

## REQUIRE VOTERS TO HAVE PHOTO IDENTIFICATION

A government-issued photo identification (“photo ID”) is a fundamental requirement of an effective electoral system that protects the validity of every vote and voter. Photo ID is required in almost every aspect of our personal and professional lives to verify that an individual is in fact who he or she claims to be. Given the importance of elections, it is vital to ensure each voter is properly identified to protect against voter fraud and guarantee a fair outcome.

Secure elections require our officials to have the ability to verify the identities of all voters. Requiring a photo ID is an effective, common-sense, and popular policy that will help ensure fair and honest elections. Eighty-five percent of Americans support the requirement of a photo ID to prove a person’s identity when casting a ballot.

This 85% support for photo ID requirements is even more astounding when considering the political and dishonest rhetoric of opponents of these measures. Their rhetoric includes claims of adverse reactions from voters, claims of people lacking an identification, and worse, race-baiting language. However, research from Harvard University and the National Bureau of Economic Research recently showed no adverse effect on voter turnout or registration after implementing photo ID requirements for voters.

Additionally, a common argument is that voter ID laws have a disproportionate or disparate effect on minority populations. This argument does not consider the fact that photo IDs are already required to buy alcohol and tobacco, board a domestic flight, drive a car, and open a bank account—all activities in which the broader public, including minority populations, regularly participate.

These Harvard researchers also found another positive byproduct regarding the implementation of

voter identification laws: preventing fraud. By studying elections between 2008 and 2018, Harvard researchers used publicly available databases on documented fraud and noted that voter ID laws could deter fraud.

Twenty-five states have already established requirements of government-issued photo ID for the purpose of voting, which is easily available at no cost to the voter. While 15 of these states allow other identification documents if a photo ID is not presented, eight states specifically require a photo ID to vote. These eight states have proven it is possible to secure the vote with no inconvenience or cost to anyone.

### THE FACTS

- ★ 25 states do not have photo ID requirements to vote.
- ★ While 25 states require photo ID to vote, 15 of them have work-arounds. These work-arounds allow a person who forgets his or her photo ID to have other ways to cast his or her ballot without using a photo ID.
- ★ 46 out of 47 European countries require a photo ID to vote.
- ★ Mexico has required all voters to present a photo ID since 1991. Every voter in Mexico must have a tamper-proof photo ID that includes a thumbprint and embossed hologram.

### THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the state level, support policies that:

- ★ Require a government-issued photo ID to vote, leaving implementation to the individual states.
- ★ Offer free photo ID cards to eligible voters to remove the barrier of access or financial difficulty.

- ★ Create a “cure” for individuals who show up at a polling place without a photo voter ID that requires them to have some form of photo ID before a person’s vote is counted.

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## CLEAN UP VOTER ROLLS BEFORE EVERY ELECTION

Voter rolls should be accurate, transparent, and cleaned regularly. If voter rolls fail to protect against fraud, then the whole election system is contaminated right from the start. Eighty-eight percent of the American people support accurate voter rolls, according to a 2022 Rasmussen poll. Moreover, accurate voter rolls are required by federal law per the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA). Nevertheless, a Pew Research study from 2012 found that approximately 24 million voter registrations are invalid or significantly inaccurate. More alarming is that more than 2.74 million people were registered to vote in more than one state, according to the same report.

The number of voters registered to vote in U.S. counties also appears to be significantly outdated. According to a 2020 report from Judicial Watch, “378 counties nationwide have more voter registrations than citizens old enough to vote, i.e., counties where registration rates exceed 100%.” The report then explained that these counties exceeded the 100% mark by approximately 2.5 million registrations. Incredibly, this marked a decrease of one million people since its previous study. One California county, San Diego County, “still has a registration rate of 117% and has one of the highest registration rates in the country.”

Recent history highlights other problems that can arise related to not having clean, accurate, and transparent voter rolls. During the 2020 elections, some states bypassed existing laws and mailed live ballots to every voter on their voter rolls through the regular postal system, regardless of whether that person requested a ballot. People who were listed as active had their ballots returned as undeliverable. Other people who had moved received ballots at their old and new addresses. And some people received multiple ballots. Every time something like this happens, it presents an

opportunity to dilute the value of someone’s ballot.

Voter rolls should be at least as accurate and reliable as a company payroll. If an employee joins an organization, that individual must fill out paperwork to be added to the payroll. If the individual leaves the company, the company immediately updates its payrolls so that the employee is not improperly compensated. In the same manner, states must proactively keep their voter rolls current and accurate. The importance of election integrity extends beyond just looking at the effect on the final vote tally—it is about ensuring that every vote receives its full and proper value without being diluted by improperly cast or counted votes.

### THE FACTS

- ★ In Michigan, approximately 26,000 names of deceased individuals were found to still be on the voter rolls.
- ★ Approximately 5,000 of these people had been dead for 20 years.
- ★ 88% of the American people support accurate voter rolls, according to a 2022 Rasmussen poll.
- ★ In North Carolina this year, more than 430,000 names were removed from voter rolls statewide after determining that they were not eligible to vote.
- ★ 92,000 live ballots of active voters in Nevada were returned as undeliverable in 2020.
- ★ Nearly two-thirds of Colorado’s counties had a voter registration rate of more than 100%, making it the most voter fraud-ridden state in the Nation. More than one in six registrations in some Colorado counties belonged to an inactive voter.

## THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the state level, support policies that:

- ★ End same-day registration or even require voter registration to end 30 days before the election to ensure ample time to verify voter record accuracy.
- ★ Require election officials to post voter registration rolls online to increase transparency and data accuracy.
- ★ Require election officials to institute a program to maintain and clean voter rolls annually, at a minimum.
- ★ Require a process that purges voters who have not confirmed proof of address and have not voted in several elections. This process has already withstood scrutiny by the Supreme Court of the United States (*Husted v. A. Philip Randolph Institute*, 138 S. Ct. 1833, 2018).
- ★ Establish voter registration and identification mechanisms that open communications between states to track voter registration more effectively and to help ensure clean voter rolls.

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Michigan's Voter Rolls are Filled with Nearly 26,000 Dead Registrants

**BY J. CHRISTIAN ADAMS, WASHINGTON TIMES (DEC. 2021).**

## REQUIRE ALL BALLOTS TO BE RETURNED BY ELECTION DAY

Americans expect their elections to be adjudicated swiftly and fairly. For example, a recent Rasmussen poll finds that 82% of Americans believe that ballots should be returned to officials by Election Day. Although slow communications in our Nation's century led to some drawn-out election processes, it should be possible in modern America to know an election's outcome on the evening of Election Day. Delaying election results by days and weeks creates more opportunities for fraud and injects uncertainty and public skepticism into the election process.

During the 2020 election, 60,000 ballots were received in Pennsylvania a full three days after Election Day. They were not alone. Twenty-one states allow ballots to be counted if received after the polls close on Election Day. Residents in Virginia had 45 days to vote in their most recent statewide elections, but some people claimed this was still not enough time to count the votes. Attorneys sued Virginia to allow 10 more days of counting.

A large majority of Americans are already skeptical of the electoral system—for good reason. From 2018 to 2020, voter confidence in the accuracy of elections fell to just 59%, dropping 11% in only two years. Ensuring ballots are counted accurately and in a timely manner is crucial to making it easy to vote but hard to cheat. Reasonable exceptions should be made for limited groups such as military service members who are overseas, but otherwise, people should be required to meet the same deadline when returning their ballots.

Despite overwhelming popular support for election integrity measures, including returning ballots by Election Day, the Biden Administration has voiced support for policies that would move in the opposite direction. For example, progressives in Congress

proposed the For the People Act, which would extend the deadline to receive ballots until two weeks after Election Day.

During the last presidential election, mail-in ballots were a driving force for the large numbers of ballots that were being tallied overnight after Election Day. The United States Postal Service already faces challenges in delivering regular, everyday mail on time, and this issue is exacerbated by the newly increased access to mail-in ballots. The verification of mail-in ballots should occur before Election Day so that states have time to verify the validity of mail-in ballots and avoid delays on Election Day. The hard deadline of all ballots received by Election Day enables both early verification of mail-in ballot validity and transparent and timely counting of all ballots.

### THE FACTS

- ★ 43% of voters submitted ballots by mail in the 2020 general elections.
- ★ Just over 23% of voters submitted ballots by mail in the 2016 general elections.
- ★ Voter confidence in the accuracy of the presidential election fell to 59% from 2018 to 2020, a decrease of 11%.
- ★ 18 states and the District of Columbia currently allow ballots to be counted after Election Day.
- ★ The highest grace period for returning ballots is 10 days.
- ★ 32 states require ballots to be received by Election Day.

### THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the state level, support policies that:

- ★ Require all ballots returned to elections officials by

the end of Election Day. No absentee ballots should be accepted once the polls close.

- ★ Eliminate drop boxes for mail-in ballots, as this creates confusion about where and when a voter should submit his or her ballot.
- ★ Require an affidavit for absentee applications that affirms the voter is incapable of voting on Election Day and affirms eligibility under defined state law.
  - All absentee ballots should have clearly defined regulations, and all absentee voters should know the deadline for returning their ballots.
- ★ Require witness signatures for absentee ballots for more efficient ballot validation.
- ★ Require jurisdictions to begin processing (not counting) absentee ballots seven days before Election Day to ensure more timely election results.
- ★ Create a uniform statewide process to cure ballots, and limit the cure period.

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## ELIMINATE BALLOT HARVESTING

During the 2020 election, officials in many states, including Pennsylvania, Georgia, and Wisconsin, cited concerns about COVID-19 to disregard vital measures that protect the chain of custody for ballots between the time they are cast and when they are counted. One of the most egregious examples occurred when officials ignored state law and allowed ballot harvesting—the transportation of ballots to various voting locations by a third party on behalf of a voter or group of voters. Ballot harvesting creates the opportunity for individuals and organizations to cheat in elections by abusing the ballot chain of custody process.

Some states allow ballot harvesting with restrictions, such as limiting the number of ballots someone can harvest or requiring a familial relationship between the voter and harvester. Other states have lenient regulations or no laws regarding ballot harvesting. Unfortunately, during the last presidential election, ballot harvesting was allowed to go unchecked in record numbers.

Many states unwisely followed in the steps of places such as California, which expanded the law in 2016 to allow paid workers to collect ballots from private residences. The problem of removing guardrails designed to protect legal voters was exacerbated by the hastily allowed policy of mass mail-in ballots. As a result, the combination of a record-setting influx of ballots mailed to citizens and the removal of regulations on ballot harvesters created opportunities for fraud.

Compounding matters further, states and localities installed drop boxes where people could place completed ballots without proper monitoring. This practice opened these states up to violations of written law and fraud, which unsurprisingly led to lawsuits. Hastily creating a new system whereby an unprecedented number of mail-in ballots are

transported by an unknown number of people and delivered unregulated into an often-unmonitored drop box is not a recipe for instilling confidence in elections. The security of these ballot drop boxes was so weak that the boxes themselves sometimes went missing, were vandalized, or were set on fire. Worse yet, there was no accounting for the ballots inside.

Investigations into malfeasance remain underway today. These investigations include evaluating testimonies of payments made to people who collected ballots, commonly referred to as “mules.” The mules are accused of depositing multiple ballots at various drop boxes, manipulating elderly voters at nursing homes to hand over ballots, and bribing local election officials to boost turnout of certain political voters.

Ballot harvesting is a ripe opportunity for individuals and organizations to cheat in elections. Allowing ballot harvesting is a mistake. States should prioritize transparency and accountability by banning the practice.

### THE FACTS

- ★ 9 states allow a family member to submit a ballot in place of a voter, according to the National Conference of State Legislatures.
- ★ 31 states allow the voter to choose someone to submit the ballot in his or her place, although some states have set limits on who can collect the ballots or how many they are allowed to collect.
- ★ Alabama is the only state to require a ballot to be returned by the recipient of the ballot.
- ★ 13 states say nothing about ballot collection, which allows unfettered ballot harvesting.

## THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the state level, support policies that:

- ★ Eliminate drop boxes for mail-in ballots.
- ★ Prohibit a person from returning more than two mail- in ballots, and limit who can return a ballot to a familial relationship.
- ★ Eliminate mass mailing of unsolicited mail-in ballots.
- ★ Require an affidavit for mail-in ballot applications that affirms the voter is incapable of voting on Election Day
- ★ and affirms eligibility under defined state law.  
Require a witness signature for mail-in ballots.  
Implement statewide ballot tracking.
- ★ Reform the mail-in ballot process by requiring the matching driver's license number or last four digits of a social security number on absentee applications and inside the envelope of a returned ballot.
  - This allows a form of ID that protects the personal identifiable information of the voter but allows for validation, which is needed because of the rise of ballot harvesting in certain states.
- ★ Prohibit any organization or entity from paying individuals to collect ballots.

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## BAN THE PRACTICE OF BILLIONAIRES GIVING MONEY TO ELECTION OFFICIALS TO INFLUENCE AN ELECTION

A new practice of private sector businesses partnering with state government election officials to influence elections has created major implications for election integrity. In the most recent presidential election, Facebook Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg used his foundation to funnel hundreds of millions of dollars through nonprofits directly to local government entities that run elections. These government entities then used that money, which has become known as “Zuckerbucks,” in politically targeted areas of a state to drive up the turnout of certain target groups.

Under the guise of wanting to assist with COVID-19 relief efforts, the Zuckerberg Foundation sent half a billion dollars to local government election entities in 2020. States and local governments promised to use this money for personal protective equipment (PPE) and overall voter turnout efforts.

However, Freedom of Information Act requests showed that the money was largely not used for PPE, nor was it used to help facilitate voter turnout overall throughout the entire state. Instead, this private money was used by election officials to target certain areas and certain voter groups, according to the grant application submitted by the City of Philadelphia. This type of pollution of America’s election system erodes people’s confidence in free and fair elections.

States must outlaw private entities from using grant money to usurp governmental authority and illegally alter our election procedures. This is a high priority for ensuring election integrity and is essential for providing states with proper control over their elections.

### THE FACTS

- ★ \$10 million in private money was given to the City of Philadelphia to be used to purchase PPE, but only \$225,000, or approximately 2%, was spent on PPE.
- ★ Election officials in Philadelphia spent almost all of the \$10 million on the targeted turnout of target voters.
- ★ In Pennsylvania, 92% of Zuckerbucks money was directed to counties that went for Joe Biden.

### THE AMERICA FIRST AGENDA

At the state level, support policies that:

- ★ Prohibit local governments from accepting private money from private individuals and third parties to conduct elections.
- ★ Create civil causes of action for election fraud. This involves establishing substantive claims forming a case so that local officials are held accountable for improper and illegal actions.

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