

# WHEN WE ALL VOTE

March 23rd, 2021

To the American People:

We write to you today as citizens who love this country and care deeply about its future. And right now, the most important thing we can do to protect that future is to rise together in support of the For the People Act currently before the Senate—the most significant piece of legislation to strengthen our democracy since the Civil Rights movement.

On January 6th, a violent mob laid siege to our nation’s Capitol, determined to overturn the results of a presidential election that their preferred candidate lost. It was a shocking and outrageous assault on our democracy—and a sobering reminder that we can no longer take our system of self-government for granted. In the months since, a new president and vice president were sworn in and some insurrectionists are now facing justice for their roles in that historic day of shame.

Yet we cannot act as if the threat to American democracy has passed.

Already this year, in state houses across the country, more than 250 bills spread across 43 states have been introduced to further weaken our democracy and make it more difficult for Americans to vote. These bills seek to make it harder to register to vote and cast a ballot by limiting early and mail-in voting and setting up more barriers that particularly impact Black, Brown, and young people. Some of these undemocratic measures have already become law, with others surely to follow.

What’s happening is this: After more Americans than ever voted in the last presidential election, some state leaders believe that silencing them is the only way to maintain their grip on power. They’re hoping to choose their voters, rather than the other way around. And if we as Americans stand idly by—if we wait for others to act or we refuse to do so with anything other than clear purpose and full-hearted patriotism—they will succeed.

Our nation was founded on the idea that as citizens, we should be able to determine our nation’s destiny. Generations of Americans have rightly organized, marched, and died to defend that ideal and expand voting and civil rights to women and minorities—a story that continues to this day. Today, the moment calls for us to take up that patriotic call to protect and expand those rights once again. And that’s why we must rally behind the passage of the For the People Act.

This bill is not about choosing one party or one issue over another. It is about commonsense reforms and best practices that make our democracy more open, more fair, and more inclusive. It is about reaffirming our founding principle that we can chart our own course as a nation.

The For the People Act is about moving closer to the America we aspire to be—a land of opportunity where every voice is heard and valued. Among the tremendous progress it promises, this bill will:

- Expand automatic voter registration, adding as many as 50 million people to voter rolls;
- Expand same-day and online voter registration for federal elections, which are especially important for young people and first-time voters;
- Allow for pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds, so that when they get their driver’s license, they are also registered and ready to vote when they turn 18;
- Require two weeks of early voting for federal elections, including on the weekends and after work, and increased access to vote-by-mail, so no American has to decide between making their voice heard and earning a living, taking care of their family, or staying safe during a pandemic;
- Make Election Day a national holiday, making it easier for more Americans to cast a ballot;
- Restore the right to vote for people with felony convictions, which disproportionately impacts minority communities;
- Strengthen federal criminal penalties for those who misinform and intimidate people at the polls;
- Overhaul our campaign finance system to give ordinary Americans a greater voice in the political process and afford a more diverse array of people the opportunity to run; and
- Ban partisan gerrymandering and discriminatory voter purges.



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We applaud the House for passing this bill, and now we urge the Senate to follow suit and do its part to protect our democracy. And if that means eliminating or instituting meaningful reform to the filibuster—a relic of Jim Crow and an arcane chamber rule increasingly abused to create gridlock and forestall progress—the Senate should act. We cannot continue to allow the will of the majority of Americans to be overshadowed by an oppositional few fixated on maintaining power. Because make no mistake, as a recent poll showed, large majorities of Americans support this bill across party lines—including more than half of Republican voters.

So today we call on Americans of conscience and goodwill to join us in taking a stand for voting rights and to put the power more firmly in the hands of the people. We urge every American to remember how it felt to watch as our Capitol was desecrated earlier this year—and to channel that outrage into patriotic duty.

We are asking you to join us by calling on your Senators to pass the For the People Act immediately—you can join our efforts right now at [www.WhenWeAllVote.org](http://www.WhenWeAllVote.org).

Just as those who came before us turned the crack of a baton or the spray of a firehose into a Voting Rights Act; just as those who turned literacy tests, poll taxes, and other forms of discrimination into organized, concrete, and hopeful action on behalf of their votes, we too can make our mark on history. We too can right wrongs in our time and pave the way for those who come after us.

We can do so much better as a country. But we'll never be able to do it alone. Now is our best chance to protect and strengthen our democracy and put power back where it belongs—with the people. We ask you to stand with us.

With hope,  
When We All Vote Co-Chairs, Ambassadors and Supporters

Michelle Obama, Co-Chair



Valerie Jarrett, Chairman of the Board



Chris Paul, Co-Chair  
Faith Hill, Co-Chair  
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Megan Rapinoe, Co-Chair  
Rita Wilson, Co-Chair  
Selena Gomez, Co-Chair  
Shonda Rhimes, Co-Chair  
Tom Hanks, Co-Chair  
Tracee Ellis Ross, Co-Chair  
Alicia Keys  
Amandla Stenberg  
Amy Schumer  
Andy Cohen

Ariana Grande  
Ayesha Curry  
Becky G  
Billie Eilish  
Blake Lively  
Bobby Berk  
Carmelo Anthony  
Chelsea Handler  
Chrissy Teigen  
Common  
Darren Criss  
DJ Khaled  
Eva Longoria  
Fat Joe  
FINNEAS  
Harrison Barnes

Issa Rae  
Jada Pinkett Smith  
Jay Ellis  
Jayson Tatum  
Jennifer Lopez  
Joe Jonas  
John Legend  
Jonathan Van Ness  
José Andrés  
Kal Penn  
Karamo Brown  
Keke Palmer  
Kevin Jonas  
Laverne Cox  
Leonardo DiCaprio  
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Loni Love  
Lynn Whitfield  
Martin Lawrence  
Michelle Williams  
Nick Jonas  
Regina Hall  
Regina King  
Ryan Reynolds  
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