

July 18, 2023

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of Common Cause and our more than 1.5 million members and supporters, we write in strong support of the Freedom to Vote Act and in strong opposition to the “American Confidence in Elections” (ACE) Act.

The Freedom to Vote Act is a transformational pro-voter, anti-corruption bill. For far too long, special interests, ultra-wealthy donors, and vote suppressors have dominated our politics and attempted to silence the voices of everyday Americans, especially in Black and Brown communities. The Freedom to Vote Act would help shift power to “we the people.”

This critically important legislation will protect the voices of voters, end partisan gerrymandering, counter undemocratic and dangerous election sabotage efforts, and help to eliminate the undue influence of dark money in our elections. The Freedom to Vote Act, which incorporates significant feedback from state and local election officials, will ensure no matter which party you support or where you live, your voice and vote will be heard, counted, and protected. Specifically, the Freedom to Vote Act would:

- Respond directly to new laws around the country aimed squarely at making it harder for people to vote—which will disproportionately impact communities of color—by setting basic, commonsense standards for safe, convenient practices like early voting, automatic voter registration and vote-by-mail for all who want it.
- Protect the integrity of our elections by adding new safeguards against election sabotage, such as partisan efforts to remove local election administrators and harassment of poll workers.
- Ban partisan gerrymandering.
- Break the grip of special interests in our elections by shining a light on secret political spending and getting big money out of politics.

At the same time, we oppose the ACE Act because the bill would: 1) make it harder to vote for millions of Americans, especially Black and Brown Americans; 2) allow more big, secret money in politics; and 3) further restrict the rights and voices of the residents of the District of Columbia, who already lack full representation in Congress.

The ACE Act would overturn and prevent overwhelmingly popular, bipartisan pro-voter reforms that have been passed in red, blue, and purple states. It would greatly limit the choices that voters have when registering to vote, restrict the ability of voters to cast a ballot by mail, create strict photo ID requirements, and reinforce extreme gerrymandering.

This bill would also allow more big and secret money to be spent in elections. Instead of ensuring that all campaign spending is disclosed, the ACE Act would increase contribution limits and empower dark money, special interest groups that flood our government with hundreds of millions of dollars and drown out the voices of everyday Americans.

Additionally, the ACE Act would hamstring the residents of the District of Columbia. Washington, D.C., remains the only national capital in the democratic world whose residents do not enjoy full voting rights, and the ACE Act further undermines the voices of District residents by reversing many pro-voter reforms that Washington, D.C., has already passed.

Common Cause [testified against](#) a previous version of the ACE Act when the Committee on House Administration held a series of hearings on the bill this year. The ACE Act is a giant step backward and would silence the voices of everyday Americans by putting up barriers to voting and by allowing millions of dollars more in secret money to infiltrate our political system.

To strengthen free and fair elections and help get big, secret money out of politics, Congress must instead pass the Freedom to Vote Act.

Sincerely,

Marilyn Carpinteyro
Interim Co-president
Common Cause

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Since 1970, [Common Cause](#) has been working to hold power accountable through lobbying, litigation, and grassroots organizing. Our non-partisan, pro-democracy work has helped pass hundreds of reforms at the federal, state, and local levels. We now have 30 state chapters and more than 1.5 million members around the country who are working to strengthen our democracy.

