

Governor Carney Signs Early Voting Legislation

New law seeks to increase participation by allowing early, in-person voting

DOVER, Del. – On Sunday, the final day of the 2019 legislative session, Governor Carney signed legislation into law that seeks to increase voter participation in Delaware elections by allowing early, in-person voting.

[House Bill 38](#), sponsored by Representative David Bentz, will allow registered Delaware voters to cast their ballots at polling places up to 10 days before Election Day. The measure will make it easier for all Delawareans to participate in elections.

*“Voting is our most fundamental right as Delawareans and Americans,” said **Governor Carney**. “Regardless of zip code or party affiliation, we should make it easier for all Delawareans to cast their ballots, choose their elected officials, and participate in our democratic process. Thank you to Representative Bentz and other members of the General Assembly for their continued partnership, and for their leadership on this issue.”*

“Voting is a fundamental part of our society. We should be doing everything in our power to make it easier for working Delawareans across the state to vote in our elections, because when everyone participates, we all stand to do better,” said **Representative David Bentz**, House Bill 38’s lead sponsor. “Early voting reduces stress on the voting system, creates shorter lines on Election Day, and increases access to voting as well as voter satisfaction. This new law will help increase

voter turnout in our elections, which should always be a common goal.”

“One of our top priorities this year was to enact meaningful election reform in Delaware and this is one of the bills that I’m most proud of,” said **Senate Majority Leader Nicole Poore**. “Right now, participating in the electoral process – the activity that supports our whole system of government – is limited to 13 hours on one day, every two years, and you absolutely have to be there in person or request an absentee ballot. We should be doing all we can to make voting easier and with this legislation Delaware takes a major step forward in that effort.”

“Families today face a number of demands, such as juggling childcare demands and simply trying to make ends meet,” said Senate co-prime sponsor **Senator Bryan Townsend**. “Thirty-five states, both red and blue, have recognized that fact and extended their voting periods to multiple days. We owe it to Delaware voters to make participating in democracy easier and I’m proud of my colleagues for coming together to support this important step.”

“By extending the voting period, we’re not only making it easier to cast a ballot but ensuring we have fairer elections in Delaware,” said fellow co-prime **Senator Stephanie Hansen**. “This measure will reduce lines at the polls. It will allow more time to discover and correct any issues with our new voting system. And it will make casting ballots easier and more convenient for the people we were elected to serve. That’s why 50 lawmakers – both Democrats and Republicans – voted to pass this measure and it’s why it was signed into law today.”

###