

Letter from Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD) Organizations Urging the Senate to Make Additional Investments in State and Local Elections

Senator Roy Blunt, Chairman
Senate Committee on Rules & Administration
Russell Senate Office Building, Room 260
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Amy Klobuchar, Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Rules & Administration
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 425
Washington, DC 20510

July 21, 2020

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Klobuchar:

As you prepare to hold a hearing to examine the critical needs that our states must address in advance of the 2020 elections, our below organizations strongly urge you to invest additional resources for elections in the Senate version of the Heroes Act. Our organizations are part of the Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD), a coalition of more than 160 groups representing tens of millions of Americans, and we urge you to support the \$3.6 billion in election funding that was included in the House-passed Heroes Act so all voters can have their voices heard and votes counted this year.

Election officials throughout the country and on both sides of the aisle have spoken up to ask for Congress to prioritize additional resources for state and local elections. Nearly all (if not all) states do in fact need Congress to make additional investments so we can ensure that voting is safe, accessible, and secure this year. This year's elections face unprecedented challenges from the COVID-19 crisis and the economic recession. Millions of Americans, many of whom have lost their jobs and potentially their health care, should not have to choose between their health and their right to vote. Congress has a critical role to play to ensure that no voters are disenfranchised this year.

The \$400 million in election funding included in the CARES Act was a fine first step, but states need significantly more resources. As you know, voters in some states' primaries faced significant barriers, including:

- Waiting in hours' long lines (up to five or more hours in [certain instances](#));
- Finding their polling locations closed;
- Not receiving absentee ballots; and
- Receiving their absentee ballots but not having them returned in time or not having them counted

We cannot let these problems be repeated in this November's election. Voters have been able to cast their ballots during wars, natural disasters, and pandemics, and the COVID-19 pandemic

presents unique circumstances to voting this year. Our democracy requires continued investments, and we strongly urge you to provide \$3.6 billion for election funding in the Senate version of the Heroes Act.

Sincerely,

Brady United Against Gun Violence
Center for American Progress (CAP)
Church World Service
Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW)
Clean Elections Texas
Climate Reality Project
Common Cause
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, U.S. Provinces
DemCast USA
Democracy 21
Democracy Initiative
Fix Democracy First
Franciscan Action Network
Greenpeace USA
League of Conservation Voters (LCV)
League of Women Voters of the United States (LWV)
Let America Vote/End Citizens United Action Fund
March for Our Lives
National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
National Council of Jewish Women
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
New American Leaders Action Fund
Pax Christi USA
Progressive Turnout Project
Public Citizen
Reclaim Our Democracy
Revolving Door Project
SEIU
Stand Up America
Voices for Progress
20/20 Vision

cc: All Members of the Senate Committee on Rules & Administration