

## **Resolution 2021-02**

### **Regarding Suppression of the Rights of Voters with Disabilities**

**Proponent: XX XX**

WHEREAS, being able to cast a ballot privately and independently is the bedrock of our democracy; and

WHEREAS, the passage of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA) has enabled the majority of blind voters and many others with disabilities to exercise their right to vote privately and independently at polling places; and

WHEREAS, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires that voters with disabilities be provided the opportunity to exercise their right to vote equal to the opportunity provided voters without disabilities; and

WHEREAS, states that require voter identification or medical documentation or are limiting polling locations are restricting that right by creating barriers for individuals with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the time and expense in obtaining state issued ID or other forms of identification can be onerous and therefore create a barrier for voters with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, legislation requiring voter identification has been enacted or is currently before the legislature in Arizona, Alaska, Arkansas, Alabama, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, Maryland, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Nevada, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and West Virginia; and

WHEREAS, medical certification forms are frequently not available in an accessible format; require the signature of a medical or rehabilitation professional; and as a result are excessive and unnecessary hurdles for voters with disabilities to overcome, as well as a potential violation of privacy for disabled voters; and

WHEREAS, Alabama, Louisiana, and Texas have enacted or have bills currently before their legislatures requiring medical documentation for voters with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, limiting the number and/or location of early voting and election day polling places may prevent some voters with disabilities from accessing a polling place due to a lack of transportation; and

WHEREAS, legislation limiting the number or location of early voting or election day polling places has been enacted by or is currently before the legislatures in Arkansas, Arizona, Georgia, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Montana,

North Dakota, Nevada, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington; Now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the National Federation of the Blind in Convention assembled this tenth day of July, 2021, that this organization condemn and deplore all acts of suppression that make it difficult for blind and disabled voters to exercise their right to vote; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization demand that state and local election officials protect the right of voters with disabilities to cast a private and independent ballot, as required by HAVA and Title II of the ADA, without having to provide difficult-to-obtain state-issued identification and documentation; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this organization demand that all state and local governments implement legislation and election procedures necessary to expand the number of polling locations so that they are accessible to public transit routes and so voters need only travel a reasonable distance to cast their vote.