DEMOCRACY FOR THE PEOPLE

A Roadmap for Congress and a Future Administration

America is at a crossroads. We have reached an unprecedented moment in our country's long journey toward a fully inclusive democracy. For years, we've seen a shift away from government representation for the people, and towards representation for the billionaires and corporate interests – all while states actively pass legislation to restrict our freedom to vote and be fairly represented. Now, this administration is taking these attacks a step further – pushing the limits of executive power to the brink, normalizing rampant corruption, and attacking the pillars of civil society itself. From this decimated government and broken political system, we have the opportunity to build a government that truly is of, by, and for the people.

To meet this moment, we must advance bold, sweeping democracy reforms capable of tackling the long-standing issues plaguing our democracy, paired with new solutions designed to address the emerging issues our communities and civil society face. **This is our Declaration for American Democracy** – a roadmap for Congress and a future administration to rebuild our democracy post-Trump.

DECLARATION FOR
AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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Executive summary

This memorandum is divided into four essential pillars of our democracy: **Ensuring Our Freedom to Vote, Empowering the Voice of the People, Protecting Against Government Corruption, and Restoring Checks, Balances and the Rule of Law.**

This set of reforms was curated through the contribution and consultation of leading policy experts from across the ecosystem to collectively build a bold pro-democracy agenda to address the systemic issues facing our democracy. Building off of policies we've long championed, including the *Freedom to Vote Act,* this comprehensive lists includes new reforms to fit our current political landscape:

Ensuring Our Freedom to Vote

A true democracy requires that every eligible voter is able to participate in our elections without barriers, confusion, or intimidation. Building off the pro-voter reforms in the *Freedom to Vote Act*, Congress must ensure voter access and fair representation by advancing pro-voter policies. This includes **ensuring nationwide voting access** for all eligible voters through reforms to requirements surrounding the early voting process, automatic voter registration, and vote by mail, **Advancing legislation to ensure ballot access** for all communities including those of ethnic minorities including Native Americans, Americans disabilities, and youth, and **ensuring fair representation** accomplished through banning partisan gerrymandering and granting statehood to the more than 700,000 American citizens residing in Washington D.C; and more.

Empowering the Voice of the People

A true democracy responds to the needs of people and their communities – rather than influence billionaires or corporate interests. To ensure government it beholden to the people, Congress must pass comprehensive reforms to root out the corrosive influence of big money in politics and address the various ways special interests work to influence federal and state officials, such as passing a **constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United** and the Court's broader campaign finance decisions which have harmed the will and voice of voters and undermined our democracy. This also includes enacting reforms to **reduce insider influence**, **mitigate foreign interference in our elections**, to ensure **everyday people have a voice in our democracy.**

Protecting Against Government Corruption

A true democracy serves all of us, rather than the interests of those who govern. This requires government transparency and binding rules for Congress, the President, and the courts to prevent conflicts of interest. In addition, we must have enforcement mechanisms to hold individuals accountable - regardless of who they are or what position they hold. To that end, Congress must advance a suite of reforms to **ensure no future president can profit off their office or abuse its power** to shield their administration or allies from accountability**.** Additionally, we must ensure an **ethical Congress by enacting new guardrails,** such as a congressional stock trading ban, stronger congressional ethics enforcement, and legislation to close the revolving door between private sector officials and government offices; and much more.

Restoring Checks, Balances and the Rule of Law

A true democracy relies on a system of checks and balances. We must add safeguards and accountability mechanisms to prevent government overreach and to reinforce the powers allocated to each branch of government by our Constitution. That includes **reigning in current and potential future abuses of power from the executive branch**, and **ensuring that the legislative and the judicial branch both have sufficient means to hold an administration accountable.** Congress must create meaningful guardrails against abuse of national security and emergency powers, prevent the weaponization of the federal government in the form of political persecutions or attacks on nonprofits and civil society institutions for political purposes, and ensure the federal government is accountable to Congress and the law. Finally, Congress must enact reforms to ensure an independent Supreme Court and judicial system.

Coalition Background

The Declaration for American Democracy (DFAD) is a non-partisan coalition of more than 270 local, state, and national organizations working to strengthen U.S. democracy through enacting bold transformational democracy reform. Our broad coalition includes environmental, racial justice, good government, faith, labor, women's rights, consumer rights, national security, business, and a range of other organizations - all of which recognize that to make progress on the issues Americans care about, we must build a democracy that truly is of and by the people. Collectively, we represent tens of millions of Americans nationwide.

Disclaimer

While the DFAD Coalition is unified in our vision for sweeping federal democracy reform, this document does not represent an official coalition endorsement of each of these policies or imply the endorsement of all DFAD member organizations to each specific policy proposal included in this report. The policies included do represent a range of innovative ideas and approaches identified by democracy experts and advocates within the coalition.

Building Upon Existing Pro-Democracy Solutions

***Please note:** A number of policies referenced in this document have previously passed through the U.S. House of Representatives as either stand-alone legislation or within the Freedom to Vote Act or the For the People Act, which DFAD has enthusiastically supported. Those policies are marked with an asterisk. **

ENSURE OUR FREEDOM TO VOTE.

A Democracy for the People must allow every eligible voter to participate in our elections without barriers, confusion, or intimidation. Our electoral system must be reformed to ensure all voices are heard. For the past decade, Americans' access to the ballot has been threatened, and in some cases, diminished. From constraints on mail-in ballots, to voter-roll purges, to needlessly restrictive voter ID requirements, voters face far too many barriers to exercise their fundamental right to vote - Congress must step in to protect them. We must eliminate discriminatory voter suppression policies, continue to ensure the security of elections, and realize fair representation through fair districting.

I. Improving Voter Registration & Access to the Ballot

DFAD has long advocated for many protections to secure voters' access to the ballot, particularly those in the *Freedom to Vote Act*. This includes modernization of voter registration systems and additional pathways to ensure citizens can exercise their freedom to vote.

Voter Registration Modernization *

Congress should focus on passing measures from the *Freedom to Vote Act* that make voter registration easier, faster, and more accessible by establishing **Automatic Voter Registration (AVR)** and **online voter registration** as a national standard. Congress should also **support same-day voter registration**, which would allow eligible voters to register and vote on the same day. Congress should also invest in education and outreach initiatives for secondary school students to help young people understand the registration process.

Current registration systems create unnecessary barriers that disproportionately affect young voters, low-income individuals, and voters of color. Implementing the *Voter Registration Efficiency Act* would further improve registration systems while unlocking funding from the *Help America Vote Act (HAVA)* so that states can update and modernize their voter registration infrastructure.

Ensuring Voting Access *

To ensure every eligible voter can exercise their right to vote, we must enact national standards for our elections, enabling every eligible voter to cast their ballot easily and trust that their vote will be accurately counted. The *Freedom to Vote Act* includes many reforms to make voting easier, faster, and more accessible. To that end:

I. Congress should make **Election Day a federal holiday** and establish consistent protections for voters by **expanding access for individuals with disabilities**, including guaranteed access to absentee ballots. To ensure that eligible voters can exercise their freedom to vote, including workers whose employers don't typically honor federal holidays, Congress should **require employers to give their workers paid time off to vote** in federal elections, such as what's outlined in the *Time Off to Vote Act*.

II. Congress should require states to provide **a minimum of two weeks of early in-person voting, including evenings and weekends,** with consistent standards for implementation nationwide. More specifically, in-person early voting should be available for at least the two weekends before Election Day, for a minimum of 10 hours, with both morning and evening hours offered. Standardizing early voting access nationwide would reduce long lines, ease Election Day congestion, and make participation more convenient and equitable. This ensures that access to the ballot is not determined by geography or work schedule. Moreover, grants to **recruit and train**

poll workers should be provided, to help election offices maintain adequate staffing and preparedness.

III. Congress must expand and streamline **mail-in voting nationwide,** including making it easier for Military and Overseas Voters (UOCAVA), their families, and overseas voters to receive and return ballots.

IV. For **provisional voting**, Congress should add safeguards, require eligible portions of provisional ballots to be counted for every contest in which the voter is eligible, and require states to establish uniform, nondiscriminatory standards for issuing, handling, curing, and counting provisional ballots in federal elections.

V. To prevent the unnecessary disenfranchisement of qualified voters, Congress should require additional **standards on transparency and decision-making for voter purges**, ensuring election officials provide notice and the ability to contest removal from voting rolls and by requiring evidence as the basis for removal from the rolls.

Passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act *

Discrimination in voting has evolved: the Jim Crow era's first-generation forms of discrimination, like poll taxes and literacy tests, have transformed into second-generation barriers, like polling place closures, registration list purges, and unfair district maps that weaken or drown out voters' voices based on race. Congress should restore and strengthen the *Voting Rights Act (VRA)* by updating and passing the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*. The bill responds to the Supreme Court's multi-pronged attack on the VRA over the past 15 years by restoring preclearance provisions that stop racially discriminatory voting practices before they start; strengthening the nationwide prohibition against voting discrimination; clarifying existing protections, including that a private right of action exists for voters to sue in federal court when discriminatory laws make it harder for them to cast a ballot; and more.

Passing the Native American Voting Rights Act *

Congress should protect Native American voting rights by passing the *Native American Voting Rights Act*. This will combat obstacles Native voters face, including directing states to work with tribes to provide requested polling places, drop boxes, and poll workers; ensuring states allow specified tribal community members to return ballots on behalf of other tribal community members; and requiring states to accept tribal identification as a valid form of voter ID.

Restoring Voting Rights for Returning Citizens *

Congress should establish national standards for **restoring voting rights** for formerly incarcerated individuals, ensuring that those with past felony convictions regain their right to vote upon release. Disenfranchisement laws vary widely by state and disproportionately impact Black communities, undermining fair representation. A clear, uniform restoration policy would eliminate confusion, reduce administrative barriers, and reaffirm democratic inclusion—and is broadly popular with nearly two-thirds of Americans, according to polling. Restoring voting rights also decreases recidivism rates, strengthening public safety while encouraging civic participation. In addition, Congress should consider changes to empower jail voting by setting requirements for jails to provide opportunities for absentee voting by eligible incarcerated individuals.

Youth Voting Rights

The *Youth Voting Rights Act* would **strengthen enforcement of the 26th Amendment** through a private right of action and by requiring states with voter ID laws to accept student IDs issued by institutions of higher education as valid identification for federal elections. It would also designate student-service offices at public colleges and universities as voter-registration agencies, require states to offer

preregistration to eligible 16- and 17-year-olds, promote polling places on college campuses, and prohibit certain residency requirements that can create barriers for students who move between home and school.

Removing Cumbersome Voter Registration and Voting Requirements

Restrictive documentation requirements for voting and voter registration, like those outlined in the *SAVE Act*, make it significantly harder, if not outright impossible, for millions of eligible voters to register to vote. **Congress should reduce barriers related to voter identification, including requiring states with active identification laws to expand the list of acceptable Voter ID documents,** as outlined in the *Freedom to Vote Act*. Many American citizens do not have the specific documents required to vote or register, and often acquiring such documentation comes at a financial cost, making this a serious socio-economic issue. To that end, Congress should ensure that lack of access to a required government-issued photo ID doesn't disenfranchise eligible voters.

Similarly, Congress should protect voters who may face barriers because they are overseas. Congress should also ensure under UOCAVA that states are prohibited from coercing overseas voters into using military IDs or CACs as voter identification unless cleared by the Department of Defense.[1] Where such identification is permitted, states or localities would need secure systems for receiving and storing digital copies.

Protections for Voters Under Guardianship

State guardianship and voting laws create a patchwork of voting rights for disabled Americans under guardianship. Nine states bar people under guardianship from voting, while others impose individualized capacity requirements or no restrictions at all. An estimated 1.3 million U.S. adults are under guardianship or conservatorship, yet there is no comprehensive federal data on how many have lost their voting rights. Federal protections would prevent guardianship from functioning as a form of disability-based disenfranchisement, by **making clear that guardianship status alone cannot disqualify a citizen from voting in federal elections**.[2] Federal legislation could build off of the *Accessible Voting Act of 2024*. Alternatively federal administrative action could also empower voters, building off of guidance the Department of Justice issued in 2024. In any event, federal action can protect voters from the current patchwork of state laws by prohibiting states from imposing a higher voting-capacity standard on disabled people—an approach that would prevent states from disenfranchising people under guardianship.

Protecting Ballot Assistance

A growing number of states have criminalized routine third-party ballot assistance, targeting the organizations that help elderly, disabled, low-literacy, and low-income voters navigate the absentee voting process. Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, and Florida have adopted restrictions making certain forms of absentee ballot assistance a felony punishable with years in prison. These laws disproportionately affect Black voters, who often rely on community organizations and church networks for ballot access. While Section 208 of the Voting Rights Act protects a voter's right to choose an assistor, there could be additional protections for assistors to prevent overly restrictive state laws. **Congress should establish federal protections against state and local laws that overly criminalize third-party voter assistance**,[3] with the federal law preempting both existing and future state restrictions where possible, and voters having a private right of action against the state to ensure their rights can be protected.

Empowering Municipalities to Meet their Localized Needs

Congress should strengthen existing protections to ensure voters can access the voting process. Such reforms should prevent a repeat of Texas' voter suppression tactic. Harris County, which is home to the largest Black population in Texas, implemented drive-through voting and 24-hour voting during the 2020

[1] Democracy Defenders has produced significant research in this area.
[2] The Center for American Progress has produced significant research in this area.
[3] Democracy Defenders has produced significant research in this area.

election to increase access for essential workers and voters facing transportation barriers, but Texas SB1 (2021) eliminated both voting options statewide. Attempts by Harris County to restore these voting options were blocked by state officials—but Congress could empower municipalities, by establishing national minimum standards permitting jurisdictions, particularly those with large shift-worker populations or major transportation barriers, to adopt such policies to meet their localized needs. Congress should protect local election officials' autonomy, by establishing **national minimum standards for jurisdictions to be allowed to provide services,** including curbside voting, drive-through voting, mobile polling places, and 24-hour voting,[4] unencumbered by state restrictions.

II. Ensuring Voters Have An Equal Voice and Fair Representation

Many Americans face barriers that complicate or prevent their full representation in government. Partisan gerrymandering has increased, and federal courts have refused to enforce protections against it under the 14th Amendment absent additional legislation. Similarly, the *Voting Rights Act* historically helped ensure that communities of color could elect candidates of their choice, but Supreme Court cases have weakened the Act, from the striking down of preclearance to the gutting of protections against racial vote dilution. *The Freedom to Vote Act*, the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*, and other DFAD-supported bills include substantial protections against partisan gerrymandering, racial discrimination in voting, and racial vote dilution, alongside additional solutions to protect every voter in the United States. To that end, Congress must use its constitutional authority to protect meaningful and full representation.

Banning Partisan Gerrymandering *

Congress should **ban partisan gerrymandering** and establish stronger requirements for congressional redistricting. To ensure against map manipulation, this ban should promptly enjoin any congressional map that on a statewide basis has the intent or effect of materially favoring or disfavoring any political party, and enforce it using effective and efficient mechanisms through the federal courts.

DC Statehood *

Congress should admit Washington, D.C. as the 51st state to ensure its residents have full voting representation in Congress. More than 700,000 Americans currently lack voting representation in the House and Senate despite paying federal taxes and serving in the military. D.C.'s disenfranchisement is also a civil rights issue. D.C. has a larger share of Black residents than any state, and its struggle for statehood has long been tied to the fight for voting rights. In the wake of Louisiana v. Callais, statehood is one critical step toward a truly representative democracy.

Statehood would provide equal representation, full local self-government free from congressional interference, and full participation in federal decision-making. It would also give D.C.'s elected leaders the same authority over their National Guard that every governor has. This reform directly addresses structural disenfranchisement and would help ensure that all citizens have an equal voice in their government.

Preventing Prison Gerrymandering *

Congress should **prevent prison gerrymandering** by recording incarcerated individuals in decennial census data at their pre-incarceration communities, not where they are currently imprisoned. This will ensure that prison populations no longer distort population data for funding and redistricting purposes, and more accurately represent communities.

Empowering States and Territories to Expand Representation *

Congress should ensure that states can further expand representation and voting rights practices independently, continuing to ensure states can be laboratories of democracy. Congress should also apply

[4] Democracy Defenders has produced significant research in this area.

existing protections including the *National Voter Registration Act (NVRA)* where applicable in **U.S. overseas territories** and combat obstacles facing enfranchisement for those voters.

III. Preventing Election Subversion

Modern election systems face a variety of threats from both state and non-state actors attempting to target and compromise voter registration, voting machines, and other election infrastructure. The *Freedom to Vote Act* includes many protections to promote confidence in elections, stop partisan election subversion, and protect against election interference, both foreign and domestic.

Training, Retaining, and Protecting Election Administrators *

Congress should **strengthen federal civil protections for state and local election officials**, helping ensure that those who administer our elections are protected from undue partisan interference or control. Moreover, given the need for more staff to ensure elections run smoothly, Congress should allocate additional funding towards **training and recruitment grants** to states and localities, and the Election Assistance Commission should develop model training programs to recruit a new generation of election workers.

Providing Funding for State Election Operations *

Congress should increase financial support—alongside proper oversight—to federal agencies and states for election infrastructure. This includes funding for voting system security, such as providing **grants to states and localities for risk-limiting audits** following elections and directing DHS to create grants to **encourage private sector research and development on election security**. Congress should also establish an election grant advisory committee to review election security grants through an expert lens.

Safeguarding Against Mass Challenges to Eligibility

Congress should limit the ability of private individuals and groups to conduct mass challenges[5] to voters' registration or ballots in order to prevent bad actors from disenfranchising authorized voters for self-serving purposes. Such federal limits could include **imposing a cap on eligibility challenges any one individual can bring and/or requiring such challenges to be subject to a strong evidentiary standard,** made on specific permissible grounds and/or made with personal knowledge. Election officials should also be empowered to dismiss frivolous challenges quickly. Moreover, **affected voters, election administrators, and states should be able to demand records related to such challenges**, and **directly challenge algorithmic or artificial intelligence decision-making** on matters like voter qualifications, ballot counts, ballot acceptance/curing, and voter ID verification.

Protecting State Voter Data

Congress must **prevent efforts to coerce states into improperly sharing sensitive voter data**[6] with the federal government, further clarifying that such efforts are illegal. Congress should also **block the misuse of federal data in attempts to mass purge lawfully registered voters**.

[5] Campaign Legal Center and Democracy Defenders have produced significant research in this area.
[6] Campaign Legal Center has produced significant research in this area.

Preventing Intimidation and Harassment Against Voters or Poll Workers

Congress should prevent voter intimidation by conducting oversight and **strengthening the legal safeguards that already exist against the deployment of federal military or law enforcement[7] to and near polling locations,** ballot drop-off sites, or vote counting facilities. Congress should also **protect nonpartisan election officials and volunteer poll workers from increasing threats**. This includes strengthening election workers' civil legal protections against intimidation and harassment, protecting the confidentiality of their personal information, and providing them with enhanced security resources.

Funding for Modernized, Secure Equipment

Congress should invest **additional significant sustained funding into election administration**, so that states and localities can modernize outdated equipment (including providing accessible private voting machines), address cyber threats, recruit staff (including security and cybersecurity personnel), conduct more robust public education, and provide enhanced voter services—all of which will help secure elections and build trust in the process.[8]

Enhancing Testing and Chain-of-Custody Protections

Federal action should help to ensure that election results are accurate by **encouraging thorough pre-election testing of voting systems**, including election management systems, as well as **robust post-election audits** of federal races, with testing and audits open to meaningful observation by the public. All testing and audit results should be posted promptly. Similarly, states should review chain-of-custody practices for election materials, including ballots, election equipment, seals and seal logs, and other election records.[9]

VI. Considering Broader Representational Reforms

In this challenging moment, careful consideration should be given towards bolder and broader reforms, including options such as proportional representation and/or ranked-choice voting at the state and federal levels. Any alternative system must only be adopted if it strengthens participation and representation for communities of color who have historically been marginalized or locked out of fair representation.

The Roberts Court has dismantled the *Voting Rights Act's* protections for voters of color, intensified ongoing redistricting wars, and enabled further targeting of majority-minority districts. In this moment, Congress should carefully explore whether proportional electoral systems, which allocate legislative seats in proportion to votes cast, would ensure both more durable voting power for long-excluded communities and a more representative democracy less prone to manipulation long-term; and what, if any, ancillary reforms would be needed to make such reforms work in the American political context.

Congress should also carefully explore ranked choice voting, a reform for single-winner elections that gives voters the option to rank candidates in order of preference.

As with any potential reform, Congress should thoroughly explore what design choices would be necessary to ensure that any reform securely and fairly empowers voters of color.

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[7] Campaign Legal Center has produced significant research in this area.
[8] Campaign Legal Center has produced significant research in this area.
[9] Campaign Legal Center, Democracy Defenders, and SMART Elections have produced significant research in this area.

EMPOWER THE VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

A Democracy for the People responds to the needs of everyday people and their communities. The voices of Americans should not be drowned out by billionaires or corporate interests who use their wealth to buy access, curry favor, and shape policy and elections. We must root out the corrosive influence of big money in politics and address the various ways special interests work to influence Members of Congress and government officials.

I. Combating Big Money and Empowering the Voices of the People

A true democracy amplifies community voices and makes it possible for any qualified and eligible candidate, regardless of income or background, to run for office. To that end, Congress must enact the following reforms to limit the corrosive influence of big money in politics.

End the Supreme Court's Antidemocratic Wealth Favoritism

The Supreme Court's disastrous *Citizens United* decision has led to an influx of secret money in our elections that has amplified the voices of billionaires and corporate interests and blocked progress on issues Americans care about. But *Citizens United* is not the only problem the Supreme Court has created.

For decades, the Supreme Court's campaign finance decisions have distorted the First Amendment to constitutionally privilege big election spending by the wealthy at the expense of everyone else. As a result, nearly three-quarters of all Americans — including vast majorities of both Democrats and Republicans — view the role of money in politics as a very big problem. **To fix this, we must overturn *Citizens United* and the Court's broader campaign finance decisions (dating back to *Buckley v. Valeo)* that have harmed voters and undermined our democracy.**

Amplify the Voices of Everyday People

Today, a small group of wealthy donors and corporations wield outsized influence over our political system. This concentration of political power among the wealthy elite is especially harmful to Black and brown communities, low-income voters, and other historically marginalized communities whose voices and interests are too often drowned out by a donor class that is disproportionately wealthy and white.

To that end, Congress should advance and support robust public financing programs for House and Senate candidates that meet a certain threshold and requirements. Small dollar public financing, paid for by fines and fees on corporations that break the law–as included in the *For the People* and *Freedom to Vote Act,* could be used to support the following programs:

I. **Democracy Vouchers** offer one powerful solution. Under these programs, eligible residents receive publicly funded vouchers they can donate to participating candidates of their choice. By giving every person resources to support candidates they believe in, democracy vouchers expand participation and reduce candidates' reliance on wealthy donors. Seattle's pioneering Democracy Voucher program significantly broadened the donor pool, ensuring candidates have stronger incentives to engage with and respond to the communities that they are meant to serve.

II. **Small donor matching programs** similarly amplify the voices of everyday voters by multiplying the value of small contributions with public funds. Rather than relying on a handful of wealthy donors, candidates are incentivized to build support from broad, grassroots constituencies. Programs in New York State, New York City, and other jurisdictions have demonstrated that matching small-dollar donations can increase participation, diversify the donor class, and make it possible for candidates from a wider range of backgrounds to run competitive campaigns.

III. **Public financing grant programs** provide participating candidates with direct public funds to run viable campaigns while limiting their dependence on private fundraising. States such as Arizona and Maine have long operated grant-based systems that allow candidates to focus on engaging voters instead of courting wealthy donors. By reducing fundraising barriers, grant programs make it easier for candidates from underrepresented communities to seek office and help create a government that more accurately reflects the diversity of the people it serves.

Additionally, Congress can encourage wider adoption of small donor public financing reforms by creating incentives for state and local governments to establish and expand programs of their own.

Together with other money-in-politics reforms, these proven policies can expand political participation, increase government responsiveness, and help ensure that all Americans have a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect their lives and communities.

Shine A Light On Secret Money in Politics

Existing campaign finance laws and Supreme Court precedent allow secret, or dark, money to proliferate in American politics. Billionaires and corporate special interests are able to buy our elections by funneling their money through innocuously named organizations. This leaves voters left in the dark about who's actually behind the mailers and campaign ads they're inundated with each election cycle. Transparency on election spending is essential for Americans to cast informed votes. The following policies would rectify this — ensuring voters know who's paying for what messaging in support or opposition to candidates:

- **Require Disclosure:** The *DISCLOSE Act* would dramatically curtail secret spending in our elections by shining the light of public disclosure on dark money. The *DISCLOSE Act* prevents the use of intermediary groups to conceal the true sources of large political donations by requiring groups that spend money on elections to disclose donors who give at least $10,00 during an election cycle. *

- **Close digital and online political spending loopholes:** Changes are also needed to modernize campaign finance laws to account for online political advertising. Since 2002, anyone who pays for a political ad on TV must include an ad disclaimer identifying themselves. Additionally, the broadcaster is required to keep public records of political ad purchases, and leading up to elections, foreign nationals are banned from paying for ads that mention political candidates. Existing ad disclosure requirements do not account for internet ads and the ways social media has changed our advertising ecosystem. The *Honest Ads Act* would subject internet ads to the same rules as TV and radio ads. It would also increase overall transparency by allowing the public to see who paid for the online political ad—no matter who the entity behind the ad is. Additionally, the *Sunlight on SuperPACS Act* would require campaign ads by SuperPACs to name their top 3 donors to empower voters with information about who's really behind the ads they see.

  Additionally, as the online influencer ecosystem begins to play a pivotal role in our elections, our disclosure laws need to account for this newer form of advertising communications. The *Promoting Authenticity with Influencer Disclaimers (PAID) Act* would require social media influencers and content creators to clearly disclose whenever a political committee, campaign, or even a foreign government has compensated them to promote political messaging. This ensures that their audience knows the message is not simply their opinion, but rather another form of electioneering communications for which they are being compensated.

  Advances in artificial intelligence (AI) further complicate transparent political ads and present a danger to our democracy. As generative AI improves, it becomes easier to create deepfakes—or AI-generated images, audio, or video that falsely depict candidates or officials. Deepfakes are becoming an increasingly common way for spreading disinformation or attacking political

opponents through the distribution of fake content. AI generated deepfakes make it easier to manipulate voters because they can depict a candidate saying or doing things they never did to damage the candidate's reputation and deceiver voters. While existing federal law may prevent the use of some deepfakes in electioneering communications, Congress must pass the *Protect Elections from Deceptive AI Act* to address this problem.

- **Prevent Pop-up PACs' Exploitation of Disclosure Deadlines.** The 2026 midterm election cycle has highlighted how super PACs and their funders can game existing campaign finance filing deadlines and disclosure rules to temporarily hide information about election spending. Pop-up super PACs form shortly before Election Day in both primary and general elections. Pop-up PACs then receive and spend money at very specific points to evade campaign finance disclosure deadlines. They typically receive donations from deep-pocketed, special interest donors—whose interests may be at odds with the voters of a particular election. By functioning in this way, pop-up super PACs can avoid disclosing their donors until after the election is over—effectively leaving voters in the dark about whose funding is for or against specific candidates.

  To address this problem, lawmakers must enhance campaign finance disclosure rules to create more real-time information for voters by passing legislation such as the *DISCLOSE Act*, *SHINE Act*, and *Sunlight on SuperPACs Act*. This allows voters to make informed choices ahead of elections. No more super PACs gaming the system to avoid revealing their funders before Election Day.

Make Clear the Rules of the Road for Civic Engagement by Nonprofits

As referenced in the Checks and Balances section, Congress must protect non-profits from being targeted via the IRS simply due to political differences with an administration. Clear definitions about what constitutes political intervention by tax-exempt groups will help strengthen American democracy. Ambiguity regarding what election-related activities can be undertaken by nonprofits—as well as perceived disparities in IRS enforcement of the rules—chills civic engagement rather than encourages it. It's time to replace the IRS "facts and circumstances" test with a single, transparent standard for political intervention and precise definitions and safe harbors for allowable civic engagement. New bright lines rules will help nonprofit leaders understand that participating in nonpartisan voter activities is permissible, and, like lobbying activities, is morally essential to a robust democracy.

II. Reducing Insider Influence and Strengthening Anti-Coordination Rules

Due to *Citizens United* and other campaign finance decisions, wealthy donors today play an outsized role in funding and even running electoral campaigns. In the 2024 federal elections, just 300 billionaires and their families donated more than $3 billion—nearly a fifth of the total spent that cycle. Most of that money flowed through super PACs, the *Citizens United*-enabled campaign finance juggernauts that can raise and spend unlimited amounts. The Court has downplayed concerns about these groups, declaring that they cannot corrupt the political process because they have to operate "independently." In reality, however, they often work hand-in-glove with candidates, who increasingly outsource core campaign functions—including door-to-door canvassing and get-out-the-vote efforts—to allied super PACs. **Congress can correct the Court's errors by passing stronger rules to prevent coordination between outside groups and candidates, and by closing loopholes that allow foreign donors to illegally funnel money into American elections.**

Legislation such as the *Stop Illegal Campaign Coordination Act* and the *Political Accountability and Transparency Act* should be passed. These bills would: extend the time period when former staffers may

set up an electioneering group that spends money in support of the same candidate; prohibit candidates from fundraising for super PACs; and treat outside spending as illegally coordinated if it is "materially consistent" with a candidate's strategic instructions, targeted voter guidance, or shared campaign strategy.

Reducing Foreign Influence in U.S. Elections

The Supreme Court has also assured that its rulings would not open the door for foreign money to influence American elections. But while federal law still bars foreign election spending, the Court's rulings have made the prohibition easier than ever to evade. Congress should pass the *Get Foreign Money Out of U.S. Elections Act*, which would close a major campaign finance loophole that has allowed U.S. companies appreciably owned by foreign entities to pour unlimited sums of money into our elections.

Banning the Personal Use of Leadership PAC Funds

When members of Congress are free to spend political contributions for their own enrichment, the distinction between campaign contributions and bribes begins to break down. That's why politicians have long been prohibited from using campaign funds for personal use. Lawmakers across the political spectrum should likewise agree that politicians should not be permitted to use the political action committees called "leadership PACs" as slush funds. Leadership PACs are typically used by politicians to raise money and give it away to political allies and like-minded candidates. **From a statutory perspective, Congress only needs to add a comma and three simple words to the law to make it crystal clear that leadership PAC funds cannot be used for lawmakers' personal use.** That is all it would take to clarify that the personal use restrictions that govern campaign committees also apply to leadership PACs and other political committees. That's a simple fix that would significantly improve the public's trust in politicians who are elected to be public servants.

Strengthening Enforcement and Accountability

Congress established the Federal Election Commission (FEC) as an independent, bipartisan agency charged with the vitally important mission of interpreting and enforcing federal campaign finance laws. Far too long, however, the FEC has been failing that mission and, even more troublingly, actively undermining it. The result has been an exponential increase of dark money influencing our elections and the extreme concentration of political power in a tiny group of wealthy donors whose extraordinary spending to influence elections drowns out the voices of everyday Americans. Restoring the proper functioning of the FEC would help address these and other problems in our campaign finance system by ensuring faithful interpretation and application of existing campaign finance laws and meaningful enforcement of the law when it is violated. **The *Freedom to Vote Act* and *Restoring Integrity to America's Elections Act* each include reforms that would go a long way towards restoring the proper functioning of the FEC.** These reforms would address the persistent deadlock at the Commission, strengthen the FEC's ability to investigate and pursue potential campaign finance violations, and ensure greater accountability when the Commission fails to enforce the law. Specifically, reforms such as restructuring the Commission from six members to five, strengthening the authority of the FEC's general counsel, and providing more meaningful judicial review of Commission inaction would help create a more functional and effective enforcement agency.

Still, the most effective campaign finance system requires not only meaningful *civil* enforcement by the FEC, but also robust prosecution and accountability by an independent Department of Justice for violations that rise to the level of criminal misconduct. The DOJ historically prioritized its pursuit of criminal charges against those who abuse the electoral process for their own private gain, recognizing that such actions undermine Americans' faith in our democratic system. We need reforms that protect our democracy and prioritize these anticorruption goals, and that ensure public corruption is prosecuted rather than pardoned.

Closing Loopholes for Federal Contractors to Spend on Campaigns

Reforms should also expand the ban on political spending by federal contractors to give it real teeth. Existing law prevents individuals and firms that hold federal contracts from giving to political parties and federal candidates. But companies can easily dodge these limits by donating through subsidiaries and corporate affiliates. So, too, can the contractors' executives and major shareholders make such campaign contributions on behalf of the contracting businesses. These loopholes are why individual donors like Elon Musk can spend hundreds of millions of dollars in the 2024 election cycle despite owning companies that hold massive government contracts, and why defense contractors and other industries can routinely spend millions each election cycle. **Congress can close these gaps by extending the ban to cover not just entities that hold federal contracts but also their parent companies and other corporate affiliates, executives, and major shareholders** who have a clear financial interest in government contracting decisions.

PROTECT AGAINST GOVERNMENT CORRUPTION

A Democracy for the People serves all of us, rather than the self-interests of those who govern. This requires government transparency and binding rules for Congress, the president, and the courts to root out conflicts of interest. In addition to oversight, we must have enforcement mechanisms to hold individuals accountable - regardless of who they are or what position they hold. Our democracy requires comprehensive safeguards that prevent self-dealing and ensure that no one in power, whether a president, judge, or Member of Congress, can use public office to advance their own personal or financial interests.

I. Reducing Opportunities For Corruption

In order to ensure those in power serve the people, and not themselves, we must build off the protections outlined in the *For the People Act* and the *Freedom to Vote Act* to enact comprehensive safeguards to prevent self-dealing and ensure no one in power can use public office to advance their own personal or financial interests.

Divestment from Assets While in Office *

The president and vice president have long enjoyed freedom from many federal ethics laws observed by other executive branch employees. Importantly, this includes 18 U.S.C. § 208, which prohibits executive branch employees from participating in government matters which will affect their own financial interests. Donald Trump is exploiting this loophole to further grow his personal wealth–Congress must close it. To that end, Congress should impose new, stringent divestment mandates requiring the president and vice president to divest all assets outside of a narrow group of permitted holdings, like exchange traded index funds, or place assets into a qualified blind trust for a trustee to divest then reinvest. They should also require more detailed disclosure of financial interests of both the president, vice president, and their immediate family members and prohibit the president, Vice president, and cabinet secretaries from entering into contracts with the United States government.

Closing the Revolving Door

Americans have long known that when the federal government operates to benefit corporate interests, it is only the wealthy and well-connected who gain. The revolving and reverse-revolving doors are not new issues. Since Donald Trump reclaimed office in 2025, however, there has been an unprecedented migration of private sector officials into government office and former government officials into the industries they regulated. These political and corporate insiders bring institutional knowledge and political and corporate contacts that can shape policy outcomes. Once former officials enter the lobbying force, they have easy access through their government contacts to policy makers out of reach of typical lobbyists. Consequently, special interests have been given inordinate influence over policies that impact the lives of everyday Americans.

Unlike past administrations, which have passed ethics barriers to limit former lobbyists from acting preferentially towards their former clients, the Trump Administration has willfully ignored the issue and worked to install former industry insiders in government. In fact, in one of his final acts of his first term, Trump repealed his own ethics guardrails, which had barred those who had served in his administration from lobbying for political parties and foreign governments for life. Now in his second term, we have seen, for example, over one hundred fossil fuel insiders installed across nine federal agencies within his first year in office.

Likewise, numerous former government regulators and office holders have already claimed lucrative employment in the very sectors they once oversaw. For example, the former Director of the U.S. Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA), Michael Miller, joined Northrop Grumman two months after leaving his office. DSCA played a key role in helping authorize exports of weapons, made by Northrop, to the Middle East within the past two years. To combat the public to private revolving door, reforms should:

I. Implement a 5-year ban on government officials transitioning to lobbying positions domestically, and 10 years for foreign governments or foreign government controlled or wholly owned entities, after leaving office.

II. Prohibit former U.S. government acquisition-role officials from receiving compensation for 4 years from a contractor whose contract or license they participated in selecting, signed off on, or granted (see Section 103 in Sen. Warren's *Department of Defense Ethics and Anti-Corruption Act of 2023*).

III. Similarly, prohibit former U.S. government officials from receiving compensation in any capacity, including as a consultant, lawyer, or advisor, for 4 years from any company whose contract, export license, or arms sale they helped select, review, approve, or enforce if the contract is in excess of $10,000,000.

IV. Consider creating a new category of "corporate lobbyist," defined as individuals paid to influence government on behalf of for-profit entities and their front-groups, which would be subject to a lower working time threshold for lobbying registration (currently 20 percent).

V. Expand the legal definition of lobbyist to include consulting and advisory positions to combat shadow lobbying loopholes.

VI. Officials leaving government service must enter binding revolving door exit plans that lay out the steps the official will take to ensure compliance with applicable post-employment restrictions. A summary of this plan could be made available to the public. Former officials must also submit exit plan compliance reports periodically after leaving government service. These exit plans and compliance reports should be filed with the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) and made available to the public.

VII. Strengthen the Foreign Agent Registration Act (FARA) by (1) requiring FARA registrants to list what bills they lobby for as well as who their "lobbying contacts" are; (2) narrowing the "commercial" exemption for FARA by requiring registration for any person or entity engaged in commercial activities that directly or indirectly promote the interests of a foreign government (as the Biden Administration proposed at end of his term); and, (3) publicizing individuals lobbying for foreign entities who are registered through the LDA, but not through FARA (as proposed by *LDA Improvement Act*).

To combat the **private to public revolving door,** reforms should mandate:

I. Public disclosure of former private sector employees, lobbying history, deferred payments, severance agreements, and investments.

II. Mandatory recusal for government officials tasked with overseeing their former employers.

III. The expansion of 18 U.S.C. § 208 to encompass a broader range of regulatory decisions, not only specific matters.

IV. The creation of a uniform, cross-agency public database to record recusals statements, the duration of the recusals, and the ethics statute(s) that require such an action.

V. Mandatory divestment from financial interests that are tied to sectors they regulate, along with stricter provisioning of conflict-of-interest waivers.

Combatting Pay to Play Politics

Reforms are needed to lessen the risks of corruption and the appearance of corruption inherent in the interplay of lobbying and campaign fundraising. Campaign contributions from lobbyists—and funds raised by lobbyists through bundling programs—are often transactional, given to secure access, influence, and gratitude. We need reforms that break the cycle of pay-to-play politics in Washington. **Congress must pass the** *Lobbying and Campaign Finance Reform Act* and also the *Close the Revolving Door Act* to ban lawmakers from accepting contributions from registered lobbyists and prohibiting lobbyists from helping raise campaign contributions for any lawmakers they lobby.

Stock-trading Ban

Congress passed the *STOCK Act* in 2012 to affirm that insider trading law applies to lawmakers and to require them to disclose their trades. That law has not stopped the trading. A 2022 *New York Times* investigation found that 97 members of Congress or their immediate family members bought or sold securities in industries their committees oversee, in more than 3,700 transactions. No federal statute bars a member from owning stock in a company that member regulates, investigates, or funds with taxpayer dollars. Disclosure alone cannot cure that conflict. Eighty-six percent of Americans support a ban, including 87 percent of Republicans and 88 percent of Democrats. Speaker Johnson, Minority Leader Jeffries, and President Trump have each voiced support. Yet despite this overwhelming support, years of policy development and advocacy, and numerous strong bipartisan bills that would eliminate these poisonous conflicts of interest, the measures have mostly stalled. Indeed the only bill to reach a floor vote, the so-called *Stop Insider Trading Act*, is a half-measure that leaves existing conflicts in place and will not restore public trust–and it may foreclose real reform for years.

Any reform must include four key provisions:

I. **Ban both ownership and trading:** Cover individual stocks, bonds, digital assets, and other securities, along with stakes in private equity, venture capital, and hedge funds. Permit only diversified mutual funds, ETFs, and index funds.

II. **Cover spouses and dependent children** so members cannot shift holdings to family.

III. **Require real divestment:** Members must sell within 180 days of enactment and new members within 90 days of taking office. A blind trust qualifies only if the trustee sells the underlying individual holdings so the member no longer knows what the trust contains.

IV. **Enforce with real penalties:** Fine violators 10 percent of the value of each covered investment plus disgorgement of any profit, and impose no intent requirement, since a "knowingly" standard makes violations nearly impossible to prove.

Other similar or related legislative solutions include the *Restore Trust in Congress Act*, *Restore Trust in Government Act*, Ending Trading and *Holdings in Congressional Stocks (ETHICS) Act*, and the *Halting Ownership and Non-Ethical Stock Transactions (HONEST) Act.*

Pardon Reform: Barring Personal or Political Benefit

The presidential pardon power exists to correct injustice and provide mercy in extraordinary cases. Some presidents have misused this broad authority in ways that have been questionable or self-serving, but President Trump has taken it further than ever, transforming the federal clemency process into a system where loyalty, access, and wealth can seemingly buy a pardon. Specifically, President Trump has routinely pardoned wealthy individuals following large contributions to his political endeavors, including his super PAC, campaign committees, and inaugural committee. He has also granted clemency after pardon seekers channeled benefits to his family's many businesses or hired lobbyists with insider access to his relatives and administration staff.

Alarmingly, the cases that have made headlines are likely just the tip of the iceberg: we cannot know how much pardon recipients may have channeled to dark money groups, projects like the East Wing ballroom and Trump's presidential library, or businesses connected to the president that do not disclose their donors and investors. Congress can address this pay-to-play situation by targeting corruption on the part of private individuals seeking pardons, and their intermediaries. **Specifically, Congress should:**

Require pardon recipients to disclose anything of significant value that they provide—or that is provided at their direction or on their behalf—to:

I. The president or their immediate family.
II. Any entity established, financed, maintained, or controlled by the president or their immediate family, or that exists to advance the president's personal, political, or financial interests. This includes super PACs, dark money groups, inaugural funds, presidential libraries, ballroom projects, and other entities.
III. Any business in which the president or their immediate family holds a meaningful financial interest, including real estate and cryptocurrency ventures.
IV. Any lobbyist, political fixer, or intermediary paid to seek a pardon.

Strengthen the existing federal anti-bribery law to:

I. Clarify that offering or granting a pardon or commutation is both an "official act" and a "thing of value" covered by the current statute.
II. Expand the law to candidates for federal office to capture corrupt bargains made during a campaign in exchange for the promise of a future pardon.
III. Double the statute of limitations from 5 to 10 years, so that a future administration can investigate and prosecute corrupt clemency bribes even if the president who issued a pardon obstructs the Department of Justice during their term of office.

Cracking Down on "Pardon Brokers"

President Trump's pile of disturbing pardons and commutations have exposed an exploding market of lobbyists, lawyers, and intermediaries who have sold "pardon broker" services in exchange for millions of dollars. This new pardon broker industry needs to be treated distinctly differently than policy lobbying because it is not about policy, it's about influencing one irreversible and unaccountable action by one individual. And it has created a perfect shakedown scenario for sleazy grifters to persuade desperate individuals to make themselves rich by leveraging inside access to flip the criminal justice system on its head to benefit the rich and toss out justice for victims like trash. This corrupt pardon broker system must be exposed, investigated, and dramatically reformed. Here are three ways to begin:

I. **Ban Pardon Lobbying Solicitation**: Prohibit lobbyists from directly soliciting clients for pardon lobbying services when a significant motive for the lobbyist doing so is the lobbyist or lobbying firm's pecuniary gain.

II. **Pre & Post-Election Pardons Review**: All pardons 90 days before or after presidential elections will be the subject of a congressional review with a required public hearing and the ability to compel testimony of people pardoned and actors involved.

III. **Expose Pardon Lobbying Activities**: Require pardon lobbyists, brokers, and influencers–anyone who is paid to advocate for a pardon–to file detailed disclosures akin to how registered foreign agents file via FARA. Require listing of the names of all government officials they lobby for pardons, disclose all written pardon lobbying communications, and impose criminal penalties for failure to file.

Restricting the Ability for Private Donors to Pay for Government salaries, White House Renovations, and Presidential Libraries

Congress must pass stringent restrictions on the ability for private donors and corporations to pay for government salaries, White House and other federal property renovations, presidential libraries, and other enterprises championed by the president. Failing to do so allows donors to use funding projects as a means to seek preferential treatment in the form of legal pardons, government contracts, government appointments, federal investigations, and regulatory decision making.

New laws should **eliminate anonymous donations and require all contributions to federal projects to be publicly listed with the monetary amount and the name(s) of the donor(s)**. Further, the **president, vice president, members of the first family, their staff, or cabinet secretaries may not solicit donations and donations which create a conflict of interest are prohibited**; this includes but is not limited to donations from individuals or corporations currently holding or seeking federal contracts, grants, or licenses; individuals or corporations under federal investigation; executive branch lobbyists. **All donations from foreign governments are prohibited unless otherwise authorized by congress**. Finally, all **donations are subject to preapproval by the agency ethics official** to ensure their compliance with the aforementioned codes.

Banning Presidential Profiteering

Every week, it seems the White House invents new forms of self-enrichment – from memecoins to baseless settlements, licensing deals for the president's name to pay-to-play pardons. The result is an executive who is distracted by his money-making ventures, attempting to divert public funds into his and his supporters' pockets (as in Trump's IRS lawsuit), and distorting decisions on regulation, pardons, and foreign policy based on his business interests.

And the problem will not disappear once Trump leaves office. The norms that have been shattered will enable profiteering by other presidents, regardless of party–unless Congress codifies clear and enforceable standards for all future occupants of the White House.

Policymakers attempting to address presidential self-enrichment face a daunting challenge: the sheer volume of self-enrichment vehicles makes it hard not to leave gaps, the ingenuity with which new forms of self-enrichment are being devised makes it hard to keep pace; and the purposeful ambiguity of some profit streams makes it hard to pinpoint a corrupt act.

The solution: In addition to erecting guardrails against new forms of corruption individually, policymakers should pursue a more comprehensive approach: **a clean prohibition on outside enrichment during the presidency.**

I. The president and vice president would receive their official salary–and that's it. No side hustles.

II. This should be paired with a requirement to divest income-generating assets for the duration of their term.
III. Both the government officials (president and VP) and those paying them off (corporations or individuals) could be held accountable for violating the ban.
IV. The ban should include robust enforcement options, to include a private right of action, plus a 10-year statute of limitations.[10]

Special Government Employee Reform

In the first half of the second Trump administration, a massive amount of corruption and self-dealing flowed through a loophole in the "Special Government Employee" (SGE) designation. This enabled high profile and unscrupulous individuals, such as Corey Lewandowski and Steve Witkoff, to effectively serve as powerful federal government policy makers with the highest level of access to sensitive information and government contracts with none of the anti-corruption safeguards and financial conflict of interest disclosure requirements that generally apply to people in those positions of power.

SGEs were created to be a time-limited designation to enable the federal government to take advantage of the knowledge and skills of outside experts while allowing them to remain employed in the private sector. Under existing law, SGEs have been broadly exempted from the divestiture of conflicting interest requirements and are permitted to participate in matters that directly and substantially affect their financial interests providing those matters do not have a unique impact on the SGE or the SGE's former or current employer other than as part of a general industry or class of persons. In addition, special government employees have not been required to publicly disclose their financial interests unless they are both classified above the GS-15 level of federal employment and serve over 60 days. All SGEs must file financial disclosure statements, but most of them are filed only with the office they work for and kept confidential. Neither members of Congress or the public have access.

Comprehensive reform to address exploitation of the special government employee designation should include: requiring all SGEs to file public financial disclosure statements with the Office of Government Ethics and made available to members of Congress and the public immediately upon request; require any petitions for conflict-of-interest waivers to be conducted by the Office of Government Ethics–and not agency ethics officers–and released to the public upon request; prohibiting SGEs from participating in reviewing or issuing government contracts; mandating SGE recusal for any topic area on which they could have a specific conflict of interest; limiting the role of all SGEs to advice only, ensuring safeguards exist protecting sensitive government data from unauthorized SGE use; and prohibit SGEs from making final government policy decisions that are not directly overseen by a permanent government official.[11] All ethics concerns must be resolved *before* an SGE assumes their role, and the Office of Government Ethics should be empowered to impose serious civil penalties on violators of these provisions.

Permanently Block the Slush Fund and Future Corrupt Payouts

Congress must also permanently block the Trump administration's attempt to create a $1.8 billion slush fund for January 6 rioters and prevent future corrupt payouts by passing the *NO CARTE BLANCHE Act*. This would prevent taxpayer dollars from being funneled to January 6 offenders, political appointees, and the president, vice president, their families, or entities they control.

Anti-Corruption Guardrails for Federal Antitrust Review

Congress has confronted a bought merger approval before. After the Nixon Justice Department settled its ITT case in 1971 amid presidential intervention and a $400,000 ITT pledge to the Republican convention,

[10] Further details in the profiteering ban framework released by Common Cause and other DFAD partners: https://www.commoncause.org/resources/profiteering-ban-framework/

[11] These measures build upon, but go farther in many instances, than the SGE Ethics Enforcement & Reform (SEER) Act of 2025.

Congress passed the *Tunney Act*, which requires judges to find that DOJ antitrust settlements serve the public interest. That safeguard just failed a major test. When the DOJ sued in 2025 to block Hewlett Packard Enterprise's $14 billion purchase of Juniper Networks, HPE hired lobbyists close to the White House, went over the Antitrust Division's head, and won a settlement; the administration fired two officials who resisted and pushed out Assistant Attorney General Gail Slater in February 2026. On August 12, Judge Casey Pitts approved the deal, finding that HPE hid its lobbying of the CIA and Pentagon and that the DOJ withheld the alternatives it considered, yet the court "lacks the independent power" to intervene. The problem runs to the top. Paramount paid $16 million to settle President Trump's suit against CBS News three weeks before the FCC approved its merger with Larry and David Ellison's Skydance; Trump then promised to "be involved" in the Warner Bros. Discovery sale, and the DOJ cleared Paramount's $110 billion takeover reportedly over career staff objections. Trump Media's own $6 billion merger with fusion developer TAE Technologies needs approval from agencies Trump now controls.

Once a merger closes, no statute lets anyone unwind it because the approval was purchased: the *Tunney Act* reaches only DOJ consent decrees, not FTC orders or dismissed cases, and courts read its public-interest test so narrowly that political interference or corruption does not count. And the main conflict of interest statute, 18 U.S.C. § 208, exempts the president and vice president, and it reaches only financial interests, not political ones. **Reforms to unwinding tainted approvals include:**

I. Amend the *Clayton Act* so that any merger cleared through bribery, benefits promised to officials or the president, or concealed lobbying becomes voidable for ten years after closing in federal, state, or private suits, with the merged firm bearing the burden of proving the deal lawful.

II. Investigate every merger above $25B that the second Trump administration approved for anti-competitive effects treating each as corrupt and subject to unwinding unless the parties win a declaratory judgment proving no harm to competition, and review all smaller mergers for political interference such as DOJ political appointees overriding career staff.

III. Extend the *Tunney Act* to FTC orders, voluntary dismissals, and closed investigations; require hold-separate orders during review; let state attorneys general intervene in evidentiary hearings; broaden "public interest" to cover all harms to the public; and direct courts to vacate any settlement procured through improper influence and revive the government's complaint.

IV. Require agencies to disclose every White House or lobbyist contact about a pending transaction and to state on the record when political leadership overrides career staff, with concealed contacts creating a presumption of taint and tolling the statute of limitations.

Disqualifying Conflicted Reviewers

I. Before Hart-Scott-Rodino review opens, require everyone with authority over the matter, including commissioners, staff, and White House officials who weigh in, to certify to the Office of Government Ethics that they hold no financial interest in the parties, whether through a spouse, dependent child, deferred pay, or job offer, and have not represented them within five years.

II. Treat political benefit as a disqualifying interest, covering contributions from the parties, their executives, or lobbyists to a campaign, PAC, inaugural committee, library, or legal defense fund; settlements or business dealings with the official or the president; advertising commitments; and jobs for family members.

III. Make recusal automatic, un-waivable, and public; extend § 208 to the president and vice president; bar them and their families from contacting reviewers about pending deals; and render voidable any clearance a disqualified official touched.

Related Legislation includes the CLEAN Mergers Act; the Antitrust Accountability and Transparency Act and; the Prohibiting Anticompetitive Mergers Act.

Addressing the Role of AI in the Regulatory Process

Federal agencies are already beginning to use artificial intelligence at various stages in the regulatory process, despite the large potential risks and little evidence of benefits. Congress and the administration should evaluate the role AI is playing in rulemaking and whether it inhibits public voices, as well as agencies' ability to meaningfully respond to public input. Additionally, the government should **take steps to ensure that fraudulent, autonomous AI bots are not infiltrating public participation opportunities such as notice-and-comment processes** while also ensuring that those steps do not stop real people from writing comments with AI assistance. The public's right to participate in rulemaking, including using readily-available tools used with their consent and approval, should not be restricted, particularly if the agencies are using those same tools.

Public Engagement In Agency Decisions

Robust public engagement in agency regulatory decisionmaking is inherently part of the democratic process, as it ensures our government agencies hear from Americans about what safeguards they need to improve their lives. When agencies listen to individuals and communities harmed by companies that pollute air and water, operate dangerous worksites, or deceive and scam consumers, for example, they can better ascertain the benefits their rules and decisions will offer and build strong records to support those decisions. However, the regulatory process is often dominated by corporate special interests and lobbyists opposed to strong safeguards.

To that end, Congress should **address corporate capture of the regulatory process and strengthen the role of public voice** by passing the *EXPERTS Act*. This Act would establish an Office of the Public Advocate, require agencies to expand public participation opportunities, and impose new disclosure and transparency requirements to prevent corporate interference and abuse.

Congress should also ensure statutory authority delegated to federal agencies to issue strong public protections is not impeded by the president. Congress should consider including statutory hammers in authorizing statutes to prevent delayed rulemakings. Congress should also conduct oversight of agencies and offices that serve as roadblocks to strong public protections (e.g., SBA Office of Advocacy, White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs). Additionally, Congress should flood resources into enforcement programs to ensure agencies have needed resources to engage in robust enforcement activity.

II. Increasing Accountability For Corruption

In addition to preventing opportunities for corruption, it's critical to ensure proper oversight and enforcement mechanisms to identify conflicts of interest and hold bad actors accountable. The following reforms will help prevent acts of corruption by providing clear standards for Members of Congress and the president, and providing real teeth to enforcement mechanisms.

Release President's Tax Returns *

Congress must pass new legislation requiring all presidential and vice-presidential candidates to release their federal income tax returns. Building off the *For the People Act*, a new law should **require all major party candidates for executive office to release both personal and business tax returns for the ten most recent taxable years**, making information on taxes paid, charitable giving, and conflicts of interest public. These must include all returns for the 10 most recent taxable years. These returns must be

publicized within 90 days of declaring candidacy. Additionally, new legislation should formally introduce tax returns as a robust supplement to financial disclosure forms required for major party candidates for president and vice president. Finally, legislation should work to provide the public with the means to identify financial conflicts of interest and investigative threads that could lead to even greater accountability in our government's highest office.

Broadening the Legal Definition of Corruption to Align with Common Sense Standards

The legal definition of corruption has been systematically narrowed by the Supreme Court over the past several decades to only criminalize black and white quid-pro-quo corruption through so-called "official acts". But we know corruption is so much more. The law should reflect that and criminalize all abuses of public office for private gain. A revitalized anticorruption jurisprudence would recognize that "private" gain need not be personal - it is any one intended for the use of a particular person, group, or class, and therefore does not require the inclusion of the corrupt individual. Using one's public office to manipulate regulations to unduly benefit a group of business associates, for example, is corrupt. In addition, a "gain" is more than just money. One can gain competitive advantages, power, and influence in different spheres, business and personal. Manipulating your office, for example, to have landmarks named after you, is corrupt.

Congress must pass laws defining corruption to encompass the wide range of crooked arrangements taken advantage of. Congress should begin with the recently introduced *Anti-Bribery Improvement Act* , aimed at countering the *McDonnell Decision* and the *No Gratuities for Governing Act* which addresses the shortcomings of *Snyder V United States (2024)*. Additionally, Congress should build a robust record of how large political contributions and financial transactions (including stock trading) contribute to systemic corruption and consider new ways to track relationships between spending and political action.

It is imperative that laws, which mostly address quid quo pro corruption, are expanded to fight the true breadth of corrupt activities.

Enhancing Congressional Ethics Enforcement

U.S. House and Senate procedures for ethics investigations and enforcement need significant reform. The Senate currently uses a system of self-policing, in which senators themselves are responsible for investigating alleged wrongdoing as well as enforcing the rules against their own colleagues. This approach is inherently unworkable, however, with partisanship, the discomfort of investigating one's coworkers, and the desire for collegiality allowing senators to break the rules with little to no consequence. The Senate's system is also demonstrably less effective than the method employed by the House of Representatives, where an independent Office of Congressional Conduct (OCC) exists to conduct initial fact-finding, publish reports, and make referrals for disciplinary action. At the same time though, the OCC can still be improved as well, including by making it a permanent entity with subpoena power and bolstering its nonpartisan structure. To address these problems simultaneously, lawmakers interested in combatting misconduct and corruption should pass legislation to:

I. Create and codify a permanent, independent entity that reviews alleged ethical violations across both chambers of Congress and makes referrals for disciplinary action to each chamber's respective Ethics Committee.

II. Require the appointment of non-partisan leadership for this independent entity, to be chosen by true consensus between the leaders of the majority and minority parties.

III. Establish impartial and transparent procedures for this independent entity to follow when conducting investigations, including the hiring of expert staff and the ability to release its reports directly to the public.

IV. Empower this independent entity with the authority to subpoena third parties, as well as to publish real-time information on legislators who refuse to cooperate with its investigations.

Strengthen the Office of Special Counsel *

The Office of Special Counsel plays the essential function of creating and ensuring a nonpartisan, merit-based civil service and enforcing the *Hatch Act,* which bars officials from misusing their official position or government resources to advance partisan causes. Hatch Act enforcement against senior officials has historically been weak, and has become far weaker in this administration. The *Hatch Act Enforcement Transparency and Accountability Act* would enable Congress to conduct stronger oversight of Hatch Act enforcement and hold government officials accountable if they use their positions to benefit their political party. The OSC also needs to be granted new powers to address Hatch Act violations directed by the White House, such as the coordinated partisan messaging deployed on government websites during the 2025 government shutdown.

Clear Standards to Enforce the Constitution's Foreign/Domestic Emoluments Clause

The framers feared corruption, so they wrote protections against it into the Constitution itself: the Foreign and Domestic Emoluments Clauses, which bar the president and other federal officials from receiving gifts, payments, or other benefits from foreign governments and, in the case of the president, the federal and state governments.

For most of American history, formal enforcement of the Emoluments Clauses was unnecessary because high-level officials usually took steps to comply voluntarily. That is, until President Trump took office in 2017 and declined to meaningfully divest from his extensive business holdings. Now, in his second term, the president's financial entanglements–including with foreign actors–have grown considerably. The courts, meanwhile, have failed to keep pace and adequately enforce the Emoluments Clauses as apparent violations grow increasingly common.

To rectify this situation, **Congress must pass a new law to fully implement the Emoluments Clauses and ensure guardrails at the top of government.**[12] Such legislation should, among other things, provide a clear statutory definition of the term "emoluments" that broadly covers any benefit or advantage that has the potential to influence a federal official, with limited exceptions. It should expressly prohibit indirect or delayed emoluments, promised to officials after they leave government service. And crucially, Congress must ensure vigorous enforcement - including by empowering both chambers (as well as the states and territories) to bring legal actions to enforce the Emoluments Clauses, and by implementing processes to prevent violations before they occur and foster greater transparency.

Enhancing Executive Branch Ethics Enforcement

President Trump's second term has featured consistent patterns of unethical behavior across the federal government, and little enforcement of ethics laws in response. Data from the Office of Government Ethics (OGE) clearly reveals that there are fewer ethics officials working across the executive branch, with more political appointees taking over ethics offices from career public servants, and more vacant ethics leadership positions overall - leading to fewer prosecutions of criminal ethics violations, and more financial disclosure non-compliance compared to past years. This trend is alarming, because it means that our ethics laws are becoming almost meaningless due to a lack of enforcement, which will only lead to a downward spiral of even more misconduct. We need independent watchdogs that cannot be taken over or influenced by an administration.

[12] The Brennan Center has conducted significant research on this. Brennan Center for Justice, "Codifying the Constitution's Emoluments Clauses," November 6, 2025, https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/policy-solutions/codifying-constitutions-emoluments-clauses

To fix this problem, **Congress should establish an independent executive branch ethics body that centralizes the enforcement of federal ethics laws** and is empowered with the authority and resources necessary to conduct thorough and prompt investigations, including subpoena power. It should be led by appointed officials in a manner that shields them from political retribution, and it should be required to maintain transparent records that meaningfully inform the public about its activities and the status of ethical conduct across the executive branch.

Prohibit Presidents From Granting Themselves Immunity from Prosecution

In a 2026 lawsuit now deemed collusive by a federal judge, President Trump sued the government he oversees, and then settled before the government mounted a defense. One of the rewards of this sham settlement was a sweeping immunity deal - forever blocking the government from holding Trump's inner circle accountable, not only for tax fraud but for all other federal crimes.

In addition to the untold financial benefits this provided to Trump, the immunity deal did serious harm to the notion that nobody is above the law. Now nothing stands in the way of future presidents granting a similar "super pardon" to themselves and their families - unless Congress explicitly forbids it.

Congressional action is needed in order to nullify Trump's May 2026 immunity order - and prohibit future presidents from attempting similar tactics. Specifically, Congress should:

I. Bar the federal government from granting broad immunity for the president's tax claims or potential misconduct under other civil or criminal claims

II. Invalidate past granting of presidential immunity along these lines

III. Prohibit the IRS from entering into closing agreements with high-ranking officials

Create Private Right of Action for High-Impact Corruption Crimes

An additional tool to combat government corruption is to establish a private right of action so that other actors can sue to enforce anti-corruption laws against public officials when the government fails to act. Building off the *Anti-Corruption Bureau Creation Act*, Congress should create a cause of action for state Attorneys General, insiders with first-hand knowledge of the corruption, nonprofit watchdogs, and those directly harmed (such as business competitors). To avoid spurious lawsuits, any awards should be modest and reserved for genuine whistleblowers who took real risks.

Ban Collecting Settlements From Collusive Lawsuits Against the Federal Government by the President, Vice President, and Cabinet Officials

Since the start of his second term, President Trump has brought baseless lawsuits against the federal government to extract billions of taxpayers' dollars into his own pocketbook. The *Ban Presidential Plunder of Taxpayer Funds Act* would close the loopholes that enable this corruption and ban future presidents and vice presidents from abusing their power to enrich themselves through controlling both sides of litigation.

Strengthening the Ability to Recover Money Stolen Through Corruption

There are various existing federal statutes that allow for the ill-gotten proceeds of fraud and corruption to be recovered from wrongdoers and returned to the American people. But these legal tools currently live in different parts of the U.S. Code, with different standards, procedures, burdens, applicable defendants, and statutes of limitation. And many federal corruption recovery laws require a criminal conviction—a slow process that will be all the more difficult in the wake of the *Trump v. United States* immunity decision and potential of widespread pardons for corrupt actors. To close these gaps, Congress should enact a new civil cause of action that the DOJ can use to recover the financial proceeds of federal corruption—separate from any criminal case. This reform wouldn't require the creation of new substantive crimes or increase

criminal penalties. Rather, it would incorporate the predicate offenses that already exist and create a civil tool to simply get the money pilfered from the taxpayers back for the American people while protecting defendants' rights not to have their property seized without due process.

Ensuring No President is Above the Law

To ensure the U.S. president is accountable to the rule of law, Congress should propose a constitutional amendment to overturn *Trump v. United States* (undoing the Supreme Court's presidential immunity decision). *The Presidential Accountability Amendment* would clarify that presidents are not above the law, that they do not have immunity from criminal prosecution for an act on the grounds that such act was within the constitutional authority or official duties of an individual, and they do not have the ability to grant themselves a pardon. This amendment would reverse the Supreme Court's decision in *Trump v. United States* to grant presidents immunity from criminal prosecution.

MAINTAIN CHECKS, BALANCES, AND THE RULE OF LAW

A Democracy For the People depends on a system of checks and balances. We must add safeguards and accountability mechanisms to prevent government overreach and to reinforce the powers allocated to each branch of government by our Constitution. We must stop the current and potential future abuse of power from the executive branch and ensure that the legislative and the judicial branch both have sufficient means to hold an administration accountable and are beholden to the American people.

Checks & Balances: The Executive & Legislative Branch

President Trump and his administration have trampled on Americans' freedoms, undermined our prosperity, raised the cost of living, and endangered our national security through a series of abuses of power taken straight from the authoritarian playbook. This memorandum describes three areas where Congress should act to strengthen our checks and balances to protect against this sort of abuse of power.

First, Congress should protect our security and civil liberties by enacting guardrails to limit abuse of presidential emergency, wartime, and intelligence-gathering powers. Second, Congress should limit ways the president can deploy a weaponized government to violate people's rights - and create more avenues for people to hold executive branch officials accountable if they do so. And third, Congress should create stronger tools to ensure that the executive branch is accountable to Congress and the law.

I. Create Meaningful Guardrails Against Abuse of National Security and Emergency Powers

Congress has delegated sweeping emergency powers to the executive — and presidents have too often abused every inch of that delegation. At the same time, Congress has failed to exercise its own authority on critical national security decisions, including acquiescing in the executive branch's view that a president can now start a war anywhere, at any time, for any reason.

Limitating the Emergency Powers

Congress should put hard limits on the emergency powers it has already delegated. The *National Emergencies Act* lets a president declare an emergency on almost any pretext and renew it indefinitely, unlocking far-reaching authorities. Congress should require that declarations lapse within 30 days unless affirmatively approved, as provided in bills such as the *ARTICLE ONE Act* and the *National Security Powers Act*. Congress should also consider narrowing the dangerously broad emergency powers conferred

on the president by the *International Emergency Economic Powers Act,* the *Defense Production Act,* and *the Communications Act's* emergency provisions.

Congress should sharply constrain the president's ability to deploy the military against Americans. The Insurrection Act's 19th-century language gives a president enormous discretion with insufficient constraints; the *Insurrection Act of 2025* would narrow when it can be invoked, require consultation with Congress, cap deployments at seven days absent congressional approval, and provide for judicial review. Congress should also close loopholes that may allow a president to use the National Guard for similar purposes and explicitly extend Posse Comitatus Act restrictions to federally requested missions.

Congress must also reclaim the decision to go to war and curtail abuses of war powers. Over the past year, the executive has conducted a sustained campaign of lethal strikes in the Caribbean, a military operation to seize a foreign head of state, and a war against a major foreign adversary, all without congressional authorization. Congress should replace the War Powers Resolution's easily evaded framework with one that defines "hostilities" to reach remote and intermittent uses of force, sunset existing authorizations for the use of military force, and cut off funding for hostilities Congress has not approved. Congress should also repeal the *Alien Enemies Act*, a 1798 wartime statute that the executive sought to use to bypass ordinary legal process in detaining and deporting non-U.S. citizens.

Protect Non-Profit Organizations and Americans from Politically Targeted Designations

Congress must refuse to let "terrorism" become a label for political opposition and stop the nation's intelligence and homeland security apparatus from being turned inward on Americans. No law authorizes the president to designate domestic organizations as terrorist entities, yet we have seen an administration purport to do so and turn its formidable counterterrorism apparatus on American citizens and organizations defined only by their ideology rather than their conduct. Congress should explicitly prohibit any such domestic designation authority, tighten rules governing the acquisition and pooling of information about Americans (including data purchased from commercial brokers) and pare back DHS's sprawling investigative authorities. Congress should also tighten and clarify prohibitions on using the intelligence community to interfere in domestic elections.

Curbing Government Surveillance on American Citizens

Congress should ensure that the federal government respects Americans' full Fourth Amendment protection. Advances in technology have combined with legal gaps and loopholes to leave Americans' most sensitive private information vulnerable to warrantless government access. Such access facilitates a range of abuses, including the targeting of the president's perceived political enemies and political dissent more broadly. Congress should amend existing laws that authorize foreign intelligence surveillance and administrative subpoenas, and should pass new laws addressing overseas surveillance and the purchase of sensitive information from data brokers, to require the government to get a probable-cause order before accessing Americans' communications content, geolocation data, web browsing and Internet search history, and other highly sensitive categories of information. Furthermore, Congress must also address and rein in the recent practice of federal agencies outside of the Intelligence Community (IC) engaging in functions similar to those performed by the IC. This includes curtailing or comprehensively regulating activities such as undertaking investigations of U.S. persons or organizations, conducting surveillance of individuals and organizations, and otherwise using U.S. person data.

II. Prevent Weaponization of the Federal Government

The Trump Administration has run rampant in deploying the coercive powers of the federal government, including criminal investigative and enforcement authorities, to punish perceived political opponents and stifle dissent. Congress must step in to prevent the executive branch from weaponizing its coercive powers and ensure that those targeted have adequate remedies and defenses.

Preventing the Weaponization of Government Agencies

Any decision for the federal government to investigate, charge, or pursue an individual must be based solely on the evidence, the law, and the fair, impartial administration of justice – free of any political considerations. To that end, **Congress should adopt carefully designed measures to prevent politicized prosecutions and give those unfairly targeted by the government appropriate tools to defend their rights to free speech and political participation.**

Congress should pair these measures with statutory limits on contacts between the White House and Department of Justice and document communications about specific investigative matters. Additionally, new court procedures can be enumerated to guard against political prosecution of judges and members of Congress. Importantly, Congress must preserve the ability for the government to pursue legitimate prosecution**.**

Congress should also protect nonprofits and other civil society institutions from being investigated, defunded, or designated out of existence simply for exercising their constitutionally protected rights. The current administration has directed agencies to scrutinize the funding of advocacy organizations, threatened to rescind tax-exempt status, and used grant terminations and investigative referrals to punish disfavored groups. Congress can strengthen existing protections against White House involvement in IRS audits and enforcement referrals, extend them explicitly to exempt-status determinations, and provide for expedited judicial review of any revocation.[13]

Protecting American Citizens Rights from being Violated by Federal Officials and Agents

Congress should **restore a real remedy for people whose constitutional rights are violated by federal officials.** The Supreme Court has repeatedly limited Americans' ability to hold federal officials accountable for violating their constitutional rights. This has left many people injured by federal agents, for example, without any remedy at all. The *Bivens Act of 2025* would be a good start, offering a statutory cause of action against those acting under federal authority, and could be paired with broader reforms to so-called qualified immunity and other judge-created doctrines that limit accountability for government officials' wrongdoing and abuse of power.

Additionally, Congress should restore the National Law Enforcement Accountability Database, which was launched by the Department of Justice in 2022 to track officer misconduct, commendations, and then decommissioned by the Trump administration in 2025. Congress should then require the president and DOJ to take immediate personnel actions against officers found liable for constitutional violations to end revolving doors between agencies and from federal agencies to local law enforcement offices.

Lastly, Congress should narrow the criminal statutes now being stretched to punish dissent - including dissent by its own members. Broadly worded offenses, such as civil disorder and conspiracy to defraud the United States, give prosecutors enormous room to charge protesters, journalists, and bystanders, and carry penalties severe enough to coerce pleas. Congress can carefully tighten what is covered and in some cases require proof of genuine criminal intent.

[13] Additional anti-corruption proposals related to this are also listed below in "Clearer rules of the road for civic engagement by nonprofits" in Section 3.

III. Ensure the Federal Government is Accountable to Congress and the Law

With the encouragement of the Roberts Court, the Trump administration has repeatedly discarded federal statutes that, among other things, establish and structure federal agencies, decide how federal money is spent, staff the federal government, and ensure that executive branch personnel follow the law. Congress should use its constitutional authorities to ensure that the federal government is accountable to the law.

Reinforcing Congress' Spending Power

Congress should insist that the executive branch adhere to the laws it has enacted, starting with respect to Congress' spending power. The *Congressional Power of the Purse Act* includes measures to prevent impoundment and strengthen transparency. Congress should pair that with legislative constraints on gift authority and apportionments (which the Trump administration has used to circumvent Congressional spending decisions). And it should support these with **stronger enforcement mechanisms** (e.g., creating penalties for impoundment act violations that parallel anti-deficiency act penalties; appropriations contingencies for impoundment and ADA violations; appropriations riders on transfer authorities; private rights of action) that fill in the gaps of the current statutory framework and provide real incentives for career officials and political appointees alike to comply with Congress' power of the purse. Beyond spending, Congress should consider measures to **require more detailed reporting and enable faster redress when the executive branch fails to observe or execute an act of Congress** (as the Trump Administration has with the TikTok ban and the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, among others).

Protecting Civil Servants and an Independent Civil Service

Congress should prevent an autocratic president from replacing the independent civil service with partisan loyalists. Our current civil service laws have failed to ensure a non-partisan, merit-based civil service - both because of executive actions that have exploited alleged loopholes, and because of the shifting legal landscape. Congress must act to right the ship, including by ensuring for-cause removal protections for all non-political appointees; stopping administrations from circumventing the removal process with illegitimate "suitability" actions, and union busting; ensuring meaningful independent review of executive personnel actions including through judicial oversight; ensuring that oversight by eliminating MSPB channeling and creating a clear individual and class-based private right of action; and redistributing power from the president to agencies themselves.

Additionally, Congress should ensure that the president cannot override determinations that it has made about how to establish and structure federal agencies and offices. While the Roberts Court has somewhat handcuffed Congress's ability to legislate for-cause removal of agency heads of many independent agencies, there is still much that Congress can do. This includes reasserting that Congress must decide on and approve large-scale agency reorganizations or reductions in force. With respect to independent agencies, in the aftermath of *Slaughter*, Congress should look at ways to add substantive limitations and procedural guardrails for these agencies to ensure they follow the law, not just presidential will. Congress should also strengthen the Inspector General function, including if necessary moving more authorities and capacity within GAO so that the president can't squash independent investigations into corruption and wrongdoing.

Lastly, Congress should invest in its own effectiveness. Congress should enhance the capacity of its Committees to engage in more detailed legislation and oversight, including adding to its legal and technical expertise in ways that serve as a counterweight to the executive by providing resources to ensure sufficient staffing. It should also update rules in both chambers to enable it to legislate and engage in oversight more effectively.

Safeguarding Judicial Independence

An independent judicial branch is the backbone of our justice system - but today, trust in the courts is at an all time low. The courts must pursue equal justice under the law, not partisan political agendas. Whether a president, a judge, a member of Congress, a CEO, or anyone else, no one is above the law. The reforms below offer potential solutions that can ensure an independent and functional justice system and help restore public faith in our justice system.

I. Ethics, Safety, and Workplace Protections

To ensure a functioning justice system, we need to ensure court justices abide by a code of ethics–and that they have the resources to do their jobs effectively.

Binding and Enforceable Code of Ethics for Supreme Court Justices

Supreme Court justices are the only members of the federal judiciary who are not covered by a binding and externally enforceable code of conduct. If we want our Court to serve everyday people and not just billionaires and corporations, such a code is necessary.

Among other things, **the ethics rules must be enforceable** by someone not under the control of the chief justice (such as an inspector general); there must be ethics counsel to advise the justices, including on recusal issues; justices must publicly explain recusal or non-recusal decisions; ethics investigations must be publicly disclosed; and the rules about required divestiture to avoid conflict must be tightened.

Inspector General for the Judiciary

Unlike many executive and legislative branch entities, the judiciary lacks an independent office of the inspector general (OIG) to conduct audits, promote economic efficiency, and prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse. The absence of an independent watchdog raises ethical concerns, as the judiciary must investigate all matters of abuse and misconduct internally, and in turn decreases public trust. To promote accountability, there must be an independent OIG for the judicial branch empowered to prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse and investigate misconduct, including alleged violations of the Supreme Court Code of Conduct.

Judicial Safety, Security and Workplace Reforms

The physical safety of judges and court personnel is a critical cornerstone of judicial independence. But the United States Marshals Service, an agency within the executive branch, bears the primary responsibility for providing security for the lower federal courts, and the USMS also performs functions unrelated to court security. As threats against federal judges continue to rise, there must be strong guardrails to ensure that the USMS dedicates sufficient resources to its primary responsibility of judicial security. Moreover, the judicial branch must have enhanced authority to provide or contract for its own security on an emergency basis, and there should be an emphasis on increased funding for personal, facility, and cybersecurity.

Real Property Authority

The judiciary relies on the General Services Administration (GSA), an executive branch agency, for construction, leasing, renovations, and maintenance of most courthouses and judicial buildings. This system has led to a backlog of repairs totaling $8.3 billion, created safety risks that impact court operations, and required the judiciary to pay overhead costs to the GSA.

The functioning of the judicial system depends on safe, functional, and well-maintained courthouses and judicial buildings. Over time, the judicial branch should be provided authority to manage its own construction, leasing, and maintenance needs and the requisite resources to do so, and should be subject to rigorous congressional oversight of its use of their new authority and resources.

Workplace Protections for Judicial Employees

More than 25,000 federal judiciary employees remain excluded from Title VII and the other civil rights statutes that protect most other American workers, leaving them to rely on an internal judiciary reporting process that repeated scandals have shown cannot police itself or deliver real accountability. **To provide judicial employees the same substantive rights and enforcement mechanisms,** Congress should Amend Title VII of the *Civil Rights Act of 1964,* the *Americans with Disabilities Act,* and the *Pregnant Workers Fairness Act* to explicitly cover Judicial Branch employees.

II. Jurisdiction Reforms

The power of the courts has grown substantially in recent years - but it is Congress that is the elected body for voters. To that end, we must right size the power of the Supreme Court through a series of jurisdiction reforms.

Limit Power of the Courts to Undermine Agency Authority

The Supreme Court's 2024 decision in *Loper Bright Enterprises v. Raimondo* overturned 40 years of precedent requiring courts to defer to reasonable agency interpretations, limiting the ability of agencies to use experts and establish reliable regulations without court interference. Combined with cases like *Relentless, Inc. v. Department of Commerce*, which make it easier to challenge longstanding regulations, this ruling makes regulatory schemes more rigid, less adaptable, and more vulnerable to judge-shopping by well-resourced litigants. **Reform recommendations include:**

I. Congress should amend the *Administrative Procedure Act's* judicial review provision, 5 U.S.C. § 706, to require courts to accept an agency's reasonable interpretation of a statute it administers when the statute is silent or ambiguous. This would **restore *Chevron U.S.A., Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc's*** basic two-step framework while preserving familiar limits, including review for agency jurisdiction and arbitrary and capricious decision making.

II. Courts should be directed to consider evidence of congressional intent, including committee reports, floor statements, and similar legislative history, when deciding whether a statute is ambiguous. Congress should also create an expedited, privileged "covered resolution" process, modeled on the *Congressional Review Act*, to quickly address an agency interpretation that a court invalidated or modified.

III. Congress should consider adopting a clear, functional definition of "ambiguous" that covers unclear text, broad or general statutory terms, and technical or scientific gaps left for agency expertise.

IV. The deference standard should be framed as a guidance on interpretive method, not as a command that courts surrender their constitutional role. The statute should also distinguish agency interpretations of statutes from agency views on constitutional questions as well as agency views on their own authority.

Disempowering Reforms

Time and time again, when the people's representatives have spoken through Congress—the only democratic lawmaking body representing all Americans—the Supreme Court has stood in the way. Take for example *Dred Scott*: The Court restricted Congress from banning slavery in the territories. In the *Civil Rights Cases*, it stopped Congress from outlawing racial discrimination by businesses, and in *Hammer*, from banning child labor. Today, by continuing to invalidate federal laws, the Court is repeating the worst mistakes of its past. Worse yet, it is making sure that nothing can be done about it, by gutting the rights of voters to have their voices heard, like in *Callais*; protecting the rich and powerful by unleashing corporate

influence in elections, like in *Citizens United*; and permitting an unchecked executive to attack enemies and enrich allies without consequence, like in *Trump v. United States.*

In order to ensure the U.S. Supreme Court does not undermine the will of the people through duly passed legislation passed by Congress, Congress should limit the powers that the Court is abusing—a response that our Constitution empowers Congress to do.

I. Congress should require, via statute, that **the Court meet a supermajority voting threshold before it can void federal laws.** Such a measure would stop Justices from imposing their own political judgments when constitutional meaning is contested, while allowing Congress, the most democratically accountable branch, to take primary responsibility for implementing our Constitution's guarantees.

II. **Congress should require that relief be stayed and vacated where the Court has granted certiorari or noted probable jurisdiction after a federal circuit or final state court enjoins federal laws on constitutional grounds.** Relatedly, Congress should require the Court to review federal circuit or final state court decisions that strike down federal laws.

III. **Congress should pass legislation overriding certain Court interpretations, like those that weaken voting protections or limitations on executive overreach,** and reserve the possibility of barring Court review of such overrides with clear, intentional language**.**

IV. To ensure that conversation is a true two-way street, **Congress should fast track its process to correct far-fetched Court interpretations** that hinder enforcement of its laws and give itself the staff, resources, and rule changes needed to fuel such real-time responses.

Closing the Grant-Termination Jurisdictional Loophole

The Supreme Court's shadow-docket ruling in *NIH v. American Public Health Association* channels challenges to unlawful federal grant terminations into the Court of Federal Claims, which can award money damages but cannot restore terminated grants or enjoin unlawful agency action. That loophole gives the executive branch powerful leverage to redirect congressionally appropriated funding and leaves grantees without adequate recourse, with billions of dollars in essential services at stake. To address this, Congress should:

I. Amend the jurisdictional statutes underlying the *Administrative Procedure Act (APA)* and *Tucker Act* - as proposed in the *Federal Funding Protection Act* - to affirm that federal district courts can hear grant termination challenges brought by grantees, subgrantees, and third parties who receive benefits. This change would allow claims for reinstatement and injunctive relief, restoring the review process that existed from 1946 until the current loophole was created by the Supreme Court.[1]

II. Require all federal grant terminations to be preceded by notice, an opportunity to respond, and grant-specific written explanations for termination.

III. Amend the statutes governing federal grants to bar agencies from including termination-for-convenience or shifting priorities language in award terms under 2 C.F.R. § 200.340(a)(4). This forecloses the mechanism agencies currently use to unilaterally cut off funding whenever political priorities change.

IV. Optionally, it may be helpful to amend the *Tucker Act* to state explicitly that it does not preclude district courts from hearing APA challenges to unlawful grant terminations. This would block the DOJ's argument that these disputes belong exclusively in the Court of Federal Claims regardless of their merits.

Shadow Docket Reform

Historically, the emergency motions or shadow docket has been used in true emergency situations to rapidly have the court weigh in on an issue that would have an immediate impact on the affected parties, like death penalty cases. In recent terms, the Supreme Court has used the shadow docket to create massive shifts in the legal landscape, often overturning longstanding precedent, without a full factual record or merits briefings, and often without providing any public reasoning in doing so. The court thus has undermined its own legitimacy while aggrandizing its own power in ways not previously contemplated. The proposed reforms reduce the influence of the "shadow docket" by prohibiting merits decisions on the emergency docket, increasing transparency, and curtailing emergency docket jurisdiction:

I. **Limit shadow docket jurisdiction** to cases that constitute true emergencies, death sentence cases, and instances where the government or a litigant is able to show by clear and convincing evidence that specific irreparable harm is imminent and not solely monetary in nature. The court must also engage in an equities balancing analysis in reaching their decision.

II. **Require full transparency**–justices must record their votes and issue reasoned opinions for any decisions.

III. **Mandating a supermajority** for any emergency actions that would reverse past Supreme Court precedent.

IV. Explicitly prohibit shadow docket decisions from having any precedential value on matters of law or fact in the subject case or similarly situated cases.

V. Similarly, the Supreme Court has increasingly used the shadow docket to issue inconsistent decisions related to voting rights under the so-called "*Purcell* principle" that federal courts should not change election rules too close to an election. Such delays prevented 2.5 million voters from voting in compliant congressional districts in 2022, but then the Court reversed course in 2026 following its *Louisiana v. Callais* decision and allowed states to halt elections that were already underway. As part of any shadow docket reform, **Congress should mandate that all federal courts, including the Supreme Court, prioritize maximal voter participation when considering injunctions in voting rights cases.**

III. Structural Reforms

Politically-timed retirements and political gamesmanship in filling vacancies and appointing new justices have eroded Americans' faith in the Court. For instance, after Justice Scalia died in February 2016, Senate Republicans refused to even consider Barack Obama's nominee, Merrick Garland, blocking a qualified nominee from the Court for partisan reasons and reducing the Court's size to eight for over a year. After Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg died on September 18, 2020, Republicans then rushed to nominate and confirm Amy Coney Barrett to the Court days before the presidential election.

The American people no longer believe the Court applies the law evenhandedly. Approval ratings of the Court stand at a record low of 33 percent. As the Constitutional Accountability Center has documented, the current Court majority "overwhelmingly favors corporate interests." In 2025-2026, "Notably, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's position prevailed in nearly every case in which the result was debatable enough to divide the Justices."

The Roberts Court has erased decades of progress on voting rights, civil rights, workers' rights, reproductive rights, gun violence prevention, environmental protection, and campaign finance reform, and given presidents near absolute immunity for crimes committed while in office. In Trump's second term,

the Court has enabled Trump's authoritarian actions, allowing him to dismantle federal agencies that provide vital services Americans depend on, fire independent agency heads and civil servants providing those services, rescind congressionally-appropriated funds for lifesaving programs, ban servicemembers from the military because of their gender identity, and racially profile Latinos for ICE stops regardless of citizenship status. Often, the Court has overturned lower court rulings with little explanation on its shadow docket, alarming judges appointed by both Republicans and Democrats.

The federal courts, including the Supreme Court, must be structurally reformed. Our coalition is united in our strong belief that urgent reform is necessary.

Structural Supreme Court reform is a vital element to protect any pro-democracy legislative package Congress might pass. Different members of the coalition support a range of different options for achieving that reform, including creating term limits for Supreme Court justices, regularizing the number of appointments to the Court that each president receives per term, expanding the number of justices on the Supreme Court, reforming the Court's discretion on how it grants certiorari, reforming judge shopping, and more. The lower courts require reform as well - options include increasing the number of lower court authorized judgeships, addressing judge shopping, and more.

Congress has the power to structurally reform federal courts, including the Supreme Court, and it must use this power.

Article III of the U.S. Constitution establishes a Supreme Court vested with "the judicial Power of the United States." It provides that U.S. judges hold their offices during "good Behaviour," subject to Congress's impeachment power to remove them, and that their compensation "shall not be diminished during their continuance in office." Article III allows Congress to make significant determinations regarding the Supreme Court's and lower courts structure and powers as part of Congress's authority to "make all Laws which shall be necessary and proper."

Historically, Congress has aggressively exercised its authority to regulate the Supreme Court and lower federal courts:

- Congress has substantially changed the Court's jurisdiction, only granting it the power of discretionary appellate review in 1891.
- Congress has altered the duties of Supreme Court justices, such as when Congress created circuit courts in 1789 and mandated that justices hear cases alongside local district judges in a practice known as circuit riding - a practice maintained for over 100 years.
- Congress has established senior judgeships for the lower federal courts in 1919 and allowed justices to serve as senior judges since 1937.
- Congress has changed the number of justices on the Supreme Court seven times, from six justices at the founding to as many as ten during the Civil War, before settling at 9 in 1869 to match the number of circuit courts at the time. The number of justices is set by statute, 28 U.S.C. § 1, and has never been in the Constitution.

Our constitutional system is built on the separation of powers. Its checks and balances are designed to prevent any one branch from becoming too powerful. But the Supreme Court now asserts an undue dominance in our democracy: ushering in unlimited money in politics, restricting the freedom to vote, facilitating corruption, and taking away our rights.

Congress has the power to check the Court and the duty to do so if the Court becomes a threat to Democracy. It has done so throughout history: regulating the Court's size, the duties of the justices, its jurisdiction, and its funding. The Court is not an institution immune from reform, but one with vast power

and minimal accountability. Congress has an appropriate role to play to ensure it does not continue to abuse its power, and Congress has many tools as its disposable to do so.

Executive Actions

Ultimately, this moment requires comprehensive pro-democracy legislation passed through Congress and signed into law by a future president. Congress can lay the groundwork now by introducing and passing democracy reform legislation as a top priority next Congress.

In the event a future pro-democracy president does not have a Congress able to pass bold structural reform, there are a number of tools a president could use to make incremental progress while building towards the passage of federal legislation as the soonest possible opportunity. Executive actions include:

Fully Implement and Expand Federal Agency-Based Voter Registration

The president should direct all federal agencies to reverse unnecessary new limits imposed on voter registration opportunities through various agencies and restore and expand upon prior guidance that had expanded voter registration opportunities under Executive Order 14019, including designating additional agencies as voter registration sites under the *National Voter Registration Act*. Many eligible voters - particularly low-income individuals, students, and veterans - interact with federal agencies but are not consistently offered registration opportunities. Agencies can integrate automatic or streamlined voter registration into existing services, such as benefits applications or student loan interactions. This approach uses existing executive authority to significantly expand access to registration without requiring new legislation.

Contractor Disclosure Executive Order

A Contractor Disclosure Executive Order (EO) should ban any direct political spending from companies that hold government contracts on behalf of candidates, political parties and political committees. The EO should also require government contractors that receive over $1 million for federal projects to disclose political expenditures to non-profits, trade associations, and others that could play in politics after being awarded a contract. Pay to play schemes with contractors have resulted in many corruption scandals over the years where politicians have sold government contracts for cash. Americans want a government that works for all of them, not one that works exclusively for those who can afford to buy it. This would be a major step toward making our government more transparent and accountable.

Modernizing Regulatory Review and Participation

For decades, groups have called on the government to enhance public participation in rulemaking and limit corporations' outsized influence in the process. Intensified attacks on the public's regulatory participation since 2025 make abundantly clear the need for urgent action. An executive order could reinstate the directives in President Biden's Executive Order 14094, Modernizing Regulatory Review. The order could also incorporate additional measures to improve public engagement, such as establishing an Office of the Public Advocate as set forth in the *EXPERTS Act.* Consistent with the EO, a new administration could update former guidance to federal agencies directing them to promote public participation and community engagement in the regulatory process.

Require Disclosures for Public Companies' Decision Making Regarding Political Spending

Given the massive increase in such spending since the *Citizens United* decision, the president should advise the Securities and Exchange Commission to take steps to protect shareholders and the broader financial system from these risks by establishing baseline procedures and requiring disclosure of how public companies make decisions about political expenditures, how much they are giving, and how much they are spending on lobbying activities.

Prevent Foreign Entities From Influencing our Elections via U.S. Corporations

To combat foreign influence in U.S. elections, an administration should direct the Justice Department to determine the extent to which foreign entities influence our elections via U.S. corporations (including shell corporations) and political nonprofit organizations, and make recommendations to stop this inappropriate influence. The Supreme Court's disastrous decision in *Citizens United* opened up a loophole for foreign entities to influence U.S. elections via foreign-owned or controlled corporations, or by secretly laundering funds through non-profit organizations (namely 501(c)(4)s and 501(c)(6)s) that keep their donors hidden from the public.) The president should direct the Justice Department to work with the Federal Election Commission and other relevant agencies to determine the frequency and amount of foreign money being spent directly or indirectly in connection with U.S. elections, and issue recommendations to help prevent political spending by U.S. corporations (including shell corporations) that are controlled by foreign entities or have an appreciable amount of foreign ownership.

Resource FARA to Effectively Detect Potential Foreign Influence in our Democracy

The Foreign Agents Registration Act **(**FARA) is a key tool for preventing secret foreign meddling in U.S. politics. However, DOJ's Inspector General in 2016 found rampant noncompliance with FARA's basic reporting requirements. The next president should ensure that the DOJ's FARA Unit has sufficient resources to handle its considerable responsibilities by directing the DOJ to triple staffing of the FARA enforcement unit. Also, since FARA may not have fully revealed past foreign advocacy or lobbying, the next president should ensure that all potential nominees fully disclose any and all previous paid activities on behalf of foreign interests during the vetting process, without regard for whether those activities triggered a FARA disclosure obligation, so that questions of influence can be considered.

Ban the Use of Auto-Deleting Apps

The Presidential Records Act of 1978 requires that the United States shall reserve and retain complete ownership, possession, and control of presidential records. The Trump White House personnel have been using self-deleting message applications in violation of this records-preservation law even while an internal memo asked them to refrain from using them when conducting official White House business. Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington (CREW) filed a lawsuit for an order compelling the president and his staff to strictly comply with the 1978 Presidential Records Act, but a Washington appeals court concluded that it lacks the authority to enforce day-to-day compliance. The next president should issue clear guidance from day one that using self-deleting encrypted technology for official business violates the Presidential Records Act and will not be tolerated.

Fully Resource Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Offices Across the Executive Branch

The Trump administration has been withholding an inordinate amount of information. The *Freedom of Information Act* and the ability for agencies to properly respond to FOIA requests has been curtailed by inadequate funding. The failure to adequately respond has resulted in a sharp rise in lawsuits over poor or nonexistent responses to requests. Additionally, gaining access to government records has become a frustrating and lengthy battle. The next president must prioritize funding the FOIA programs across the entirety of the executive branch as a commitment to transparency.

Combat and address risks related to the acceptance of incentive payments.

The corporate practice of providing incentive payments, which are special financial rewards given to company executives who secure government positions, has become common practice among Wall Street banks. By using incentive payments, companies can encourage their executives to leave the company to go work in a government agency so they may reap the benefits of having a loyalist in a government position, thereby fueling the reverse revolving door.

The next president should prohibit all appointees from accepting, at any time, compensation from a former employer or client that is specifically awarded for entering government service. This should be

accompanied by a transparency element, requiring appointees to publicly state in their Certification of Ethics Agreement Compliance form whether they have, or have not, accepted a banned payment. The next president should also prohibit appointees from participating personally and substantially in any particular matter affecting the financial interests of a former or current employer or client from which the appointee accepted compensation specifically awarded for entering government service. This recusal requirement should not be limited to the narrow sub-category of "particular matters involving specific parties," but rather should cover all "particular matters."

Prohibit the Acceptance of Gifts from Lobbyists or Lobbying Organizations

Corporate interests may seek to influence federal officials through gifts, such as meals and tickets to events. Current law does regulate the gifts that executive branch employees may and may not accept, but there are many exceptions that, in practice, dramatically reduce the scope of the regulation. The next president should prohibit appointees from accepting gifts from any lobbyists or lobbying organizations (regardless of which government bodies they lobby) for the duration of the appointee's service. This prohibition should largely replicate previous lobbyist gift bans but should go further by addressing the issue of travel paid for by lobbyists and lobbying organizations, which is a highly valued gift.

Combat the Traditional Revolving Door

The president should prohibit all appointees from lobbying their former executive branch departments or agencies for a period of five years after leaving government service; and from lobbying certain executive branch officials for the remainder of the Administration. The president should prohibit very senior appointees from lobbying any part of the executive branch or Congress for a period of at least two years after leaving government service. For all cooling off periods, the term lobbying should be defined to include lobbying activities and strategic consulting, not just lobbying contacts.

Combat the Reverse Revolving Door

The president should expand existing conflicts of interest requirements by prohibiting all appointees, for a period of two years after appointment, from participating personally and substantially in any particular matter in which the appointee's former employer or client has a financial interest. The president should also prevent individuals with significant conflicts of interest from being appointed to senior level positions in the executive branch in the first place. To do this, the Office of Government Ethics should be given the authority to conduct a screening process and recommend against proposed appointees for senior level positions if their employment backgrounds and/or current private sector activities would give rise to conflicts of interest requiring recusal so frequently as to significantly impair their ability to perform their official duties.

Publish White House Visitor Logs

Visitor logs provide meaningful insight into who the president and staff are consulting with on policy matters. Furthermore, these records have proven to be of tremendous value to the public in revealing key information about the potential influences that may shape a president's decisions and legislative proposals on critical issues.

The president should direct that White House visitor log records be kept and made public. The logs should be clear and accurate such that the public can understand them. These records should contain the names of all visitors, the date and time of their visit, a brief and accurate description of the nature of the visit, as well as confirmation that the guests were actually present, and electronic copies of any materials relevant to the matter discussed that were left behind. They should be available via a searchable database. Finally, visitor log records should be kept and available for public inspection from any location the president is meeting with individuals or groups that can potentially influence policy matters.

Publish Ethics Documents and Agency Visitor Logs

Gaps and weaknesses in transparency must be addressed to ensure that the public has access to information needed to identify undue influence, corporate capture, and to hold government bodies and officials accountable. Currently, OGE compiles waivers granted to political appointees under the ethics Executive Order, but waivers granted to other executive branch employees are largely kept out of public view by the Designated Ethics Agency Officer (DAEO) of each division or agency in the executive branch. The president should require all DAEOs issuing ethics waivers to put the waivers in writing and promptly file them with the OGE for public inspection. In addition to publishing ethics related documents the public also needs to know which non-governmental persons and entities agency officials and staff consult with concerning policy and other official matters.

Pledge Not to Solicit Super PAC Contributions or Appear at Super PAC Events

Super PACs now regularly operate as shadow campaigns, offering the wealthiest Americans opportunities to buy political influence that are not available to the average citizen. President Trump and senior administration officials have regularly appeared at super PAC fundraisers and private events providing wealthy donors the unique opportunity to influence policy decisions. The next president should implement a binding ethics pledge which declares that neither he, nor the vice-president, cabinet officials, nor their surrogates will appear at super PAC fundraisers or other super PAC events, and will not solicit contributions for super PACs.

Conclusion

While our nation has experienced a new wave of recent threats, the current moment offers an opportunity for us to build a new democracy – one that is reflective and responsive to the American people – by advancing bold sweeping democracy reform.

Poll after poll shows that Americans are sick and tired of government corruption. At a time when many Americans are concerned with how to pay their rent or get food on the table, they are looking for a government that will deliver on the needs of their families and communities - rather than prioritizing the desires of billionaires and corporations.

Congress can meet this moment by prioritizing introducing and passing bold democracy reform legislation as a top priority next Congress. Any future president should also prioritize comprehensive democracy reform. The solutions outlined above offer a path to remake our electoral and political system into one that responds to the needs of the American people.

For more information on the policies included in this report, please reach out to our Coalition Director and Policy Working Group Leaders: Christine Wood (Christine@DFADCoalition.Org), Jacob Carrel (carrel@redistrictingfoundation.org) or Gabe Lezra (gabe@democracydefenders.org).