Keystone Votes
THE COALITION FOR MODERN ELECTIONS

Primary Election Exposes Issues that Require Legislative Attention to Fix before November
Keystone Votes outlines agenda to address challenges

HARRISBURG (June 3, 2020) – The Primary Election exposed urgent issues that must be addressed before Pennsylvania's General Election in November, according to 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.

Because so much uncertainty remains, and with a potential for a resurgence of the virus in the fall, pandemic in-person voting may be as difficult, if not more so, in the General Election as it was on Tuesday, when precinct consolidation led to long lines and confusion, voters faced challenges with mail-in ballots and provisional ballots, and poll workers refused to wear personal protective equipment (PPE). The challenges were mitigated only by a low turnout.

"State officials and election directors should be commended for the work they did. Administering elections isn't easy in the best of times. The challenges they faced during this Primary Election were monumental, and they rose to the challenge and did the best they could," said Ray Murphy, state coordinator for Keystone Votes. "Nevertheless, we simply can't ignore some of the real problems that this election exposed, and we should rise up to face them as well by crafting the reforms we need before November to ensure our General Election isn't a disaster."

Looking ahead to the General Election, Keystone Votes has proposed the following:

- Instead of consolidated polling places, the legislature must give counties more flexibility and **authorize county boards of elections to create vote centers and allow curbside drop-off of ballots**.
- **Ballots post-marked on Election Day should be counted up until seven days after the election**, avoiding the problems witnessed in the Primary Election with ballots not making it back to county election offices on time because disruptions.
- Lawmakers should amend state law to **permit counties to begin processing mail-in ballots they receive well before Election Day**, instead of starting to count ballots on Election Day. Early tabulation can be done safely and securely.

- The legislature must **authorize the Department of State and/or county board of elections to send mail-in ballots to all registered voters**.
- The administration and General Assembly must **provide financial support to county boards of election** to ensure poll workers and voters have the proper personal protective equipment (PPE); to pay for printing and pre-paid postage costs for counties to send mail-in ballot applications to all registered voters; and to implement enhanced ballot tracking services.

A full copy of the legislative agenda can be found at www.KeystoneVotes.org.

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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 2020 elections. More at www.keystonevotes.org.