



DECLARATION FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD), Coalition of 170+ Diverse Organizations, Supports the For the People Act (H.R. 1/S. 949)

The [Declaration for American Democracy](#) (DFAD) is a diverse coalition of more than 170 organizations from labor, environmental, faith, social justice, good government, civil rights, reproductive rights, and many other important communities that has organized in strong support of the [For the People Act \(H.R. 1/S. 949\)](#). This transformational legislation, which [passed the House](#) with unanimous Democratic support in March 2019 and has been [cosponsored by all members of the Senate Democratic Caucus](#), would get big money out of politics, protect and strengthen the right to vote, end gerrymandering so that voters are more fairly represented, and establish anti-corruption measures to fix our broken system and amplify the voices of everyday Americans in our democracy.

Fixing Our Democracy Is Connected to Every Other Issue

- ☀️ Making pro-democracy reforms a first priority is the key to making progress on all the other pressing policy issues facing our country.
- ☀️ If Congress passes comprehensive democracy reforms, we will see a domino effect take place, with rapid progress on the issues American families care about most, from the environment and affordable healthcare, to fair labor laws and millions of good-paying jobs, to racial justice and gun violence prevention.
- ☀️ We must have a healthy democracy that responds to the needs and priorities of voters - not wealthy donors and corporate interests, which have dominated our system for far too long.
- ☀️ Along with the passage of the For the People Act, Congress must similarly prioritize H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act and H.R. 51, which would grant statehood to the long disenfranchised citizens of Washington, D.C.
- ☀️ A "[first priority](#)" of the Biden Administration is to lead on a comprehensive set of democracy reforms like those reflected in the For the People Act (H.R. 1/S. 949).

What Does the For the People Act Do?

I. Protect and Strengthen the Sacred Right to Vote

Improve Access – Expands access to the ballot box by sharply reducing institutional barriers to voting. Patchwork and cumbersome voter registration systems, disenfranchisement and limited voting hours are roadblocks to a more participatory democracy. The For the People Act (H.R. 1/S. 949) will create automatic voter registration across the country; ensure that individuals who have completed felony sentences have their full rights restored; expand early voting and simplify absentee voting and vote-by-mail; and modernize the U.S. voting system.

Promote Integrity – Commits Congress to building the record necessary to restore the Voting Rights Act as embodied by the House-passed H.R. 4; declares that the residents of the District of Columbia deserve full congressional voting rights and self-government, which only statehood can provide; prohibits inappropriate voter roll purges; and ends partisan gerrymandering to prevent politicians from cherry-picking voters.

Ensure Security – Ensures that American elections are decided by American voters without interference by enhancing federal support for voting system security, particularly voter-verified paper ballots, increasing oversight over election vendors, and requiring the development of a national strategy to protect U.S. democratic institutions.

What Does the For the People Act Do? (Contd.)

II. Get Big Money out of Politics

Guarantee Disclosure – Shines a light on dark money in politics by strengthening disclosure for online political ads and requiring all organizations involved in political activity to disclose their large donors. It also breaks the so-called ‘nesting-doll’ sham that allows big-money contributors and special interests to hide the sources that fund their political spending.

Empower Citizens – Gives political power back to hard-working Americans by creating a robust matching system for small donations, thereby allowing Americans of modest means to amplify their voices in politics and enable more diverse Americans to run for and win elected office. This new 21st century system of citizen-owned elections will break special interests’ stranglehold on Congress and lay the groundwork for an agenda that serves the American people.

Strengthen Oversight – Ensures that there is a referee on the field to enforce our campaign finance laws. It tightens rules on super PACs and restructures the Federal Election Commission to break the gridlock and do its job to provide fair administration of the law. It also repeals appropriations riders that prevent government agencies from requiring common-sense disclosure of political spending.

III. Clean Up Our Government with Anti-Corruption & Pro-Ethics Measures

Fortify Ethics Law – Reduces the power of the influence-peddling lobbyists and consultants who have a grip on many federal officials and increases accountability by expanding conflict of interest laws and divestment requirements, slowing the revolving door, preventing Members of Congress from serving on corporate boards and requiring presidents to disclose their tax returns.

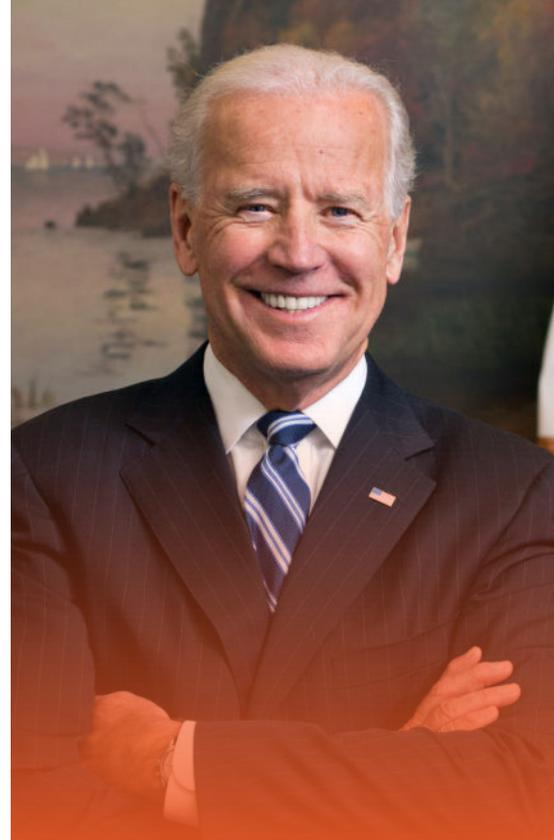
Ensure Greater Ethics Enforcement – Gives teeth to federal ethics oversight by overhauling the Office of Government Ethics, closing loopholes for lobbyists and foreign agents, ensuring watchdogs have sufficient resources to enforce the law, and creating a code of ethics for the U.S. Supreme Court.

IV. Reforms in the For the People Act Are Popular and Continue to Pass at the State and Local Levels

Reforms in the For the People Act are popular across the country with ideologically diverse voters. [Poll](#) after [poll](#) continues to show that voters prioritize anti-corruption measures and support bold democracy reforms to get big money out of politics, protect and strengthen the right to vote, and other policies to return power to the people.

Reforms in the For the People Act are tried and true and have taken hold across the nation. Driven by everyday voters, reforms [have passed in red, blue, and purple states and localities](#), often with bipartisan support.

For more information or for any questions, please contact [Aaron Scherb \(ascherb@commoncause.org\)](mailto:ascherb@commoncause.org) or [Mike Sozan \(msozan@americanprogress.org\)](mailto:msozan@americanprogress.org), co-chairs of the Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD) Hill working group.



"The charge facing the president who follows Donald Trump is as big as it is essential: **restoring faith in American government.** The next president must demonstrate with their actions – not empty words – that public servants serve all Americans, not themselves or narrow special interests."

— Joe Biden

"We have to make... "sure every American is automatically registered to vote, including former inmates who have earned their second chance... [and] by ending some of the partisan gerrymandering, **so that all voters have the power to choose their politicians**, and not the other way around."

— Barack Obama

