



## DECLARATION FOR AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

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Contact: Elias Hakim, [Elias@dfadcoalition.org](mailto:Elias@dfadcoalition.org)

### **New Report: Transformative Democracy Legislation Is Foundational To Moving Priorities Voters Care About**

Washington, D.C. – On the heels of President Biden’s speech Friday warning of continuing threats to democracy, [a new report](#) from the Declaration for American Democracy coalition highlights how the Freedom to Vote Act would not only fight the influence of big money in politics and improve voting rights, representation, and racial justice – it would also help move the needle on issues voters care about, such as abortion access, gun safety, the environment, and more.

In [\*Pathway to Progress: How the Freedom to Vote Act would Pave The Way for Progress on the Priorities Voters Care About\*](#), the coalition, which is comprised of advocacy groups representing tens of millions of Americans who care about labor, racial justice, women’s rights and more, illustrates how transformative democracy legislation is about much more than the right to vote and fighting corruption.

“Shoring up our system of democracy is foundational to the issues voters care about,” **said Christine Wood, co-director of the Declaration for American Democracy.** “This report provides a roadmap for how the reforms in the Freedom to Vote Act are a necessary prerequisite for action on abortion access, gun safety, income inequality, and many other issues that impact Americans every day. We urge President Biden to direct Congress to pass these vital reforms.”

The report reveals how the Freedom to Vote Act can improve the following issues that poll highly among voters’ priorities:

- **Racial Justice:** The Freedom to Vote Act establishes automatic voter registration across the country, fully restores rights to people who have completed felony sentences, enhances access to the ballot through early and absentee voting, increases election security, and fights partisan gerrymandering. In addition to the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act, it would establish comprehensive national pro-voter election standards that strengthen American democracy, eliminate secret political spending in politics, and provide critical tools against race discrimination in voting.

- **Environmental Justice:** The Freedom to Vote Act would protect equal voting power for marginalized communities suffering the most from pollution, reform the redistricting process to create more equitable maps, and directly address big and secret money in politics.
- **Abortion Access:** Candidates across the country are running on platforms that are pushing for national abortion bans, or severely weakening access to abortion and reproductive healthcare, more generally. There are many key races and ballot initiatives where bodily autonomy could be expanded or limited, and voter suppression laws will silence the voices of the people, including impacted communities.
- **Gun Safety:** By banning partisan gerrymandering that limits the political power of communities of color and urban areas, and limiting the financial dominance of lobbyists and special interests, the bill ensures that the vast majority of Americans, who are demanding action on gun violence, will have their voices heard in Washington.
- **Supreme Court Ethics:** The Freedom to Vote Act would increase transparency about the people trying to buy influence on the Court by requiring groups that spend money on ads supporting or opposing judicial nominees to disclose their donors. Pairing the Freedom to Vote Act with a binding and enforceable Supreme Court code of ethics would ensure that our democratic institutions work on behalf of the people.

The report also examines how transformative democracy legislation will help improve income inequality, the criminal legal system, and LGBTQ+ rights.

“The reforms presented in *Pathway to Progress*, and expressed in the Freedom to Vote Act, would help strengthen American democracy,” said **Debra Perlin, Policy Director at Citizens for Responsibility and Ethics in Washington**. “As this report makes clear, this important legislation would improve and expand democracy in America for all marginalized communities, bolstering our civil rights and helping push the fights for racial, economic, gender and environmental justice forward. CREW urges Congress to pass this transformational democracy reform swiftly.”

“In order to effectively address the climate crisis, we need a democracy that is representative of and responsive to the communities directly facing the devastating impacts of extreme weather and pollution. This is especially true for the communities of color that bear a disproportionate weight of these environmental injustices and are historically excluded from the electoral process,” said **Justin Kwasa, Democracy Program Director for League of Conservation Voters**. “The *Pathway to Progress* report clearly lays out how the voting and transparency protections in the Freedom to Vote Act can lead to a political system that prioritizes the people and not polluters.”

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