technology to enhance security and accessibility before the 2020 elections. More at www.keystonevotes.org.