

TALKING TO AFRICAN-AMERICANS ABOUT VOTING

This document provides messages that can be used to discuss voting restrictions with African-American, and help encourage them to vote.

DISCUSSING VOTING RESTRICTIONS

When talking to African-Americans about voting restrictions, the following messages may be useful:

- The Declaration of Independence says we all are “created equal.”
- If America wants to live up to its promise to provide all citizens with the same opportunities, then we can’t pass laws that block some Americans from voting and deny them the opportunity to participate equally in our democracy.
- Citizens have the responsibility to do their part and vote. It’s our right to vote. It’s our democracy. It’s important that our election laws are fair and equal.
- It’s important to stop voter fraud. But I don’t support some politicians trying to manipulate voting laws because they don’t like what the voters have to say. They are deliberately trying to limit the voting rights of people who may not support them.
- It’s wrong to pass laws for political gain that take away the right to vote from millions of eligible citizens.
- Every American has to register to vote, and this requires showing some form of identification. But some politicians want to stop certain people from voting by putting in place new rules about what type of ID you have to show on Election Day, and that could swing the election.

WHAT RESEARCH SHOWS

When surveyed, African-Americans say the top reasons to vote include:

- To bring about change
- Civic duty
- Have a voice
- To improve the future for my children and country

African-Americans Support Voting as a Civic Responsibility: 93 percent agree with the statement that “As an American citizen, it is my responsibility to do my civic duty and vote.”

- It's wrong for someone to go through the process of registering and then show up on Election Day only to be turned away because politicians have chosen to allow only one kind of ID.

MOBILIZING VOTERS

Some messages that can be used to help mobilize African-American voters to get out to the polls include:

- Dr. King and others who came before us spent their lives fighting for the right to vote, and now politicians are trying to take this right away from us. A right so sacred that people died fighting for is not something we're going to let go without fighting back.
- We are going to vote because we have to keep this fight going and we have to stand up and vote against politicians who are trying to stop us.
- The truth is, politicians who are passing laws making it harder for some people to vote are focused on defeating their opponents. That's why it's so important for all eligible Americans to understand their voting rights, learn their state's requirements, and cast a ballot on Election Day.
- Voting is my civic duty, and it's something I do to show my country and my children that I am proud to be an American. Children learn from what they see, and I want my kids to see me being a good citizen.
- I want my children to see me going to the polls to exercise my right to vote and have a say in what happens in this country. I vote for my future, my children's future, and America's future.
- Participating in our democracy is a right and a responsibility and everyone can and should do it. We can't let politicians decide who wins, WE have to decide.