



Campaign To Expand Ballot Access

Call To Action Goal (Pennsylvania)

The call to action is *to urge the Pennsylvania state legislature to enact legislation that would authorize no-excuse absentee voting (also referred to as “optional vote by mail”).* As one of only nine states without any modern election reforms, voting in Pennsylvania remains unusually and unnecessarily difficult. The current system only permits Pennsylvanians to vote absentee under limited circumstances. Giving voters the option to vote by mail is a simple, common-sense reform that will make voting more convenient and will offer greater flexibility to individuals with demanding work schedules, family member care responsibilities, or other life circumstances that can limit their ability to make it to the polls on Election Day.

The expectation is that a bill that would overhaul the election code and allow for optional vote by mail will be introduced in the state Senate mid-to-late fall, and will garner bipartisan support in the legislature, mirroring the broad, diverse support this issue enjoys among Pennsylvania voters. In 30 states and the District of Columbia, all voters can request and submit absentee ballots without providing an excuse. It’s time for Pennsylvania to join the list!

Call To Action Plan (Pennsylvania)

To get acquainted with the Let People Vote call to action for Pennsylvania, People Power volunteers/activists will:

- watch the livestream/recording of the October 1, 2017 Let People Vote launch event; and
- review and discuss [background materials](#) on the benefits of no-excuse absentee voting.

In the period before the bill is introduced, People Power activists/volunteers will work in partnership with the ACLU of Pennsylvania and partner organizations to achieve our goal of “optional vote by mail.” The ACLU of Pennsylvania and partner organizations will periodically post important events, such as opportunities to do coordinated outreach to Pennsylvania election directors, at www.map.peoplepower.org, and you will be invited to attend via email, text message and/or phone call.

In the period before the bill is introduced, People Power activists/volunteers will also be able to work independently with their teams and other teams to:

- urge their state lawmakers to co-sponsor an “optional vote by mail” bill through [meeting with elected officials and their staff](#), [gathering](#) and [delivering](#) petition signatures, [speaking out at public meetings](#) and [town halls](#), making phone calls, and [sending letters](#); and
- [gather petition signatures](#) in high-traffic public locations and at local events like farmers’ markets, as well as canvass for these signatures by going door-to-door in your neighborhood discussing the importance of “optional vote by mail” with members in your community;

In the period after the bill is introduced, People Power activists/volunteers will also be able to work independently with their teams and other teams to:

- urge their state lawmakers to pass an “optional vote by mail” bill through [meeting with elected officials and their staff](#), [gathering](#) and [delivering](#) petition signatures, [speaking out at public meetings](#) and [town halls](#), making phone calls, and [sending letters](#);
- submit [Letters to the Editor \(LTEs\)](#) to local newspapers, stressing the need to ease access to the ballot box by allowing people vote by mail, as a matter of choice;

- organize and participate in [rallies and demonstrations](#) in support of “optional vote by mail” in key electoral districts;
- make phone calls to the Governor, once a bill has been signed, to urge its prompt signing into law; and
- take other actions to promote “optional vote by mail” and voting rights, as determined by their People Power teams.

Take action TODAY!

Sign up to attend an upcoming event [here](#). Sign up to host your own event [here](#).

Background

Voting is the cornerstone of our democracy and the fundamental right that underpins all our civil liberties. That's why it is so important to advance reforms to ensure that all Americans who want to cast a ballot and participate in our democracy are able to do so. States and localities can take various measures to promote access to the ballot box such as *expanded early voting, election-day voter registration, vote-by-mail programs, online voter registration, automatic voter registration, and other programs designed to remove obstacles that may make it difficult to vote.*

Despite voting rollbacks in some states, at least [26 states](#) and DC have moved forward since 2012 with laws and policies to expand access to the ballot box – a promising sign of potential for more progress with People Power activism.

Key Reasons to Support Election Reforms

Democracy: We should make it easier to vote, not harder, so that more Americans can participate in our democracy. These common-sense reforms boost turnout, and make our election results more representative of what the people actually want.

Flexibility: Our voting system should be set up so that every eligible citizen has a fair chance to vote, including busy working parents, rural voters, frequent movers, and other Americans who face similar challenges. Flexibility to register online, register on Election Day, or vote early helps to ensure that people can exercise the fundamental right to vote.

Reduced Election Day Lines: Early voting, no-excuse absentee voting, and vote-by-mail options shorten Election Day wait times at the polls, and make the voting process easier for everyone, including election officials.

For questions, feel free to contact us at info@peoplepower.org.

www.peoplepower.org