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Disability Vote Coalition Commend Signing of AB-168

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition applauds Governor Evers who today will sign into law AB-168 which will address a barrier to voting for some voters with disabilities. Wisconsin law requires voters to speak their name and address at the polling place before voting. AB 168 will allow voters who cannot state their name and address to have an election official or another individual selected by the voter state the name and address for them.

The discriminatory impact of this requirement was highlighted during the November 2018 election. Disability Rights Wisconsin received contacts from deaf voters, other voters with disabilities and family members regarding the barriers to voting they experienced due to current Wisconsin law requiring them to speak their name and address. Legislators took action to unanimously approved this bill to protect voter rights. Today, AB-168 will be signed into law by Governor Evers.

We thank Representatives Zimmerman, Brostoff, and Subek, and Senators Bernier and Schachtner for their tremendous leadership on this legislation. We are grateful to every member of the legislature and to Governor Evers for joining together to advance this bipartisan legislature. Most of all, we thank those voters with disabilities who experienced discrimination at their polling place for sharing their experience and calling for a change in the law. Thank you also to self advocate Ramsey Lee for his dedicated advocacy. We also thank the Wisconsin Election Commission for their support to date, and with training election officials on the new law.

Voters with disabilities are underrepresented at the polls. The *Rutgers University Fact Sheet on Disability and Voter Turnout in the 2018 Elections* notes a 10.4% gap in Wisconsin voter turnout between citizens with and without disabilities. The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is working to close that gap, address barriers, and increase participation of voters with disabilities.

The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is a non-partisan effort to help ensure full participation in the electoral process for individuals with disabilities including registering to vote, casting a vote, and accessing polling places. It is a project of Disability Rights Wisconsin and the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities.

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*The Wisconsin Disability Vote Coalition is a project of
Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities and Disability Rights Wisconsin*