



## Why Delaware needs Early Voting

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that voting is a fundamental citizen right that must be guaranteed.

Expanding voter access has been a principal goal of the League since its founding. The LWV of Delaware bases its action on the LWVUS position.

### Why do we need early voting?

- Early voting makes it more convenient for Delawareans who may not be able to make it to their polling places on Election Day to cast ballots.
- U.S. Census data has long indicated the #1 reason voters gave for not making it out to the polls was “too busy/couldn’t get time off to vote.” In 2010, 27% of nonvoters gave this answer. After the 2014 midterm elections, a staggering 69% of nonvoters didn’t cast a ballot because they were stuck at school or work, or were too busy, out of town, sick or forgot.<sup>1</sup>
- Early voting reduces lines on Election Day.<sup>2</sup>
- Improves poll worker performance.<sup>2</sup>
- Results in early identification and correction of registration errors and voting system glitches.<sup>2</sup>
- Is hugely popular among the public and leads to increased voter satisfaction.<sup>2</sup>
- It is estimated that in the 2018 midterms nearly 30% of eligible voters voted early.

**What other states have early voting?** 36 other states have early voting including neighboring states of Maryland and New Jersey. In Maryland, election officials say 16.7% of eligible voters cast a ballot early in 2018, up from 8.3% in 2014.<sup>3</sup>

### Will early voting increase costs?

- Costs would need to be examined. DE already has one voting site per county where voters can cast early absentee ballots so costs would depend on additional usage. This may be offset by decreased staff needs at the polling sites.

### The LWV of Delaware supports this bill:

**2019 HB 38 10 DAY EARLY VOTING:** This bill establishes in-person early voting for the State of Delaware. Registered voters will be allowed to vote in-person for at least 10 days prior to an election, up to and including the Saturday and Sunday immediately prior to the election at locations determined by the Commissioner. The Commissioner is also charged with determining whether such voting should occur by voting machine or paper ballot. All other procedures relating to conducting voting are the same as for election day voting. For statewide elections the statute directs that there must be at least one in-person polling place in each county, and an additional location in the city of Wilmington. This Act takes effect on January 1, 2020.

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<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, November, 2014, “Little Enthusiasm, Familiar Divisions after the GOP’s Big Midterm Victory”.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/VotingReport\\_Web.pdf](http://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/publications/VotingReport_Web.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-election-youth/young-u-s-voter-turnout-surges-but-challenges-linger-idUSKCN1N710K>