

AMERICA ✓ VOTES

A Critical Time for Our Democracy

In the aftermath of the 2016 election and a presidential campaign that focused on delegitimizing our democracy, there is a barrage of new attacks on the rights of voters and our democratic institutions in the states and Washington, D.C. America Votes is leading the resistance with a comprehensive state-by-state strategy designed to fight back against these egregious attacks on voting rights and capitalize on opportunities to modernize election systems to expand voting.

Make no mistake: the time for action in the states is *now*. Legislative sessions are underway across the country, and voting legislation is at the top of the agenda. America Votes and our partners are on the frontlines in many of these states – defending voting rights and proactively advocating for positive election reforms.

Protect Voters Now!

To support these critical efforts, America Votes has launched **Protect Voters Now!**, a strategic new project designed to bolster legislative battles currently underway in six key states: **Colorado, Florida, Michigan, Nevada, New Hampshire, and New Mexico**. It will leverage our tremendous assets on the ground in the states by combining legislative advocacy, communications, lobbying, grassroots organizing, litigation strategy and district-level targeting to bring the full force of our progressive campaign coalition to fights for the right to vote.

Protect Voters Now! provides enhanced legislative advocacy, lobbying and organizing in these six states, positioning America Votes as the central voter protection watch dog during the 2017 legislative sessions and beyond. Challenges and opportunities vary based upon the unique dynamics of each state. America Votes has identified a set of strategic legislative strategies that involve working with legislators on both sides of the aisle and local officials to ensure the rights of voters are protected and the strength of our democracy is upheld.

America Votes is leading opposition to new conservative voter suppression laws introduced in Michigan and New Hampshire's state legislatures:

Michigan

Following the 2016 election, America Votes strategically blocked an onerous voter ID law in Michigan. We launched an aggressive call campaign appealing to rural conservative state senators whose voters would have been impacted by the bill. The strategy worked, and the bill was dropped by the conservative legislature. Looking ahead, we will be enhancing lobbying capacity for additional defensive battles in the state legislature to protect the rights of all voters in Michigan.

New Hampshire

The recent election of a conservative governor has intensified conservatives' thinly-veiled effort to disenfranchise the Granite State's significant student population. As part of the America Votes-led New Hampshire Campaign for Voting Rights, we are organizing election law meetings to coordinate accountability strategy, including weekly patch-through phone banks, postcards to state legislators, and earned media. Our team has hired Democratic and Republican lobbying support to work with the state Legislature and defend against egregious attacks on the rights of voters.

America Votes is working proactively to modernize election systems to expand voting access through new legislation and engagement with election officials:

Colorado

America Votes led efforts to successfully implement the Voter Access and Modernized Elections Act in 2013, which provides Coloradans with an all-mail ballot and same-day registration. The following year, the America Votes-Colorado state director served on the commission charged with guiding implementation. Under a divided legislature, we must continue to preserve and protect the integrity of the bill at the state capitol. This work will be focused on building relationships with county clerks and identifying legislative champions.

Florida

Currently, America Votes continues to work with the Division of Elections in Florida on online voter registration implementation, specifically creating a seamless method for third party organizations to use the new registration system on tablets and smart phones. Our team also monitors election-related legislation, following the state's long history of voter suppression efforts, and continues to cultivate a strong partnership with the Florida State Association of Supervisors of Elections around shared legislative priorities.

Nevada

In the last legislative session, America Votes and our allies defeated a voter ID measure. Already this year, America Votes-Nevada met with key stakeholders to discuss effectively passing election modernization bills in 2017, as well as supplemental bills to augment voting rights in Nevada. Our in-state team is building capacity to run the voting rights coalition during the state legislative session.

New Mexico

In 2015, New Mexico passed online voter registration, while also preventing the newly elected conservative House majority from passing a restrictive voter ID law. In 2017, New Mexico will hire a lobbyist during the legislative session, specifically to advocate for automatic voter registration. The America Votes-New Mexico team is leading a broad Election Administration Coalition, holding weekly calls to strategize and assess challenges to passing this law.