



# *Milwaukee County*

## Supervisor Nikiya Q. Harris, 2<sup>nd</sup> District

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### **COMMITTEE APPROVES SUP. HARRIS RESOLUTION OPPOSING VOTER ID** *Bill would disenfranchise students, individuals with disabilities*

**Milwaukee, WI** – A resolution authored by Milwaukee County Supervisor Nikiya Harris opposing Voter ID was approved by a key County Board Committee this afternoon. The resolution opposes State Senate Substitute Amendment 1 to Senate Bill 6 (SB6), which would restrict an eligible individual’s constitutionally guaranteed right to vote in Wisconsin,

“I’m pleased that the County Board has approved this resolution, and I hope the Legislature hears our voices and stops this bill in its tracks. Voting is a right guaranteed by the Constitution, and we must do everything we can to protect and preserve that right. The proposed bill creates a significant amount of barriers to voting in Wisconsin,” Supervisor Harris said. “The Committee received testimony that university and college students would face difficulty exercising their right to vote because Student IDs would not qualify as valid identification. Supervisors were also told that the Bill would pose significant challenges for individuals with disabilities to exercise their franchise.”

A 2005 study by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found that approximately half of all African-Americans and Hispanics in Wisconsin lack state-issued photo identification. The same study found more than 177,000 persons aged 65 and over who lack state-issued photo ID.

“We should not be making it harder to vote,” Supervisor Harris said. “Turnout is already too low. Instead, we need to go in the opposite direction. We must enfranchise voters, encourage them to vote and create a user-friendly process for ALL eligible citizens to legally cast a vote in this state. This is a democracy, after all.”

The fiscal analysis of SB6 shows requiring a Voter ID in Wisconsin would result in a revenue loss to the Department of Transportation of about \$3 million per year. Supervisor Harris believes those dollars could be more wisely invested in the Milwaukee County Transit System, which is already facing a \$7 million cut in State funding under the Governor’s proposed budget.

The Intergovernmental Relations Committee approved the resolution on a 4-2 vote after hearing testimony from Supervisor Harris, Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm, Milwaukee County Election Commission member David Sartori, and Barbara Beckert from Disability Rights Wisconsin.

Adoption by the full County Board on Thursday would give Supervisor Harris her first legislative victory since being elected to the 2<sup>nd</sup> District in a special election last year. The resolution calls for Milwaukee County’s Intergovernmental Relations staff to communicate this position to the Wisconsin State Legislature as part of the Milwaukee County legislative agenda.