

Our Values: Democracy

No matter where we live, the color of our skin, or how much we make, we the people know that for democracy to work for everyone, it must include everyone. Catholic teaching affirms that every person has the freedom, right, and responsibility to cast a ballot and to join in shaping our society for the common good—so that everyone can thrive, no exceptions.

Protect and expand the freedom to vote

Current Reality

- Some politicians try to make it harder for us to vote, because they know that their policies do not serve the common good and do not have the support of the people—Black, Brown, or white. They attack our freedom to vote so that they can pass economic policies that line their pockets at our expense.
- These politicians use false claims and scare tactics to justify further restrictions on voting. Laws that make voting harder often target Black, Brown, Native American, and low-income voters.
- 17 million voters have been taken off voter rolls since the Supreme Court's 2016 decision in *Shelby v. Holder*. And, since 2020, dozens of states have passed laws further restricting access to the ballot.
- We know that when we the people vote, we deliver good jobs, health care, and funding for infrastructure, schools, resources for our communities, and more.

Wins

- The Biden-Harris administration issued the Promoting Access to Voting Executive Order, directing all federal agencies to make voter registration and credible election information more accessible for millions of people, including many communities historically excluded from the political process.
- The Executive Order also strengthened voting access for people in prisons and jails in states where they are eligible to vote.
- States have restored voting rights to 2 million formerly incarcerated citizens, demonstrating national momentum to reform laws that disproportionately disenfranchise Black, Brown, and low-income people.

Vision

spread these words!

- **Together, we will protect our freedom to vote by ensuring that Congress passes:**
 - The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, to ensure that no state or locality can deprive any of us of our freedom to vote.
 - The Democracy Restoration Act, to ensure all voting age citizens can vote following incarceration.
 - The Native American Voting Rights Act, to allow tribes to determine things such as the number and location of voter registration sites, polling places, and drop boxes on their reservations, and to require states to accept tribal ID as voter identification.
 - The Automatic Voter Rights Advancement Act, and ensure all polling places have sufficient voting machines, poll workers, and other resources to avoid long lines.

Make our democracy responsible to the people, not to money

- Current Reality**
- A few ultra-wealthy people try to drown out the voices of ordinary Americans by pouring unlimited money (“dark money”) into political campaigns, enabled by the 2010 *Citizens United* Supreme Court decision.
 - They buy this political influence to push narratives that divide us and distract us from their power-grabs.
 - This is why many politicians who do not represent the interests of ordinary people get elected.

- Vision**
spread these words!
- **Together, we will ensure Congress passes the Freedom to Vote Act to:**
 - Protect our elections from anti-voter efforts, election denial tactics, and gerrymandering.
 - Shore up campaign finance transparency to counteract the undue influences of dark money.
 - Give the Federal Election Commission’s nonpartisan staff the authority to conduct meaningful investigations to keep our elections fair.
 - We will also ensure Congress passes the Disclose Act to require organizations that spend money in elections, including Super PACS, to disclose high-dollar donors and make our elections transparent to all.

Free our democracy from violent language and threats

- Current Reality**
- Our democracy relies on freedom from political violence and intimidation. Yet, some politicians encourage violence and abuse against people who disagree with them, trying to scare voters off.
 - Election workers and public elected officials, especially Black and Brown officeholders, increasingly face abuse and threats of violence. Such threats constrain how officeholders interact with constituents and what policies they feel safe to support. It makes government worse for everyone and is anti-democratic.

- Wins**
- Since the January 6, 2021 attack on the U.S. Capitol, numerous elected officials have stepped up to condemn the use of violent language and threats of violence, promote officeholder safety, and commit to the peaceful transition of power.
 - The passage of the 2022 Electoral Count Act has made it harder for any presidential candidate to pressure public officials and for Congress to overturn a presidential election.

- Vision**
spread these words!
- **Together, we will continue to reject candidates who use violent language.**
 - We will protect local election officers and poll workers from harassment and intimidation by ensuring that Congress passes the Freedom to Vote Act.