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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**House Committee Completes Hearings on Election Integrity,  
Prepares to Act on Needed Changes**

*by Rep. Dan Moul (R-Adams)*

The House State Government Committee just completed an exhaustive examination of Pennsylvania's system of elections at all levels. A series of 10 public hearings included testimony from state and county election officials in Pennsylvania and other states, experts on various aspects of election processes, how elections are carried out, what works, where improvements are needed and any problems encountered in the last election cycle.

Armed with this information, the committee is now working to determine what legislation may be needed to correct flaws that may exist and ensure public confidence in a free and fair system of elections.

To ensure the integrity of our elections, the Pennsylvania General Assembly amended the state Election Code in 2019 when it adopted **Act 77**. The act, which I supported, contained several important election reforms. The impetus of this bill was to address the governor's unilateral decertification of most voting machines used throughout the Commonwealth at a replacement cost to counties of nearly \$100 million. In addition to providing aid to counties, Act 77 of 2019 eliminated straight-party voting and established a no-excuse mail-in ballot process. Pennsylvania is one of 30 states with no-excuse mail-in voting.

Under Act 77, mail-in voters, like absentee voters, must apply for a ballot, and applications require identification to confirm each voter's eligibility. Both absentee and mail-in ballots are required by law to be received by counties no later than 8 p.m. on Election Day. Absentee voters must affirm that they will be absent from their municipality on Election Day or otherwise unable to vote in person, but mail-in voting requires no-excuse.

The 2020 election should have strictly adhered to the provisions of Act 77 despite the pandemic. However, the Wolf administration sought judicial guidance in the weeks leading up to the election that resulted in changes, which are now being challenged in court. At issue are actions by the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, which despite lacking the authority to make law, ruled to allow additional time to get ballots in, eliminate signature verification and permit the use of ballot "drop boxes."

A bill now before the House would repeal the recent expansion of mail-in voting in Pennsylvania and guard against judicial interference and last-minute changes that came into question during and after the 2020 General Election. It would restore the statutory 8 p.m. Election Day deadline for receiving mail-in or absentee ballots, signature verification, and eliminate drop boxes for ballot returns.

While the fact-finding hearings of the House State Government Committee do not seek to overturn the results of the 2020 election, they sought to review processes employed at the state and county levels and determine

what, if any, legislative changes are necessary. The need for consistency and uniformity was a common thread in the testimony received at these hearings, and I have heard similar sentiments from many of you. Preliminary findings show our process for voter registration is outdated and fails to maintain an accurate voter list. Our training requirements for elections officials and observers are insufficient and post-election audits and signature verification are needed to improve election security.

I look forward to learning more about the committee's findings and making the legislative changes necessary to ensure the public that our election system is safe, reliable and the very best it can be.

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