



**For Immediate Release: October 13, 2021**

## **Press Statement from the Election Modernization Coalition**

Boston, MA: Voting- reform- minded citizens showed up in force at a Lobby Day today for the VOTES Act, filed by **Sen. Cynthia Creem**, Newton, and **Rep. John Lawn**, Watertown. The Act was passed by the full Senate on October 6, and is now headed to the House of Representatives. If passed, it would establish permanent mail-in voting--a provision that was put in place only temporarily in 2020---and enact same day voter registration; both of which are law in many other states.

Guest speakers at the Lobby Day included **Suzanne Lee** of the Chinese Progressive Association who exhorted the crowd to make their voices heard and speak with their elected officials about why this issue is important. She told the group she arrived in this country at the age of 11, and has always worked hard to make democracy work for all.

The chief sponsors also addressed the group. Sen Creem told the group via a taped message how proud she was to be a leader of this effort. Rep Lawn told the crowd it was time for this bill, and that same day registration was key to its success.

Geoff Foster, director of Common Cause, said "I've been to my share of Zoom Lobby Days in the past 18 months, this one was a huge success. Over 100 people showed up to say how important this bill is to them."

Other members of the core group of the Election Modernization Coalition had this to say:

Janet Domenitz, Director, MASSPIRG: "It's win/win: Massachusetts can both catch up to other states and lead at a time when some are going backwards on voting rights."

Cheryl Clyburn Crawford, Executive Director of MassVOTE: "If we truly believe in making our democracy more accessible and inclusive - if we truly want to expand voting rights for all, but especially Black and brown, low income, and immigrant individuals - then the choice is clear. Massachusetts must pass the VOTES Act as soon as possible."

Rahsaan Hall, Director of the Racial Justice Program at the ACLU of Massachusetts: "It's clear that there's a strong desire -- both from legislative leaders and the public -- to strengthen voting rights in a big way this session. As we do so, we need to center racial equity to ensure no eligible voter is left behind."

Patty Comfort, Executive Director of the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts: ""The League of Women Voters encourages the House to act quickly on the VOTES Act and make last fall's reforms permanent and enact same-day voter registration. At a time when far too many states are passing laws to suppress voter participation, Massachusetts can make a major statement in support of ballot access."

Sara Wilson, Civil Rights Fellow of Lawyers for Civil Rights: “Same day voter registration is a common sense reform that will not only boost voter turnout, but will reduce barriers to the ballot for voters of color. Greater racial equity in our elections should not be up for debate.”

Beth Huang, Director, MA Voter Table: “This bill is a top priority for the dozens of organizations that sit at the MA Voter Table.”

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*The Election Modernization Coalition is comprised of the ACLU of Massachusetts, Common Cause Massachusetts, Lawyers for Civil Rights, the League of Women Voters of Massachusetts, MASSPIRG, MassVOTE, and the Massachusetts Voter Table.*