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Coalition Calls on Governor-elect and Legislature for Election Reforms

The 2018 election revealed many serious deficiencies in Florida's elections process. Improperly designed ballots, broken voting machines, too few early voting days, a continuing failure to provide adequate minority language access to election materials and assistance at the polls for voters with limited English proficiency, improper denial of vote-by-mail ballots, polling locations illegally secured in gated communities, long lines at polling locations, and unfounded allegations of fraud were some of the most troubling problems. These voter suppression tactics disproportionately impact racial and language minorities, the elderly, and student voters.

Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote. A system of fair and open elections in which all qualified citizens — regardless of gender, race, socioeconomic status or any other category — may cast a vote and have it accurately counted is the backbone of our democracy.

Elections matter, and the voters of Florida deserve better. Each and every election must primarily be about the voters of Florida — their votes must be counted and our elections process protected. Our democracy depends upon it.

We, the undersigned, call upon the Governor-elect, the Legislature and local election officials to engage in an immediate and serious discussion of meaningful reforms to our electoral process and approve those reforms during the upcoming 2019 Legislative Session.

Our policy-makers should review key areas for improvement by engaging Floridians and the elections community in discussions of the timeline for voting incorporating early voting access, vote-by-mail receipt, provisional ballots, tabulation, audits, certification and recounts; the process of vote-by-mail signature match and cure; ballot design; and clear practices and procedures for election administration in the event of natural or man-made disasters.

Consideration of advancements in election administration should also be on the agenda including the funding of Electronic Registration Information Center (ERIC) and automatic voter registration working toward the multi-agency technological support of same-day voter registration among others. We stand ready to assist you in this journey to craft improvements to make our elections more secure, fair, and transparent.

We are counting on the Governor-elect and legislators to approve these reforms, and others like them, during the upcoming Legislative Session. Florida should be leading the nation and indeed the world with a fair and efficient election process, where every citizens' vote is counted. Floridians

deserve no less.

ACLU of Florida
Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law
Common Cause Florida
Florida Education Association
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law
League of Women Voters of Florida

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