



Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth

P.O. Box 476 Convent Station, NJ 07961-0476 973-290-5345 escharity@scnj.org

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Statement of the Leadership of the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth on Voting Rights

CONVENT STATION, NJ - There is newsreel footage of two Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth at the polls at the first election after the State of New Jersey ratified the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote on February 9, 1920. Since our founding in 1859, we have worked to promote the rights and duties of citizenship, bringing the richness of our faith tradition to the public square. Promoting the common good by voting is one of the most basic and fundamental rights of the citizen and one of the hallmarks of a democratic society. We are deeply concerned that 28 states have introduced legislation to restrict voting access in a variety of ways. These legislative efforts, while a threat to our democracy in general, disproportionately impact racial minorities, poor people, and young and old voters. We join NETWORK Catholic Social Justice Lobby in supporting the *For the People Act* (H.R.1/S.1) which has passed in the House and is under consideration in the Senate. The *For the People Act* will protect and expand voting rights and take other important measures to strengthen our democracy. We encourage all people of good will to join us in promoting free, informed, and active participation in our democracy and to oppose efforts that disenfranchise voters.

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The Sisters of Charity were founded by Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton, in the spirit of Saint Vincent de Paul and Saint Louise de Marillac, in Emmitsburg, Maryland, in 1809. In 1859, Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan founded the New Jersey community known as the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth. Today the Sisters of Charity of Saint Elizabeth are engaged in education, health care, pastoral and social service ministries in 14 dioceses within the United States, El Salvador and Haiti. The Congregation currently numbers 204 vowed members. The Seton Associate relationship has 300 affiliated lay and religious women and men.