

## **Resolution on Voting Rights and Elections During A Public Health Crisis**

Adopted by the Delegates Assembly, 2020

The novel coronavirus pandemic in 2020 has exposed the very real and highly concerning overlap between public health and the way in which our elections are run. In 2020, we have even greater challenges as the coronavirus pandemic compounds pre-existing long-term voter access issues.

### **The Jewish Council for Public Affairs believes that:**

- Safe, fair, and accessible elections are a core component of a strong, thriving democracy.
- The federal government is responsible for protecting voting rights and providing funding to assist states and localities to adapt their voting systems to meet today's challenges.
- States and localities must move expeditiously to modify their voting systems to ensure maximal citizen participation in this election and future votes.
- All measures that impede voting should be eliminated and support should be provided for those who may need assistance.

### **The Jewish community relations field should:**

- Support best practices and innovative efforts that enable people to exercise their right to vote without risking their health and safety during this pandemic and afterward.
- Work with political and civic leaders of both parties to ensure bipartisan support for free and fair elections and voting rights.
- Work with organizations, partners, and coalitions to support policies such as:
  - Sufficient federal funding, estimated by some experts to be at least \$4 billion, for election assistance to enable states to offer voters a comprehensive range of safe options for voting, including at least those listed below;
  - Universal no excuse vote-by-mail with self-sealing, postage paid return envelopes. Ballots should automatically be mailed to all registered voters;
  - Early in-person voting;

- Adequate funding for the U.S. Postal Service, which is critical for vote-by-mail;
  - Expanded voter registration options, including online and same-day voter registration;
  - Prohibitions on polling place adjustments that disproportionately impact minority or vulnerable populations;
  - Provision for safe in-person voting options to accommodate disabled voters and voters who lack the ability to receive or send mail, allowing for social distancing and accommodating voter surges to ensure both voters and poll workers are protected;
  - Voter education campaigns to educate voters on any changes and to combat disinformation; and
  - Elimination of any photo identification requirements or witness signature or notary requirements.
- Develop and implement voter registration drives, voter and elections protection efforts, and nonpartisan Get Out the Vote campaigns to encourage both the Jewish community and general public vote in elections.
  - Work in partnership with communities disproportionately impacted by the novel coronavirus to make certain that those communities have maximum access to and participation in the electoral process.