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**Seventy Urges No Appeal of Ruling Striking Down PA's Voter ID Law
Says PA should comply with spirit of bi-partisan Presidential Commission on
Election Administration's report by making voting easier**

PHILADELPHIA – January 23, 2014 – The Committee of Seventy today urged Governor Corbett not to appeal a Commonwealth Court decision striking down a law requiring all voters to show photo identification at polling places.

“The voter ID law has been tied up in costly litigation for almost two years,” said Zack Stalberg, Seventy’s President and CEO. “It makes no sense to continue to spend taxpayer dollars, and risk more confusion at the polls, by pursuing a court battle that has just become much tougher for the state to win.”

Seventy spearheaded a non-partisan, 175-member statewide coalition in 2012 to make sure all Pennsylvania voters knew what identification they needed to bring to the polls for that year’s presidential election, when the voter ID law was first scheduled to go into effect. Seventy was not a party in the lawsuit challenging the voter ID law. Instead it focused exclusively on non-partisan voter ID education.

The Commonwealth Court ruled that the existing voter ID law did not permit any valid non-burdensome way to provide an acceptable photo ID to “hundreds of thousands” of Pennsylvania voters. If the governor decides he is committed to a voter ID law, Stalberg said he could work with the General Assembly to determine whether a law can be implemented in a way that would not threaten to disenfranchise voters and meets the objective of eliminating fraud.

He pointed to Commonwealth Court Judge McGinley's findings of fact regarding the difficulties of many voters (including the disabled and elderly) to get to a Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Driver's License Center in order to obtain a compliant photo identification. "Everyone who has ever had to deal with PennDOT understands that this process is not quick or simple," Stalberg observed, adding that some state counties don't have a Driver's License Center or have centers with restricted hours. "Any newly-constructed voter ID law must take this difficulty into account and come up with the easiest way possible for all voters to get photo identification."

Stalberg added that any new voter ID law should comply with the spirit of the bi-partisan Presidential Commission on Election Administration's report, which was released yesterday, that voting must be made easier and more accessible. He noted that Pennsylvania's election laws already lag behind many other states. For instance, Pennsylvania does not offer online voter registration or early voting, both of which were recommended by the Commission. "The governor and General Assembly have a real opportunity to put together a package of election reforms to improve the voting process and the experience of voters at the polls," said Stalberg. "We urge them to seize that opportunity."

If the state decides to appeal the Commonwealth Court's ruling, and that ruling is overturned by the state Supreme Court, Stalberg pledged an intense effort by Seventy to get non-partisan, accurate and trustworthy voter ID information to voters across the state. "Pennsylvania has major elections coming up, starting with the gubernatorial primary in May. Voters deserve every chance to participate."

The Committee of Seventy is a non-partisan organization fighting for clean and effective government, fair elections and an informed citizenry. For more information, see www.seventy.org.