

PROVIDING FUNDING FOR THE DANE COUNTY CLERK TO ADDRESS BARRIERS TO VOTING CREATED BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The COVID pandemic has drastically changed the election process and has created barriers for voters. The Dane County Clerk is requesting allocation of funds from the CARES Act to help support voters in Dane County created by the COVID 19 pandemic.

This project has 2 major components:

- 1) To provide assistance to Dane County voters during the entire process required to ensure that a voter can cast a vote and have it counted during this COVID pandemic.
- 2) To advertise broadly the availability of the Voter Helpline so voters know that they can obtain assistance as needed to ensure they can vote safely from home.

This project targets people who have been most adversely affected by the onset of COVID 19. This includes people of color, low-income voters, students, and ex-felons now "off paper," people with disabilities, and non-English speaking voters.

Ordinarily, in the absence of a worldwide pandemic, League and Coalition volunteers, who are already highly trained and knowledgeable about all aspects of voting, would provide voter assistance, primarily in person, at hundreds of public and private events and door-to-door canvassing, along with some use of traditional and social media publicity campaigns. Since in-person interaction with voters is mostly not available to us now, we must implement different and new strategies for reaching voters, to keep both volunteers and voters safe from the disease.

Implementation:

- 1) Encourage voters to request absentee ballots so they don't have to physically go to a polling place and risk their health.
- 2) Provide assistance in requesting absentee ballots, including uploading IDs. We have found seniors and students have struggled with this requirement, in particular.
- 3) Provide a witness for absentee ballots for voters who find it difficult to locate one themselves due to social distancing recommendations.
- 4) Continue to help voters to register to vote, obtain an appropriate ID, and get to the polls to vote in person, as desired.

To do these things, we need to reach out to voters via multiple publicity routes, trying to use publicity types that are most appropriate to reach our target groups.

Our budget for publicity will include funding for the development and purchase of print and social media ads, videos, radio spots, billboards. Previously developed Artwork by All Voting is Local (AVL) will be used for efficiency. Publicity efforts will also complement those of other non-profit organizations that are producing videos in showing people how to request an absentee ballot, how to upload an ID, how to register on-line or via paper and mail, what IDs are acceptable for use in Wisconsin, how to complete an absentee certificate envelope, information to counter confusion created by mailers from outside Wisconsin, etc.. These ads will include a Voter Helpline number so people who need personal assistance will know how to contact us.

41 To manage all the calls on the Helpline, there will be a 1.0 FTE Helpline Manager position,  
42 whose job(s) will be to monitor helpline “tickets”, ensure that volunteers are mobilized efficiently,  
43 and that no calls “fall through the cracks. Use of an automated system for receiving and  
44 tracking phone calls to Freshdesk, will be important particularly in the 3 week period just prior to  
45 the election.

46 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, account COCLKEL 20025 “COVID Expenses” in the  
47 amount of \$99,950 and account COCLKEL 80002 “CARES ACT Revenue” be created with  
48 appropriation of \$99,950

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