

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 7, 2016**  
**CONTACT**

**FAITH AND COMMUNITY LEADERS CALL FOR FAIR ELECTIONS**  
**CONCERN ABOUT VOTER REGISTRATION PROMPTS INCREASED**  
**VOTER EDUCATION MEASURES**

DELAWARE COUNTY, PA—Today, as the election nears, a group of community and faith leaders issued the following letter regarding tomorrow's election.

As people of faith and good will, we envision a society where decisions are made with justice and transparency, and where there are no barriers to full participation in our government system.

We believe that it is morally incumbent on all of us to ensure that every eligible, registered voter can cast a vote that counts on Election Day. Elections are a complicated process with many moving parts and it takes all of us, community leaders, advocates, poll workers, local election officials and officials from the Department of State working together for Election Day to run smoothly. We call on all individuals and organizations to do their part tomorrow.

We are concerned about Delaware County's announcement that nearly 1200 voters will be required to vote provisionally despite having done nothing wrong and appearing on the voter rolls. All voters who registered to vote in good faith and before the deadline should receive equal access to the ballot box. It is not fair to punish voters who did everything right simply because of where they filled out the registration form or due to political disagreements among officials. While we are glad they will be able to cast a ballot, it is an unprecedented move to require validly registered voters who appear on the rolls to vote provisionally.

We call on county election officials to:

- (1) Ensure that there are sufficient provisional ballots available at all polling places and;
- (2) To educate poll workers and voters on the process if a voter must vote provisionally and to minimize confusion and delays through all possible means.

Voters, particularly those in Delaware County, should be aware that they may be required to vote on a provisional ballot. A provisional ballot is a paper ballot that is counted after Election Day once county election officials have verified that the voter was qualified to cast a ballot. The provisional ballot process is intended to be a ballot of last resort and typically used only if a voter does not appear on the rolls.

We are also concerned that unfounded conspiracy theories about rigged elections will discourage voters from casting their ballots tomorrow or encourage bad behavior at the polls. As Americans, we should be proud of our system of free and fair elections where every eligible citizen can have a meaningful say in our government. While it is important to

honestly evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in our system of elections and to take steps to strengthen it, false narratives about rigged elections undermine the very foundation of our democracy. We call on all candidates, community leaders, and elected officials to reject this narrative and to focus instead on the importance of ensuring that every eligible voter can cast a ballot.

Finally, we call on all voters to educate themselves about their rights at the polls. If a voter has questions or experiences problems at the polls, they should call the nonpartisan Election Protection hotline at 866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683) for assistance. It is important that voters have a positive experience at the polls. If voters are experiencing issues such as long lines, intimidation, machine malfunctions or other problems, they should report those to the hotline (866-OUR-VOTE (866-687-8683)) so steps can be taken to address them.

This is an incredibly important election and there are passionate feelings across the board. Every eligible voter has a right to cast a ballot and we encourage all voters to make sure they have a plan to vote and to actually show up and make their voices heard. Only in so doing, will our elected representatives truly be accountable to the will of the people.

Respectfully yours,

Delman Coates,  
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and Equality

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