Voter Access and Engagement Initiative

What’s at stake?

Open Classroom

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The Brown School
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Voter Access and Engagement Website
What's at Stake

Rigged: The Voter Suppression Playbook.
https://youtu.be/pNC84FyI9IA
The Why and What of the VAE Initiative? 
Fight to Keep Democracy Thriving

- Research to influence practice and policy
- Intentional focus on race
- Support advocacy and engagement efforts
- Engage and train a new generation of voter protectors
Research

Will I be able to cast my ballot? Race, Income, & Voting Access on Election Day (2019)

- A multimethod study of electoral process and access among registered voters in St. Louis City and County.
- Data were collected through by student researcher observations conducted at twenty polling locations on Election Day, November 6, 2018, in St. Louis City and St. Louis County.
- Recruited graduate student researchers from the Brown School at Washington University for 40 total shifts.
- Recruitment efforts initially targeted masters-level students in social work, public health, and social policy because those programs require IRB training as part of a research methods course.
- Students from the university’s other departments were also allowed to participate if they completed the IRB training.
Key Findings

- Voting-machine malfunctions and confusion about polling pads only at predominantly Black polling sites.
- Higher percentages of Black residents and in communities with lower income had fewer election judges and more interference with the free passage of voters—for example, crowded doorways and electioneering.
- Long lines and a lack of seats for voters were more common at predominantly Black polling sites.
- Higher police presence at polls in high-poverty communities but none at low-poverty, predominantly White polls.
- High poverty polling locations were more likely to have conditions that prevented voters from completing ballots in privacy—conditions like lack of seating to complete ballots and privacy screens.
Voting is practicing Democracy?

"VOTING IS THE RIGHT UPON WHICH ALL OTHER RIGHTS DEPEND."
- THOMAS PAINE

“Democracy thrives when it is practiced, not prevented.”
—John Payton, civil rights attorney, NAACP
Voting matters: But for who

- 1619 – First Africans arrive to America
- 1789 – U.S. Constitution
  - White men only
  - African Americans – Three-fifths of a person
  - States determine qualifications to vote for U.S. Representatives
- 1790 – States declare property ownership requirement to vote
- 1857 -- Dred Scott v. Sanford – court ruled that blacks have no rights under the constitution
- 1863 – Start of civil war
- 1865 – Civil war ends creating the 13th amendment
Select voting rights laws and related litigation

- **1867 – Reconstruction Act** – add voting rights for African Americans to state constitution’s
- **1868 – 14th amendment** – African Americans given citizenship
- **1870 – 15th amendment** gives Black men the right to vote
- **1871 – Enforcement Act** – criminal penalties for voter suppression
- **1875 – Supreme court rules that states can deny a citizen the right to vote** (Minor v. Happersett)
- **1877 – Reconstruction ends and troops protecting blacks are withdrawn from the south**
- **1903 – Supreme court rules in Alabama that voting rights can be taken away for a lifetime for missing a single registration deadline** (Giles v. Harris)
Select voting rights laws and related litigation

- 1913 – 17\textsuperscript{th} amendment gives voters power to elect U.S. senators
- 1920 – 19\textsuperscript{th} amendment women gain the right to vote
- 1959 – Literacy tests upheld by the Supreme Court
- 1960 – Civil rights act gives DOJ power to investigate voter discrimination
- 1964 – 24\textsuperscript{th} amendment abolishes poll taxes to vote
- 1965 – \textbf{Voting Rights Act} – overcome legal barriers at the state and local level preventing blacks from voting for five years unless reauthorized
Selected voting rights laws and related litigation

- 1975 – President Ford reauthorizes and eliminates literacy tests and add language protections for Latinos

- 1993 – National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) voter registration renewal at DMV

- 2002 – Help America Vote (HAVA) upgrade voting machines (Motor Voter)

- 2006 – Voting Rights Act reauthorized for 25 years

- 2013 – Supreme court finds section 5 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act rule deemed unconstitutional
Fighting for Democracy: Here’s why?
Voter Suppression Policies: Today

- **A strategy** used to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing specific groups of people from voting.

- **Types**
  - Gerrymandering
  - Challenger laws (purging)
  - Voter restrictions (i.e. voter ID laws)
  - Felony disenfranchisement

[Link to video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=11&v=HjtZH7tLZg&feature=emb_logo)
An example of Voter Suppression:
Let My People Vote (not able to share without permission)
Why isn’t voting a priority? Is it a lack of a voting culture?
What can I do to fight for democracy?

- **Voter Registration**
  - Develop, design and implement a voter registration drive
- **Phone banking**
  - Organize a group to make calls to Inactive voters
- **Work at a poll center**
  - Poll worker
  - Election judge
  - Technical Support
- **Volunteer w/Election Protection**  [www.protectthevote.net](http://www.protectthevote.net)
  - Field Support
  - Respond to incoming calls – lawyers and law students only
  - Stop Social Media Disinformation
- **Host a webinar**
  - Voter education or documentary discussion
What can I do to fight for democracy?

- Participate, engage, disseminate information & support

VotingRightsAlliance.org

John Lewis "Good Trouble" Voter Awareness March

September 22, 2020
11am-1pm
Dred Scott Courthouse
West Side, Kiener Plaza Park

BE REGISTERED.
BE READY.
BE COUNTED.

VOTE.ORG

Know your options, vote early,
and make a voting plan.

For resources and
organizer’s information:
VotingRightsAlliance.org

SEPTEMBER IS VOTING RIGHTS MONTH

https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=4424070571000661

Article - https://csd.wustl.edu/march-to-the-ballot/
Missouri Voting Dates and Deadlines 2020

**September 22**  In-Person Absentee Voting begins

**September 23**  Absentee and Mail-in Ballots mailed

**October 7**  Last day to register to vote

**October 31**  Last for US Census Count

**October 21**  Last day to request an absentee or mail-in ballot

**November 3**  Election Day
Make A Plan!
Make sure you are registered & make a plan to vote!

☐ I'M REGISTERED AT MY CURRENT ADDRESS
Check your registration status by calling your local election authority, using the QR code on this flyer, or texting CHECK to 50409. Update your info ASAP! If you need to register or re-register, do it by October 7th to be eligible to vote on November 3rd!

☐ I NEED TO VOTE BY MAIL
In Missouri, the best, most flexible way to vote by mail in 2020 is to request an ABSENTEE BY MAIL ballot using the excuse that best fits your situation. Health-related excuses #2 and #7 will not require a notary. Use MOVOTE.ORG for a quick online application process. This ballot can be returned IN PERSON or by a close family member to avoid mail delays.

☐ I CAN VOTE ABSENTEE IN PERSON
If you have one of the seven excuses for voting absentee, you can cast that ballot IN PERSON at your election authority office starting on September 22nd.

☐ I CAN VOTE ON ELECTION DAY
Wear a mask and gloves, and bring your own pen if possible. Or you can vote CURBSIDE from your car if you cannot go inside.

☐ I HAVE QUESTIONS
Call 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) to get free help for any questions or problems you have.

"I have said this before, and I will say it again. The vote is precious. It is almost sacred. It is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democracy." Rep. John Lewis, 1940-2020
Check to voter registration status

- Make sure you are registered
- Is your address correct?
- Find your polling location
- Go to the Secretary of State Website

St. Louis City Board of Election Commissioners
Address: 300 N Tucker Blvd
Phone: (314) 622-4336
Absentee Voting: (314) 622-3230
https://www.stlouis-mo.gov/government/departments/board-election-commissioners/

St. Louis County Board of Elections
725 Northwest Plaza Dr. St. Ann, MO 63074
Phone: 314-615-1800
https://stlouiscountymo.gov/
Ways to Vote

- In person
- Absentee
  - By mail
  - In person
- Mail-voting
Voting In-Person Information

- Confirm your eligibility to vote
- Confirm your polling place – it may have changed!
  - Acceptable ID’s to Vote
    - ID issued by the state of Missouri or government (including driver/non-driver license or card from election authority passport or military ID); Student ID from college, university, trade or tech school located in Missouri;
    - A current utility bill, bank statement, paycheck or government check or other government document that contains the name and address
    - Voter registration card
- Registered, but have no ID. Vote a provisional ballot
  - If you come back to your polling place on election day and show a photo ID, your vote counts
  - If your signature matches the signature in the voter registry, your vote counts
Voting In-Person Information

- Voters have a right to assistance by a person of their choice. If you feel you are not able to go inside, you can request to vote curbside from your car.

- Physically disabled voters can request curbside voting.

- Vote safely
  - Take a chair/bring an extra one for someone else
  - Stay hydrated – bring water and snacks
  - Take/bring your medicine, if applicable
  - Dress appropriately – INCLUDING PPE, rain gear, coats/hats/gloves
  - Bring a book
  - Charge your cell phone fully
Vote by...

Know the difference BETWEEN ABSENTEE BY MAIL & MAIL-IN BALLOTS IN MISSOURI

Absentee By Mail

- Requested using an EXCUSE indicated on the application. Health-related excuses waive the ballot envelope notary requirement, but other absentee ballot envelopes will need to be notarized.
- Applications can be submitted by email or fax in addition to in-person or by mail.
- Ballots can be returned to the Election Board in person or by an immediate family member.
- Voters can also simply vote absentee in person at the election board.

Mail-In

- No excuse needed.
- Applications can only be submitted in person or by mail.
- Ballot envelopes must be notarized.
- Ballots can ONLY be returned via US MAIL.

REQUEST FOR MISSOURI ABSENTEE OR MAIL-IN BALLOT
GENERAL ELECTION - NOVEMBER 3, 2020

Voter's Name:

For identification purposes: Date of Birth (MM/DD/YY) or last four digits of Social Security number:

Registered Voting Address:

City:

ZIP Code:

Telephone Number:

Email Address:

Address to which ballot is to be mailed (if different than above): City:

ZIP Code:

ABSENTEE BALLOT REQUEST (select ONE reason):

Incapacity or confinement due to illness or physical disability, including caring for a person who is incapacitated or confined due to illness or disability. (No Notary Required)

Religious belief or practice

Employment as an election authority or by an election authority at a location other than my polling place

Inconvenience, although I have retained all the necessary qualifications for voting

Certified participation in the address confidentiality program established under sections 599.660 to 599.681, RSMO, because of safety concerns

I have contracted or am in an at-risk category for contracting or transmitting severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (COVID-19), pursuant to Section 165.277.8, RSMo. (No Notary Required)

Mail-in voters are individuals who:

- Are 65 years of age or older
- Have serious heart conditions
- Have immunocompromised
- Have chronic lung disease or moderate to severe asthma
- Have liver disease
- Have diabetes

MAIL-IN BALLOT REQUEST (NOTARY REQUIRED FOR ALL MAIL-IN BALLOTS)

Any registered voter can request a mail-in ballot. If selecting this option, this form must be delivered to your local election authority in person or by mail only.

I do solemnly swear that all statements made on this application are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Registered Voter

Date

Return this completed form to your local election authority. Contact information can be found on the Missouri Secretary of State’s website. Missouri law requests that requests for ballots to be mailed to you must be received by 5:00 p.m. on October 21, 2020.
Avoid ballot rejection:

- Sign the returned Check the box or print new address
- Get envelope notarized if required

Back of Return Absente Envelope
Avoid ballot rejection:
• Sign the returned Check the box or print new address
• Get envelope notarized if required
Absentee Voting Satellite Sites – City

St. Louis City Board of Election Commissioners
300 N. Tucker Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63101

Central Library, 1301 Olive Street, St. Louis, MO 63103

Schlafly Library, 225 North Euclid Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63108

Julia Davis Library, 4415 Natural Bridge Ave., St. Louis, MO 63115

Buder Library -- 4401 Hampton Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63109

Board of Election Commission Office
Tuesday, September 22 – Hours: 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM – Monday – Friday
Saturdays - October 24 and Saturday, October 31 – Hours: 9:00 AM until 1:00 PM

Off-site locations
Monday, October 12, 2020
Hours: 1:00 AM until 5:00 PM – Monday, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday
Hours: 1:00 PM until 7:00 PM on Wednesday and Thursday
Absentee Voting Satellite Sites County

**Absentee Voting Satellite Sites**

St. Louis County Library, Mid-County Branch  
7821 Maryland Avenue, Clayton MO 63105

North County Recreation Complex  
2577 Redman Road, St. Louis MO 63136

South County Government Center, Keller Plaza  
4544 Lemay Ferry Road, St. Louis MO 63129

West County Government Center  
82 Clarkson Wilson Centre, Chesterfield MO 63017

Board of Elections  
725 Northwest Plaza, St. Ann MO 63074

**Hours**

Monday - Friday, October 22nd - November 1st | 8:00 am to 4:30 pm  
Saturday, October 24th & October 31st | 9:00 am to 1:00 pm  
Monday, November 2nd | 8:00 am to 5:00 pm
## Who's on the ballot?

### State of Missouri

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR GOVERNOR (VOTE FOR ONE)</th>
<th>FOR STATE TREASURER (VOTE FOR ONE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ MIKE PARSON - REP</td>
<td>☐ SCOTT FITZPATRICK - REP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ NICOLE GALLOWAY - DEM</td>
<td>☐ VICKI LORENZ ENGLUND - DEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ RIK COMBS - LIB</td>
<td>☐ NICHOLAS [NICK] KASOFF - LIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ JEROME HOWARD BAUER - GRN</td>
<td>☐ JOSEPH CIVETTINI - GRN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Write-In</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>FOR LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR (VOTE FOR ONE)</th>
<th>FOR ATTORNEY GENERAL (VOTE FOR ONE)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☐ MIKE KEHOE - REP</td>
<td>☐ ERIC SCHMITT - REP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ ALISSIA CANADY - DEM</td>
<td>☐ RICH FINNERAN - DEM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ BILL SLANTZ - LIB</td>
<td>☐ KEVIN C. BACCOCK - LIB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ KELLEY DRAGOO - GRN</td>
<td>☐ Write-In</td>
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</table>
Who’s on the ballot

Secretary of State

FOR SECRETARY OF STATE
(VOTE FOR ONE)

- JOHN R. [JAY] ASHCROFT - REP
- YINKA FALETI - DEM
- CARL HERMAN FRESESE - LIB
- PAUL LEHMANN - GRN
- PAUL VENABLE - CST
- Write-In

Missouri Congressional District 1
- Anthony Rogers – Rep
- Cori Bush – Dem
- Alex Furman – Lib

Missouri Congressional District 2
- Ann Wagner – Rep
- Jill Schupp – Dem
- Martin Schulte – Lib
- Write-in Gina Bufe -- Ind

State Congressional Districts 1 & 2
- State Representatives
- State Senators

City Races
- Circuit Attorney
- Sheriff
- Treasurer

STL County Races
- County Executive
What’s on the Ballot at the State Level

State Amendment 1 Summary

• If passed, Amendment 1 would limit the lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state auditor and attorney general to two terms. The state constitution now limits only the governor and treasurer to two terms.

☑️ Supporters say term limits will keep elected officials from becoming career politicians.

☑️ Opponents contend that those positions should be limited by voters, not the constitution.
What’s on the Ballot at the State Level

**CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT 3**  
Proposed by the 100th General Assembly  
(Second Regular Session)  
(SS 3 SJR 38)

Shall the Missouri Constitution be amended to:  
+ Ban gifts from paid lobbyists to legislators and their employees;  
+ Reduce legislative campaign contribution limits;  
+ Change the redistricting process voters approved in 2018 by: (i) transferring responsibility for drawing state legislative districts from the Nonpartisan State Demographer to Governor-appointed bipartisan commissions; (ii) modifying and reordering the redistricting criteria.

State governmental entities expect no cost or savings. Individual local governmental entities expect significant decreased revenues of a total unknown amount.

- **YES - FOR THE AMENDMENT**
- **NO - AGAINST THE AMENDMENT**

- Would eliminate the nonpartisan state demographer used for redistricting approved in 2018 & return to bipartisan commissions in the state house & state senate appointed by the governor.
- Would not use the total population count to determine districts, but only count eligible voters.
- Would change the limit of lobbyists' gifts from $5 to $0 & lower campaign contribution limit state senate campaigns from $2,500 to $2,400.

✓ **Supporters**
  ✓ voters need to be given another chance to consider the issue of redistricting.

✓ **Opponents**
  ✓ only state to discount 1.5 million kids, immigrants, international students and incarcerated citizens. Communities of color would be significantly underrepresented.
Would remove party affiliations from the primary ballot for candidates for mayor, comptroller, aldermanic president and alderman, & make the general election a runoff between the top two vote-getting candidates for each post. In the primary, voters could vote for any or all candidates they approve & then vote for one in the general election. Supporters complain that some city officials have been elected with less than 40% of the primary vote under the current system.

✓ They add that under the proposition, some officeholders would be elected with broader citywide support.

✓ They also point out that nonpartisan city elections are held in all other Missouri municipalities and 80% of municipalities nationwide.

✓ Opponents say political parties would be hurt and lose their candidates' party identity & the ward committee system weakened. Residents would be confused by the proposed change.
The measure, a proposed amendment to the city charter, would extend repeal of the city residency requirement to all city civil service employees. A state law passed in September already has removed the requirement for employees of the police and fire departments and other first responders hired before September 2023.

- **Supporters of repeal** say it could help the city attract more people to fill hundreds of vacancies in city government.

- **Opponents** say the residency requirement makes it more likely that city employees will know the areas they serve. Also argue city personnel department should do a better job recruiting city residents for available jobs.
Judicial Retention – Voting Matters

Hybrid Partisan and non-partisan judicial selection system

- **Partisan-elected judges** run under a party label against
  - Voters elect their local judges during regular elections elected judges must run for reelection at end of term. Example: Kim Gardner
- **Non-partisan judges** do not run against challengers.
  - Voters are asked to vote for or against them based on the strength of their performance on the bench.
  - Since they don’t run against an opponent, they are prohibited from campaigning for retention
Your Missouri Judges Websites
www.yourmissourijudges.org

Non-partisan appointed judges

- Position
- Background
- Evaluation by year
- Background
- Survey results
  - Juror
  - Lawyer
- Written Opinions

Four Courts
1. Supreme Court Judges
2. Missouri Court of Appeals Judges (Three districts)
3. Circuit Judges
4. Associate Circuit Judges

St. Louis County 21st Circuit Court

St. Louis City 22nd Circuit Court
OUR MARCH TO THE BALLOT BOX

We Won’t be Silenced—Your vote, your voice

https://www.facebook.com/268804473612247/videos/741268799748607

Voting Rights Alliance
References


Resources

- **Websites**
  - Protecttethetvote.net
  - Rock the Vote
  - Register2vote.org
  - Non-profit Vote
  - 411vote.org – League of Women Voters
  - Mapthetvote.org
  - Ballotready.org
  - Turbovote.org
  - Resist Bot text Vote to 50409