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## STATEMENT FROM DC LATINO CAUCUS REGARDING LOCAL RESIDENT VOTING RIGHTS AMENDMENT ACT OF 2021

*Bill Will Broaden Voter Access to Under-Represented Communities*

Washington, DC — June 10, 2021 — The DC Latino Caucus (DCLC) today announced its support for the [Local Resident Voting Rights Amendment Act of 2021, put forth by Ward 1 Councilmember Brianne Nadeau.](#)

The bill amends the District of Columbia Election Code of 1955 to expand the definition of the term *qualified elector* to include permanent residents for the purpose of local elections. Permanent residents would be able to vote in local elections, specifically for mayor; chairman or member of the Council; attorney general; members of the State Board of Education; advisory neighborhood commissioner or any initiative, referendum, recall, or charter referendum on a District ballot. The DC Latino Caucus has supported previous versions of this legislation going back to 2018.

The Department of Homeland Security defines lawful permanent residents (also known as green card holders) as “...non-citizens who are lawfully authorized to live permanently within the United States. Lawful permanent residents may accept an offer of employment without special restrictions, own property, receive financial assistance at public colleges and universities, and join the Armed Forces. They also may apply to become U.S. citizens if they meet certain eligibility requirements.”

Voter access is being actively curtailed across the United States. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, “Between January 1 and May 14, 2021, at least 14 states enacted 22 new laws that restrict access to the vote.”



During the last election cycle, DC residents saw the unprecedented expansion of voter access. The DC Latino Caucus supports this bill because it will give greater voice and input to permanent residents. Like citizens, residents use city services, contribute to the city's economic growth, and are subject to the decisions made by our local elected leaders. The bill will allow Councilmember Nadeau, and her colleagues across all levels of local government, to govern more effectively.

"Despite comprising more than 10% of the population of the District, the Latino community is underrepresented in citywide office. This bill helps ensure that when decisions are being made, the Latino community, and other under-represented communities, factor into the discussion," says Jose "Joe" Barrios, president, DC Latino Caucus.

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### **ABOUT THE DC LATINO CAUCUS**

Established in 2005, the DC Latino Caucus is the preeminent voice for the Latino community within the Democratic party and local government. Run by an all-volunteer board, the organization's primary objectives are to ensure the political representation and participation of the Latino community in the government and civic affairs of the DC metropolitan area. The DC Latino Caucus is an [official affiliate organization of the District of Columbia Democratic Party](#) (District of Columbia Democratic State Committee). For more information visit [www.dclatinocaucus.org](http://www.dclatinocaucus.org).

### **REFERENCES**

Brennan Center for Justice. *Voting Laws Roundup: May 2021*. Brennan Center for Justice, 28 May 2021, <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/research-reports/voting-laws-roundup-may-2021>.

"Lawful Permanent Residents." *Department of Homeland Security*, 4 Apr. 2016, <https://www.dhs.gov/immigration-statistics/lawful-permanent-residents>.