

VOTE FOR DEMOCRACY REFORMS

December 11, 2018

Dear Representative,

The 116th Congress has an historic opportunity to repair our broken political system and strengthen the integrity of our democracy.

We strongly urge the House to seize this moment.

We write as members of the Declaration for American Democracy Coalition, which seeks fundamental democracy reforms to create a government that is reflective, responsive and accountable. Our 65 organizations represent citizens from all walks of life with broadly diverse interests. (See list of organizations signing letter.)

House Democratic Leader Nancy Pelosi has [committed](#) to bring a comprehensive package of democracy reforms to the floor as the first order of business in the new Congress.

We strongly support House Democratic Leader Pelosi's approach.

This position is reinforced by the views of 47 newly elected Members who were among 107 Democratic challengers who [wrote](#) to Representatives during the campaign urging that sweeping reforms "be the very first item Congress addresses."

We believe it is essential for the House to act quickly to pass bold democracy reforms to provide a holistic approach to addressing a series of fundamental problems facing our democracy.

H.R.1, sponsored by Representative John Sarbanes (D-MD), will include reforms essential to fixing our political system, including voting rights, money-in-politics, redistricting and government ethics reforms.

The American people know that Washington is not representing their best interests when millions of eligible voters cannot vote because they are not registered, when voting laws are used to disenfranchise millions of Americans, and when citizens are improperly purged from voter rolls.

The American people know that Washington is not representing their best interests when wealthy Americans give huge contributions to Super PACs and dark money groups to influence our elections and to buy influence over government policies, at the great expense of ordinary Americans who are not empowered in the political process.

The American people know that Washington is not representing their best interests when congressional districts are drawn to achieve highly partisan results at the expense of fair representation – when representatives choose their voters rather than voters choosing their representatives.

The American people know that Washington is not representing their best interests when government ethics rules have major flaws that allow public office to be used for private gain, when they permit there to be a revolving door between government positions and private interests and when ethics rules are not subject to proper oversight and enforcement.

And the American people know that these problems result in a rigged system in Washington that is blocking substantive policies of great importance to ordinary Americans, such as more affordable healthcare, lower prescription drug prices, a fairer tax system and the like.

A *Wall Street Journal/NBC News* [poll](#) last fall found that 77 percent of surveyed registered voters agreed that “Reducing the influence of special interests and corruption in Washington” is either the most important or a very important issue facing the country.

The Declaration for American Democracy coalition believes:

- A strong democracy is one where voting is a fundamental right and a civic responsibility.
- A strong democracy serves the people rather than the private interests of public officials and wealthy political donors.
- A strong democracy is one where our influence is based on the force of ideas, not the size of our wallets.
- A strong democracy is one where people know who is trying to gain influence over our representatives, who is trying to influence our votes, and how and why policy is being made.
- A strong democracy works to respond to the needs of all people and their communities, building trust in governance and equity.

It is time to act.

We call on the House to seize this historic opportunity to repair our political system and strengthen our democracy.

We call on you to vote for the bold and essential package of democracy reforms to be considered at the beginning of the new Congress, including campaign finance, voting rights, redistricting and government ethics reforms.

Signers of the letter:

Action Group Network
 American Oversight
 Blue Future
 Brave New Films
 Brennan Center for Justice
 Center for American Progress
 Campaign for Accountability
 Center for Media and Democracy
 Center for Popular Democracy

Citizen Works
Clean Elections Texas
Coalition to Preserve, Protect and Defend
Common Cause
Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, US Provinces
CREW
Communications Workers of America
Daily Kos
Demand Progress
Democracy 21
Democracy Spring
Democracy Matters
Demos
End Citizens United
Equal Justice Society
Every Voice
Franciscan Action Network
Free Speech for People
Global Witness
Greenpeace
Herd on the Hill
Indivisible
International Corporate Accountability Roundtable
Lawyers for Good Government
League of Women Voters, United States
Main Street Alliance
MapLight
MomsRising
MoveOn
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Council of Jewish Women
National LGBTQ Task Force Action Fund
National Redistricting Action Fund
NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice
Organizing for Action
Patriotic Millionaires
People's Action
People For the American Way
Pride at Work
Progressive Change Campaign Committee
Progressive Leadership Initiative
Progressive Turnout Project
Protect Democracy
Public Citizen
Service Employees International Union (SEIU)

Sierra Club
Stand Up America
State Voices
Take on Wall Street
Tikkun's Network of Spiritual Progressives
The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
The Loyal Opposition
Truman National Security Project
Voices for Progress
Voters' Right to Know