

August 26, 2019

Assembly Member Mark Stone

[mark.stone@asm.ca.gov](mailto:mark.stone@asm.ca.gov)

Subject: ACA 6

Dear Assembly member Stone:

It's time to Free the Vote for Californians on parole. This constitutional amendment will restore voting rights to people who are working, paying taxes, and raising children in our communities, but have been denied a voice in the policies that shape their lives.

The strength of representative democracy depends on everyone's participation, yet nearly **50,000 Californians** on parole **cannot vote**. The League of Women Voters of California has been fighting for voting rights for 100 years. The League is co-sponsoring ACA 6 because the fight is far from over.

- Parole's purpose is to help people reintegrate into the community. Civic engagement is a critical part of that process, and has also been found to reduce recidivism.
- Disenfranchising people on parole is a legacy of Jim Crow laws, and disproportionately locks Black and Brown Californians out of the voting booth.
- California needs to catch up with 16 states and the District of Columbia which restore voting rights once people are no longer incarcerated. And also with Maine and Vermont which **never** take voting rights away from those in prison or on parole.

Our democracy thrives when it is fair and inclusive. Stripping the right to vote from formerly incarcerated people is a form of **voter suppression** and does not reflect our values. We urge you to support ACA 6. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Howard Fosler

President