

Support Voting Rights and Election Protection

JCPA believes that the right to vote and participate in our democracy is a core American Jewish value—a civic and religious duty. The bedrock of our democratic process is the right of every eligible citizen to cast a ballot and have that ballot counted.

In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down a critical Voting Rights Act provision that required states with a history of disenfranchising voters to obtain Department of Justice preclearance before changing voting laws or procedures. Since this ruling, many states have enacted – and are continuing to propose laws that suppress the vote, often through onerous voter identification laws and cutbacks to early voting, especially in low-income communities and communities of color.

JCPA has a long history of supporting voting rights since our founding where we were a leading organization in advocating for the voting rights bill in the 1960s. During COVID -19, JCPA’s Delegates Assembly made ensuring a fair, free, and accessible elections a number one priority issue.

The 2020 election had the largest voter turnout in more than 100 years, including 100 million people who voted early by mail or in-person — all with no evidence of systemic voter fraud. States’ efforts to make voting safer in response to the global COVID-19 pandemic not only achieved that goal but made elections more accessible in many communities.

These positive changes should now be made permanent. Instead, the expanded franchise is the target of anti-democratic forces that hope to roll back these reforms and pass more restrictive measures that would suppress the vote.

It is crucial that we increase access to the ballot box, strengthen democratic institutions, and expand representation. Our vote is our voice: we must protect our rights and the rights of others.

Talking Points

- **The systematic disenfranchisement of key segments of the voting population challenges the integrity of the elections process and undermines our democracy.** Many states are enacting laws that suppress the vote, targeting low-income communities and communities of color. At this very moment, we are witnessing, around the country, more than 40 states move to enact new voter suppression laws not seen since the Jim Crow era.
- **This is a civil rights and a racial justice issue – and a Jewish concern to its core.** Achieving a government that is responsive to the needs and aspirations of its people is possible only through maximum citizen participation in the electoral process and the guarantee that elections will be fair and accessible. We are obligated to speak up and take action to ensure that every eligible person can cast a vote and have that vote counted.

- **The Voting Rights Act has always had bipartisan support.** Congress has reauthorized the Voting Rights Act several times under both Republican and Democratic administrations with near unanimous support.

Action Request

Urge Members of Congress to support the swift passage of the Freedom to Vote: John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

- This comprehensive bill would update and restore the Voting Rights Act, prevent voter suppression, help improve elections, advance voting rights, and reform campaign finance and ethics rules. It would ensure that *all* Americans have the same opportunity to exercise their constitutional right to vote. Safeguarding democracy is not a partisan issue.

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