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Representative Shelia Stubbs Supports Vote by Mail Legislation

MADISON, WI- This morning, Representative Shelia Stubbs (D-Madison) co-sponsored legislation to create a Vote by Mail system for the remainder of Wisconsin's 2020 elections. Mail voting has become increasingly popular throughout the country, and five states currently maximize ballot access by mailing ballots to every voter. Wisconsin's "Pandemic Primary" on April 7th, unnecessarily put public health and people's lives at risk while leaving tens of thousands of voters disenfranchised.

Vote by Mail legislation would allow Wisconsinites to exercise their right to vote while adhering to the Safer at Home Order. Voting by Mail elections are quickly becoming a national conversation during the COVID-19 public health crisis. Several voting rights groups are pushing for a major expansion of mail balloting, and U.S. Senator Ron Wyden, D-Oregon, is partnering with Senator Amy Klobuchar, D-Minnesota, on a bill to require every state to provide the option of a mail ballot in the November election.

Representative Shelia Stubbs released the following statement after co-sponsoring this important Vote by Mail legislation:

"On April 7th, I saw our young people, our elders, our fathers - *our mothers* standing in long lines block after block waiting to cast their vote. They risked their lives to stand in the rain and in the hail to exercise their constitutional right to vote. As it stands right now, the voting system we have is not designed to provide access to free and fair elections during a global pandemic. The system has not changed and that is unacceptable."

Rep. Stubbs noted, "Nearly half (44 %) of all the people who have died of COVID-19 in Wisconsin are Black. This is a shocking reality for a state that has a population of only 6% Black people. We are such a small community and no part it has been spared. Each and every one of us has been affected by this pandemic.

Rep. Stubbs further explained, "The COVID-19 cases and related deaths showcase Wisconsin's severe disparities in access to good health care, nutritious and affordable food, secure housing and jobs that pay a *living-wage*. We do not know how many new cases will be reported as a result of Tuesday's exercise in voter suppression – especially in underserved communities across the state of Wisconsin.

Rep. Stubbs expressed, "This is beyond inequity. Our people have already endured generations of having to choose between our lives and voting. That is why this legislation is so critically important, especially for communities of color. It is our responsibility to make sure that this never happens again."