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Contact: Ray Murphy
P: 215-847-2503
E: rmurphy@pavoice.org

Keystone Votes Endorses Plan to Delay Primary Election *Postponement ensures public health, protects integrity of elections*

HARRISBURG (March 23, 2020) – Keystone Votes, a nonpartisan coalition comprising 43 civil rights, civil liberties, and good government groups, as well as large civic engagement organizations with members in all 67 counties, today endorsed the commonwealth’s plan to delay the state’s April 28 Primary Election until June because of public health concerns related to the coronavirus (COVID-19).

The House State Government Committee is expected to vote Tuesday on an amended measure (S.B. 422) that would move the Primary Election to June 2 while simultaneously allowing elections officials to begin processing mail-in and absentee ballots earlier, instead of waiting until 8 p.m. on Election Day, as currently required.

“Maintaining the right to vote has never been as important as it is now in this time of crisis,” said Ray Murphy, state coordinator for Keystone Votes. “We are encouraged that during this time of crisis, Gov. Tom Wolf, his administration, and members of the General Assembly are putting aside partisanship to keep Pennsylvanians healthy while ensuring the safety, security, accessibility, and integrity of our election process.”

Keystone Votes, which has been working for years to make voting more convenient, more secure and equally accessible for all who are eligible, has been actively engaged with the Pennsylvania Department of State, legislators, and election officials to fix technical and administrative flaws in Act 77 of 2019, including the provision that prevents counties from being able to report election results from mailed-in ballots on Election Day.

The full House could vote on the amended S.B. 422 as early as Wednesday. The measure would require Senate concurrence. The legislation could be before the governor for his signature before the end of the week.

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Keystone Votes, a nonpartisan coalition comprising 43 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 2018 elections. More at www.keystonevotes.org.