



Disfranchising Felons Taxes Wisconsin's Elections System

Unlock the Vote Report on Ex-Felon Disfranchisement Now Available

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MILWAUKEE, WI – On November 6, an estimated 62,000 Wisconsin citizens will not be allowed to cast a ballot in the Presidential Elections. Wisconsin law bars individuals with felony convictions from voting while incarcerated or while “on paper,” or on probation, parole or extended supervision. The American Civil Liberties Union of Wisconsin Foundation has issued a report, “Unlock the Vote Wisconsin,” explaining why felony disfranchisement is a significant barrier for equal participation in democracy and achieving racial justice.

“Two-thirds of people with felony convictions are on probation or parole and have been deemed safe enough to be in our communities, but not in the ballot booths,” said Executive Director Chris Ahmuty. “The ACLU of Wisconsin is working with community groups across the state to explain the current law to those who have served their time but are not able to fulfill this important civic responsibility.”

It doesn't make sense to keep a law that makes our elections system more expensive and does nothing to enhance public safety.

We ultimately hope to change the Wisconsin law so that it is less restrictive, like the laws of neighboring states: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio. Wisconsin's current policy of disenfranchising citizens after their release is a financial drain on our elections system to identify citizens in our communities who are not allowed to vote.

[Download a PDF](#) of the ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation's Report, **Unlock the Vote Wisconsin**, or [visit our YouTube channel](#) to see a series of videos that the ACLU produced on this topic. If you have a criminal conviction, and want to know your rights, [download a printable PDF](#) of our voter information sheet, or [view it online here](#). The Unlock the Vote Wisconsin report and videos were made possible by a grant from the David Rockefeller Foundation.

The ACLU of Wisconsin Foundation is a non-profit civil liberties and civil rights organization working to protect the rights of Wisconsinites. For more on the work of the American Civil Liberties Union and Foundation of Wisconsin, visit our [webpage](#), like us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on Twitter [@ACLUofWisconsin](#) and [@ACLUMadison](#).

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