July 2020

Dearest Friends,

Fair elections are the bedrock of a healthy democracy. As a Quaker abolitionist who ran for Congress in 1832 at age 25, John Whittier knew this truth. Yet in the United States today, two viruses are threatening the integrity of our elections: COVID-19 and racist voter suppression. As Whittier reminds us, we ascend together when we lift one another. Now is the time to call for election protections and ensure that all our voices are heard.

FCNL seeks a community where every person’s potential may be fulfilled. Active and informed civic participation in the political and electoral process is one essential component of this vision. With voting disruptions stemming from the coronavirus and racism already evident, Congress must act to ensure voting rights are preserved.

The HEROES Act (H.R. 6800), passed by the House in May, contains $3.6 billion in funding to protect U.S. elections in the face of COVID-19. Those protections will be especially important for communities of color and low-income communities, who often face obstacles in exercising their right to vote.

As people of faith, we call on the Senate to ensure that any future COVID-19 relief package includes critical protections for voting rights. All registered voters should receive absentee ballots and states must extend the period in which they accept absentee ballots. Congress must appropriate $3.6 billion in funding to ensure that these and other provisions can be implemented by the states to protect the health of our voters, the voting rights of vulnerable communities, and our democracy.

Please act using the accompanying letter template, call script, and this email form. When you write your letter or email, please add two to three sentences personally letting your member of Congress know why you are concerned. Then, call the U.S. Congress at 202-224-3121 to be connected to your representatives and senators’ offices. Leave a message if they do not pick up or if you are calling after office hours.

Your letters, emails, and phone calls to Congress matter now more than ever. This month and until the pandemic disruptions are resolved, we will send Letter Writing prompts only by email. Although not gathered in person, we ask Friends to continue sending letters and emails and calling elected officials using the materials we provide.

Please share this call to action with your community list-serv and organize virtual gatherings for collective advocacy. Learn more and get training from FCNL staff at fcnl.org/lobbyfromhome.

Ever faithfully onwards,

Bobby Trice
Quaker Engagement Associate
rtrice@fcnl.org

“I’ll lift you and you lift me, and we’ll both ascend together.”
—John Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)
Call Script

Hello, I am calling for **Representative/Senator** _________________. I am a resident in [city, state] in district [number]. Please ensure that any future COVID-19 relief package includes critical protections for voting rights.

COVID-19 isn’t just a threat to the health and safety of every American—it also threatens the very heart of American democracy. With elections looming, we should not ask people to choose between their right to vote and their health.

*(My story)*

Thank you for your consideration.

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Letter/Email Template

July 2020

Dear ___________________________

Please ensure that any future COVID-19 relief package includes critical protections for voting rights. By including the following provisions in any future COVID-19 relief bill, you can help ensure a free and fair election season.

- All registered voters should be sent absentee ballots so they can vote without risking exposure to COVID-19. States should extend the period in which they accept absentee ballots. New voting systems must protect the health and voting rights of people of color, low-income people, and other vulnerable communities.
- Congress must appropriate $3.6 billion in funding to ensure that these and other provisions can be implemented by the states.

*(My story)*

Please ensure that any COVID-19 response package includes these protections for our election system.

Sincerely,

*(Name, Physical Address, Phone, Email)*