



# Pennsylvania Conference of Teamsters

**Strength in Numbers 95,000**

William Hamilton, President & Eastern PA Legislative Coordinator – Joseph Molinero, Sec.-Treasurer & Western PA Legislative Coordinator – Tim O'Neill, Consultant – Dan Grace, Trustee & Legislative Advisor – Robert Baptiste, Esq. Legal Advisor

## LEGISLATIVE ACTION ALERT

### THE ELIMINATION OF STRAIGHT-PARTY VOTING IN PENNSYLVANIA AND A MAIL-IN OPTION TO AVOID GOING TO THE POLLS

#### **Pa. Gov. Tom Wolf: Election reform bill ‘removes barriers to the voting booth’**

According to the Patriot News© in an article posted on line October 29, 2019 starting next year, elections and voting in Pennsylvania are on track to be different than the way they have been done for many decades. It now goes to Gov. Tom Wolf who intends to sign it into law. He called it “a major advancement for elections in Pennsylvania.”

The PA Senate passed [a compromise election modernization bill](#) by a 35-14 and the PA House passed it by a 138-61 vote

**Following are the major changes for voting in Pennsylvania:**

- A new mail-in voting option to avoid having to go to the polls on Election Day
- It eliminates straight-party voting
- \$90 million to partially reimburse counties for the cost of buying new voting machines that have a paper trail allowing for auditable returns
- Moving the voter registration deadline to 15 days before an election instead of the current 30 days
- Pushing back the deadline for returning absentee ballots to 8 p.m. on Election Day instead of 5 p.m. on the Friday before the election.
- The governor’s office points out that the 50-day mail-in voting window provided for in the legislation is the longest in the country. The new permanent mailing list for voters requesting to automatically receive an application for a mail-in or absentee ballot is another convenience.
- “To rebuild trust in our government, we need fair and accessible elections for all citizens from our rural communities to the big cities,” Wolf said in the statement. “Modernizing our elections removes barriers to the voting booth and will hopefully encourage more people to participate in our elections.”
- Once this bill takes effect after the Nov. 5 election, Pennsylvania will join 31 states with no-excuse voting by mail options and becomes the 12th state that automatically mails either an absentee ballot or ballot application to residents who have signed up to receive a ballot every election. By cutting the registration deadlines in half, Pennsylvania will have shorter registration deadlines than 24 states.