



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

June 30, 2021

TO THE HONORABLE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 15 of the Pennsylvania Constitution, I am returning herewith, without my approval, House Bill 1300, Printer's Number 1869.

Pennsylvania had a free, fair, and secure election in November 2020 with record turnout, in which people embraced mail-in voting, and the results have been confirmed by two statewide audits. These results are a testament to the robustness of our existing election system, but also the many hard working local officials who conduct our elections in an earnest and transparent way. While the bill includes some potential areas of improvement—such as giving counties more time to pre-canvass, increasing poll worker pay, and expanding the use of electronic poll books—the legislation is incurably riddled with unacceptable barriers to voting, including:

- Imposing additional voter identification restrictions similar to those already found unconstitutional by Pennsylvania courts;
- Limiting mail-in voting by creating excessive and burdensome requirements;
- Requiring an arbitrary signature match for mail-in ballots without a thorough system to cure; and
- Eliminating the use of ballot drop boxes by creating onerous requirements on ballot delivery locations with which counties will be unable to comply.

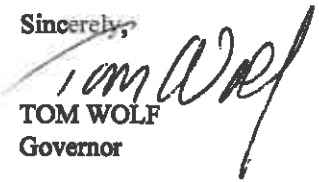
The legislation also rolls back significant bipartisan improvements made in Act 77 of 2019, the landmark election reform enacted last session, by:

- Reducing the number of days to register to vote by moving the deadline back to 30 days before an election, which would be among the most restrictive deadlines in the nation;
- Eliminating the convenient annual option to be sent a mail-in ballot for each election; and
- Eliminating the option to go to a county election office and apply for and receive a mail-in ballot in the same visit.

This bill is ultimately not about improving access to voting or election security, but about restricting the freedom to vote. If adopted, it would threaten to disrupt election administration, undermine faith in government, and invite costly, time-consuming, and destabilizing litigation. Instead of trying to silence the voices of some Pennsylvanians, we should build on the bipartisan achievements of Act 77 of 2019. To that end, I am willing to engage in good faith to refine our shared priorities, and work to find common ground in areas where we do not currently have agreement. I am committed to working sincerely towards legislation that supports voter access and can be passed on a bipartisan basis in the fall.

Until that time, for the reasons set forth above, I must withhold my signature from House Bill 1300, Printer's Number 1869.

Sincerely,


TOM WOLF
Governor