

Common Cause Urges COVID-19 Stimulus to Include 5 Key Priorities to Ensure a Healthy Democracy

March 20, 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

As Congress considers another stimulus to address the COVID-19 pandemic, Common Cause and our 1.2 million members call on Congress to ensure that our democracy and the right to vote are protected during this crisis. Failure to act may lead hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of Americans to be disenfranchised this year. The COVID-19 pandemic presents an unprecedented challenge to our democracy, and Congress must immediately act to ensure that all Americans can have their voices heard and votes counted.

As Congress considers which policies to enact in the next stimulus, there are many tried and tested solutions, which have often passed with bipartisan support in [red, purple, and blue states](#), that could be included. Five key priorities that must be addressed in the next emergency stimulus include:

- Election/voting infrastructure funding of at least \$2 billion to provide to states and localities to secure and modernize elections;
- Automatic voter registration (AVR), same-day (also known as “Election Day) registration (SDR), and online voter registration (OVR);
- Expanded early voting, no-excuse absentee, and vote-by-mail opportunities;
- Increased Census funding; paid sick leave for temporary census workers; and income exclusions for census workers receiving SNAP, Medicaid/CHIP, and TANF benefits.
- Increased funding for broadband to ensure communities have access to robust and affordable connectivity

We must make sufficient investments in our democracy this year, or else we’ll face potentially catastrophic consequences--millions of disenfranchised voters. Additionally, many Americans will be left out because they don’t have or cannot afford high-speed Internet, and millions of residents may not be counted in the 2020 Census. These five reforms would help ensure that voters can safely, securely, and efficiently exercise their right to vote and be counted without potentially spreading or catching coronavirus. The time to act is now and include these transformative and responsive policies to the next emergency stimulus package.

Thank you for protecting the health of our democracy, while simultaneously ensuring public health and strengthening our economy.

Sincerely,



Karen Hobert Flynn
President
Common Cause