POLL WORKER SHORTAGE ACROSS PENNSYLVANIA

Good morning Chairman Folmer, Minority Chair Williams, and other members of the State Government Committee.

- For over a decade, the Election Directors of this great Commonwealth have been sounding the alarm of impending Election Day disaster.

- I am here today to sound an even louder clarion call to those who can affect the change needed to avoid this.

- An election day in the very near future will come to Pennsylvania and, precincts across the state will not open to receive voters.

- To be precise, there are not enough people to staff the polls.

- This is not an exaggeration from the directors in some sort of recruiting effort.

- While we will certainly accept new volunteers, that is only a temporary solution.

- The issues causing these shortages are systemic to an election code that was written in the 1800s, re-codified with little to no change in 1937 and virtually unaltered since.

- Let me provide some perspective.

- The average age of pollworkers across the state is retirement age or older.

- This year pollworkers are elected to their respective positions.

- Many counties are reporting no more than 50% of the available positions have had petitions filed; one county had only 11%.

- That is 58 petitions filed out of a total 528 possible positions.

- Consider that due to the intricacies of the outdated election code, a county with a registered voter total of 140,000 is required to field 900 pollworkers per election.

- That equates to one pollworker to every 156 voters.

- With today's technology, that is simply a waste of resources, both labor and financial.

- Bottom line: the system that counties in Pennsylvania are forced to administer an election under is inefficient at best,

- wastes money, time and manpower and cannot be sustained.

- To give you one more peak inside the dilemma, in one county within the commonwealth out of 176 precincts almost 90 will be short staffed and not have the 5 workers required by code.

- Change must come, and come soon.

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