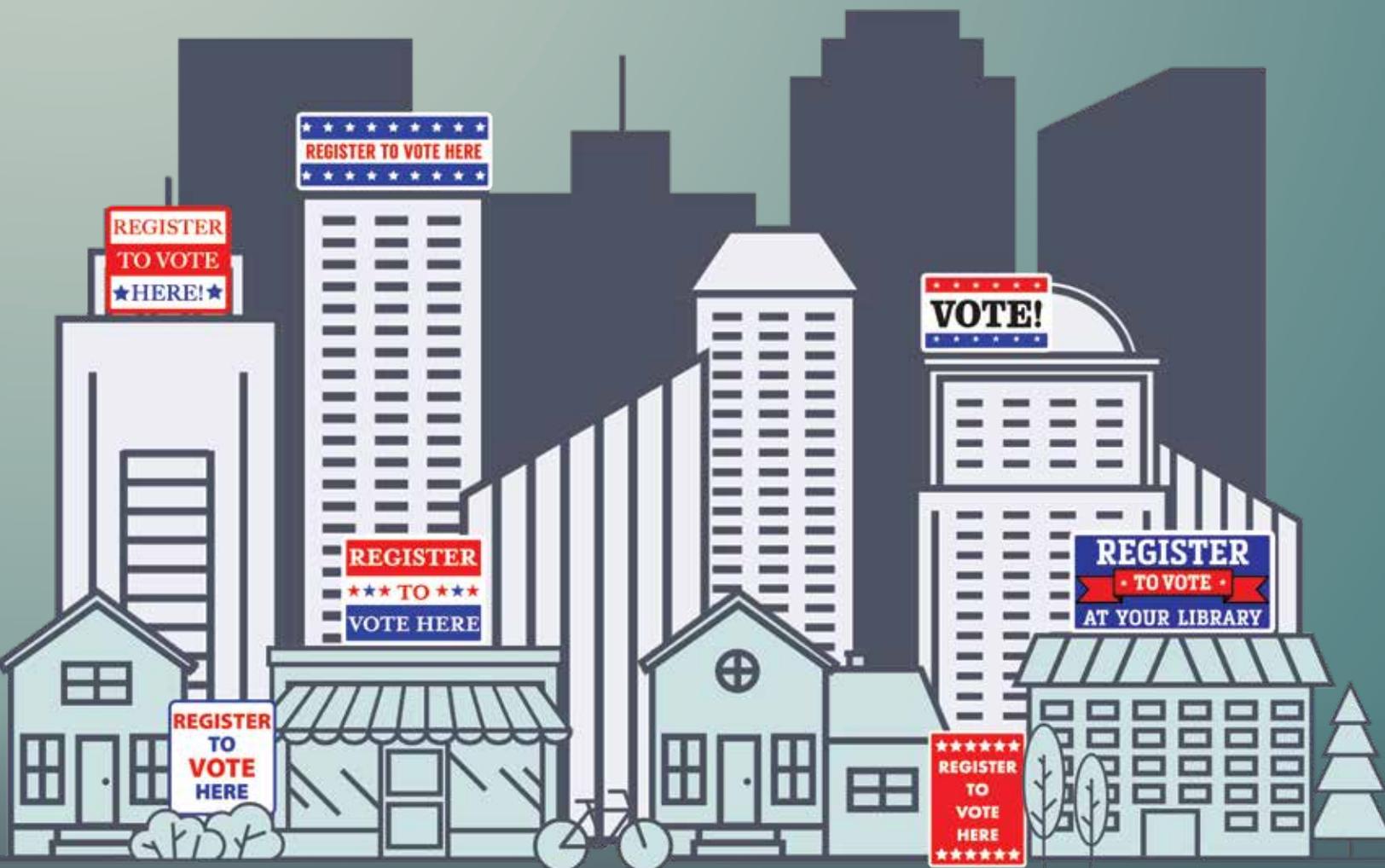


DEEPENING OUR DEMOCRACY

How Localities Can
Expand Voting Rights



DEEPENING OUR DEMOCRACY

How Localities Can Expand Voting Rights

January 2018

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

This report was prepared by the Center for Popular Democracy. It was written by Kate Hamaji and Emma Greenman. Legal research and analysis was conducted by Nathan Regenold and Patricia Alejandro.



The Center for Popular Democracy (CPD) works to create equity, opportunity, and a dynamic democracy in partnership with high-impact base-building organizations, organizing alliances, and progressive unions. CPD strengthens our collective capacity to envision and win an innovative pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial and economic justice agenda.

www.populardemocracy.org

Executive Summary

American democracy is at a crossroads. To deliver on the promise of a representative, inclusive democracy, our electoral system must provide every American the opportunity to meaningfully participate and make their voice heard in our democracy. That starts by guaranteeing that every eligible person has the ability to register and cast a ballot that is counted. However, more than a decade of attacks on voting rights and democratic participation—from *Shelby County v. Holder*¹ to restrictive state voter ID laws—have undermined these core principles of representative democracy and have eroded the political participation of ordinary citizens and the Rising American Electorate.²

While these attacks are part of a longstanding conservative agenda to restrict access to the ballot and blunt the political power of communities of color, the Trump administration has further emboldened efforts to limit democratic participation. Shortly after taking office, Trump launched the “Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity” to vindicate his widely-rebuked and self-serving lie that he lost the national popular vote in the 2016 election because of more than three million people who he claimed (without evidence) “voted illegally.”³ Since the election, there has also been an acceleration of proposed state voter restrictions including new voter ID laws, restrictions on early voting, and attempts to purge voter registration rolls.⁴

In the face of attacks at the state and federal level, protecting and strengthening our democracy and voter participation must be a local imperative. With a majority of the US population living in cities and urban counties,⁵ local proactive reforms have the potential to expand access to voter registration and voting for millions of people. Moreover, reforms that expand voter registration at the local level are crucial for increasing voter turnout and for extending the geographic reach of proactive voting reforms to reduce barriers to registration nationwide. Expanding access to voter registration is also particularly important for ensuring representation of low-income communities, communities of color, and young people. Families with annual incomes below \$30,000, voters of color, and naturalized citizens, have lower voter registration and voting rates compared to their counterparts.⁶ Young people are also less likely to be registered and less likely to turn out to vote.⁷

This report suggest some of the strongest measures localities can take on their own. Local jurisdictions can expand voter registration to eligible residents through the following policies:

■ **Local Agency Registration: Expanding Voter Registration Access to Underrepresented Communities**

Under this reform, local government agencies actively register people to vote. City and county agencies are strategic targets because they administer public services, benefits, and programs that serve primarily low-income communities and disproportionately reach communities of color. These agencies include, for example, those that administer human and social services, affordable housing, and health programs. National Voter Registration Act data confirms that low-income communities and communities of color are more likely to be registered to vote at public assistance offices than wealthier and white voters.⁸

■ **High School Voter Registration: Building a New Generation of Active Voters**

High school registration programs register eligible students who will turn 18 by the next election. With high school registration reforms, election administrators are responsible for distributing registration forms to schools and processing the forms when they are returned. Schools are responsible for distributing forms to students, verifying that students have fulfilled the requirement, and submitting the forms to election administrators.⁹ Over time, a high school registration program could significantly increase the number of registered voters citywide and

create a generation of active voters. When young people learn about and participate in the voting process, they are more likely to continue to participate over their lifetime.¹⁰

■ **Pre-Registration of 16- and 17-Year-Olds: Early Engagement of the Next Generation of Voters**

Like high school registration, targeted youth outreach and pre-registration of 16- and 17-year-olds could lead to significant increases in voter registration and voter participation over a lifetime.¹¹ This reform works by expanding access to state rules allowing 16- and 17-year olds to pre-register to vote, automatically adding them to the voting rolls when they turn 18 and are eligible to vote. Local expansion of pre-registration in applicable states is promising because it is low-cost and does not require any additional databases—new voters are simply entered under a “pending” status in the existing state system until they turn 18.¹²

■ **Exploring Additional Opportunities to Innovate at the Local Level**

Cities and counties are promising laboratories for democracy. These jurisdictions can lead the way by developing innovative strategies for expanding access to the ballot in their communities where legally feasible and politically plausible. For instance, Madison, Wisconsin and East Lansing, Michigan, have adopted ordinances requiring landlords to provide their tenants with voter registration forms in order to make registration more accessible.¹³ New York City and Seattle have reduced the outsized influence of wealthy campaign contributors by democratizing campaign funding through public financing.¹⁴ Phoenix, Arizona, is considering a robust voter reform package that includes adding registered city residents to the Permanent Early Voting List (PEVL).

Two local-level voter registration reforms provide useful models for replication. Both New York City and Fairfax County, Virginia, have implemented versions of local government agency registration policies. New York City was the first jurisdiction to adopt a comprehensive municipal voter registration program in 2000, and now requires more than 25 city agencies to register eligible residents they serve to vote. In 2016, Fairfax County successfully expanded electronic voter registration to county agencies. The county now provides access to the online voter registration portal at targeted social service agencies countywide.¹⁵

This report explores a set of high-impact voter registration reforms that could be pursued at the local level. We focus our analysis on a set of cities where there is potential for local reform and where there is need for reforms to counteract the recent history of hostility to voting rights at the state level. This report assesses the following cities: Phoenix, Miami, Jacksonville, Tampa, Orlando, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Austin, and Milwaukee. In each city, our analysis estimates the size of the population eligible for each reform and, where possible, estimates the number of people able to be registered to vote under the policy. The cities included in this analysis are just a starting point for exploration—there are likely a number of additional cities, counties, school districts and other municipalities where local registration reforms are both legally feasible and impactful.

Local jurisdictions have an increasingly important role to play in protecting and expanding the democratic participation of their residents. Through innovative local reforms, cities, counties, and school districts can increase voter participation and reduce the registration and participation disparities of communities of color, low-income communities and young people. In the face of ongoing attacks on voting rights and democracy at the state and national level, cities and counties have an obligation to protect voters and democratic participation.

Introduction

American democracy is at a crossroads. To deliver on the promise of a representative, inclusive democracy, it is imperative that our electoral system provides every American the opportunity to meaningfully participate and make their voice heard in our democracy. That starts by guaranteeing that every eligible person has the ability to register and to cast a ballot that is counted. However, more than a decade of attacks on voting rights and democratic participation—from *Shelby County v. Holder*¹⁶ to restrictive state voter ID laws—have undermined these core principles of representative democracy and have eroded the political participation of ordinary citizens and the Rising American Electorate.¹⁷

The Trump administration and the current Congress have only emboldened a longstanding conservative agenda to restrict access to democratic participation and blunt the political power of communities, including low-income communities, communities of color and young voters. Since 2010, 23 states (almost all under Republican control) have enacted new voter restrictions.¹⁸ Ten states have implemented more restrictive voter ID laws, seven states implemented laws that make it harder for citizens to register to vote, six states cut back on early voting days and hours, and three states made it harder to restore voting rights for people with past criminal convictions.¹⁹ At the same time, state governments across the country are passing sweeping preemption legislation as a strategy to curtail the ability of local government to pass progressive policy reform.

After years of escalating attacks on voting rights and democratic participation by state legislatures and the Supreme Court, our democracy now also faces threats from Washington. In his first week in office, President Trump signaled that he would use federal power to expand efforts to restrict the vote. Within months of his inauguration, Trump followed through with the launch of the “Presidential Advisory Commission on Election Integrity” based on the self-serving and widely-rebuted falsehood that he lost the popular vote because of more than three million illegally cast votes.²⁰ Trump’s commission is led by Vice President Mike Pence and vice-chaired by Kris Kobach—both of whom have histories of restrictive voter suppression efforts²¹—and includes members Hans von Spakovsky, J. Christian Adams, and Ken Blackwell, all of whom also have longstanding records of supporting efforts to restrict voting.²² After two meetings, it is apparent that the commission’s agenda is focused on pushing baseless and widely-disproven claims of “voter fraud” to advance long-planned efforts that could purge registered voters from the rolls and disenfranchise millions of voters.²³

In the months and years to come, we expect new attempts by Congress and some state legislatures to further restrict access to registration and the ballot.²⁴ These efforts may include congressional attempts to federalize voter restrictions, such as strict photo ID and documentary proof-of-citizenship requirements to register,²⁵ along with even more aggressive voter suppression laws in several states.²⁶

23

states have enacted new
voter restrictions since 2010





In the face of these attacks on voting rights at the state and federal level, protecting and strengthening our democracy through voter participation must be a local imperative. Now more than ever, local elected officials, advocates, and community groups are stepping up and doing the work to protect their communities and organizations, defend our rights, and preserve progressive policy gains. Local action must also be taken to protect voters and the democratic participation of vulnerable and targeted communities.

Local voter registration expansion is a key strategy for extending the geographic reach of pro-democracy reforms, particularly those aimed at increasing voter registration and turnout among communities of color, low-income communities, and young voters. Getting eligible voters on the registration rolls can be an avenue for increasing voter engagement and turnout. Candidates, political parties and community groups use the voter registration list to engage, educate and mobilize potential voters through canvasses, phone calls and mailers. This education and outreach can have a meaningful impact on voter turnout, especially in communities with lower voter turnout.²⁷



Cities, counties, and school districts can expand voter registration to their residents through local agencies, high schools, and programs promoting the pre-registration of 16- and 17-year olds in applicable states. This report explores the feasibility and potential reach of such reforms in 13 key cities, all located in states where voting rights are under attack, where local policy reforms are legally feasible, and where there

are elected officials and community organizations ready to champion pro-democracy reforms. The cities included in this analysis are just a starting point—there are likely a number of additional cities, counties, and school districts where local registration reforms are both legally feasible and potentially impactful.

Background

America's Voter Registration Problem

America's arcane voter registration system hinders democratic participation and creates barriers that exclude tens of millions of eligible citizens from the political process. In 2001, the National Election Commission, chaired by former Presidents Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, concluded, "The registration laws in force throughout the United States [are...] among the world's most demanding ...[and] one reason why voter turnout in the United States is near the bottom of the developed world."²⁸ Millions of citizens are prevented from voting in national, state, and local elections because they encounter problems registering or miss the registration cutoff.²⁹

In the United States, more than one in four potential voters—30 percent of the eligible voting-age population*—are *not* registered to vote.³⁰ With a registration rate of just 70 percent,³¹ the US lags behind comparable democratic countries around the world. For example, a 2009 Brennan Center study found that Canada had a registration rate of 93 percent, Great Britain had a registration rate of 97 percent, and Australia had a registration rate of 92 percent.³²

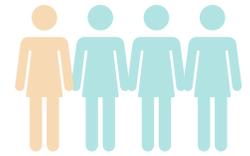
Registration and voting rates are disproportionately lower among low-income and communities of color. Families with annual incomes below \$30,000, people of color, and naturalized citizens have lower registration and voting rates compared to their counterparts.³³ Our current registration system has left 43 percent of eligible Latinxs and 44 percent of eligible Asian Americans unregistered to vote.³⁴ Just over 30 percent of eligible Black people are unregistered to vote, which closely mirrors low overall rates of registration across the country.³⁵

Young people are also less likely to be registered and less likely to turn out to vote. In the 2016 general election, 45 percent of citizens aged 18 to 24 were not registered to vote and 57 percent did not vote.³⁶ By contrast, 30 percent of the total population was not registered to vote and 39 percent did not vote.³⁷

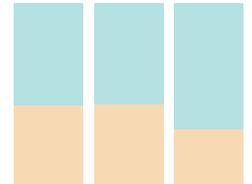
Reducing Barriers to Registration and Increasing Voter Participation

The data shows that those who are registered to vote, turn out to vote. In 2016, 87 percent of registered voters cast a ballot, compared to 61 percent of the total eligible voting age population.³⁸ As such, breaking down barriers to registration is a critical strategy for increasing overall rates of voter turnout. Research shows that state policies eliminating registration deadlines and reducing registration hurdles lead to increased rates of voter turnout in those states. For example, states with Same-Day Registration (SDR)—where eligible residents can register at the same time they show up to cast their ballot—lead the nation in voter turnout. In the 2012 presidential election, average voter turnout was over 10 percentage points higher in SDR states than in other states.³⁹ One study found that making registration portable—in other words, automatically updating the address of a registered voter if she moves within the state, rather than requiring her to re-register with every change of address—increases turnout rates by more than two percent.⁴⁰ Automatic Voter Registration (AVR) increases voter participation by increasing voter registration, lowering procedural obstacles, reducing administrative errors, and expanding the reach of voter education and mobilization efforts.⁴¹ In 2016, Oregon added 272,000 people to the rolls after it implemented AVR, more than 98,000 of whom were new voters in the 2016 election.⁴² While turnout was up across the country in the 2016 election cycle,⁴³ Oregon experienced the largest increase of any state (a 4.1 point increase from 2012).⁴⁴

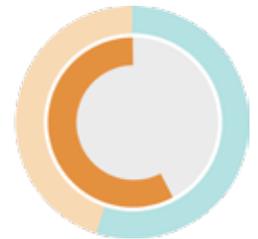
Increasing access to registration at public agencies is important for improving access to registration and participation in the election process, particularly



One in four eligible US voters are not registered to vote



43% of Latinxs, 44% of Asian Americans, and 30% of Black people are not registered to vote



45% of citizens aged 18 to 24 were not registered to vote and 57% did not vote

*The registration estimates throughout this report are based on the November 2016 Current Population Survey (CPS) Voting and Registration Supplement, a sample survey on voting and registration participation fielded every two years by the U.S. Census Bureau. To calculate the unregistered population, CPD subtracted the estimated percentage of respondents who self-reported being registered from the total citizen voting age population. The unregistered population estimate includes those who self-reported in the Voting and Registration Supplement as being unregistered, as well as nonrespondents.

among voters of color. Census data shows that Black voters are three times more likely than white voters to register to vote at state public assistance agencies, and Hispanic/Latinx voters are over four times as likely as white voters to do the same.⁴⁵ Registration at public agencies is also vital for citizens with disabilities and individuals with limited English proficiency, both of whom are more likely to be living in poverty than their able-bodied and/or English proficient counterparts.⁴⁶ Well-administered voter registration programs established at state public assistance agencies pursuant to federal law have registered 15 to 20 percent of agency applicants.⁴⁷



Democracy-expanding reforms are also important for reaching young voters, who comprise a significant proportion of the electorate. Forty-six million young people between 18 and 29 were eligible to vote in 2016, versus 39 million seniors.⁴⁸ Millennials are also the most racially diverse generation—over 44 percent of millennials are people of color, compared to nearly 39 percent of those aged 35 to 64, and 25 percent of those 55 and older.⁴⁹ Encouraging voter registration among this age group demands new strategies. For instance, research shows that millennials are less likely to obtain drivers licenses⁵⁰ and are therefore less likely to register to vote through the DMV than their older counterparts. By enacting policies specific to this age group—for example pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds and high school registration—local jurisdictions can bolster voter registration and turnout rates among youth while also working to build a more racially diverse base of active voters.

Opportunities to Expand Voter Registration at the Local Level

When it comes to registration and voting, cities and counties are where the rubber hits the road—where voters are registered, election machinery is operated, and ballots are cast. Cities and big counties are where most people live; 62.7 percent of the US population lives in cities, even though cities comprise just 3.5 percent of land area.⁵¹ Half of the US population is clustered in the 146 biggest counties out of over 3,000 counties.⁵² Improved registration and voting policies at the local level, and particularly in urban areas, have the potential to expand access to voter registration and voting for millions of people.

Proactively expanding voter registration at the local level is critical for strengthening the right to vote in cities and counties across the country. Moreover, local elected officials, advocates, and community groups can expand access to the ballot at the local level to offset efforts at the state level to curtail democratic participation. In localities affected by state-level barriers to registration, local officials, advocates, and community groups can—and should—use their power to protect and expand voter access for their residents. Local reforms provide an opportunity to increase voter outreach, registration, and turnout in local jurisdictions.

Recommended local policy reforms include the following:

■ **Local Agency Registration: Expanding Voter Registration Access to Underrepresented Communities**

One promising method for increasing voter registration, particularly among underrepresented communities, is expanding voter registration to local public agencies. As noted above, National Voter Registration Act data shows that low-income and communities of color are more likely to be registered to vote at public assistance offices, with Black and Latinx voters three and four times more likely to register to vote at state public agencies than white voters, respectively.⁵³ Local agencies—including those that provide human and social services, affordable housing, and health programming, among others—are strategic targets because they administer the public services, benefits, and programs that serve primarily low-income communities and disproportionately reach communities of color.

With local agency-based voter registration, city or county agencies would be required to offer voter registration as part of their regular interaction with the local resident. Agency staff would be trained to support the voter registration of all eligible persons submitting applications or renewals for agency services or change of address materials relating to such services.⁵⁴ As mentioned, well-administered voter registration programs established at state public assistance agencies pursuant to federal law have registered 15 to 20 percent of agency applicants.⁵⁵ Given these results at state agencies, it is likely that well-administered agency registration at the county and city level could produce similar outcomes.

■ **High School Registration: Building a Generation of Active Voters**

Localities can do more to get young people registered. They can design high school registration programs to reach and register every eligible high school student that will be 18 years old before the next election through existing school infrastructure. Schools can engage students through assemblies, classroom registration drives, and other methods to encourage registration, distribute and collect registration forms, ensure that forms are properly completed, and return the forms to election administrators. Election administrators are responsible for distributing registration forms to schools, processing forms upon completion, and ensuring that high schools meets the requirements of the program. Ideally, high school registration programs are coupled with voter education programs aimed at encouraging participation and turnout amongst new high school voters.⁵⁶

Over time, a high school registration program could significantly increase the number of registered voters citywide, helping to build a generation of engaged, active voters. When young people learn about and participate in the voting process, they are more likely to continue to vote over their lifetime.⁵⁷

■ **Pre-registration of 16-and 17-Year-Olds: Early Engagement of the Next Generation of Voters**

Building on and strengthening high school registration programs, reforms that expand registration to 16- and 17-year-olds (“pre-registration”) and include targeted outreach to youth, have the potential to increase voter registration and voter participation over a lifetime.⁵⁸ In states that allow for pre-registration, eligible 16- and 17-year-olds can pre-register to vote and then are automatically added to the registration rolls when they turn 18. New voters are automatically added to the state registration system, and ideally, receive information in the mail about how to vote upon turning 18 and the timing of the first election for which they are eligible.⁵⁹ In states with pre-registration, local programs expanding the impact of pre-registration can help to reach brand new registrants while they are still in school.⁶⁰ It is low-cost and does not require any additional databases; since pre-registered voters are simply entered into an existing state system under a “pending” status until they turn 18.⁶¹ Fourteen states, plus the District of Columbia, allow or have enacted legislation

allowing 16- or 17-year-olds to pre-register to vote, even if they will not turn 18 before Election Day: California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, Oregon, Rhode Island, and Utah.⁶²

■ **Additional Opportunities to Innovate at the Local Level**

Cities and counties are promising laboratories for democracy. Local jurisdictions can lead the way by developing innovative strategies for expanding the vote based on what is legally feasible and politically plausible.

- *Renter Registration:* Renter registration ordinances aim to make registration more widely accessible by legally requiring landlords to provide their tenants with voter registration forms.⁶³ These laws, recently adopted in Madison, Wisconsin and East Lansing, Michigan, are particularly valuable because renters are disproportionately more mobile, lower income and/or people of color.⁶⁴ These laws also help to reach these cities' large student populations, many of whom live off campus in rental housing, to get registered and stay registered to vote.
- *Public Financing of Local Elections:* Cities and states cannot ban political spending, but they can democratize campaign funding and reduce the outsized influence of wealthy contributors through public financing of local elections. In New York City, candidates for mayor and city council receive \$6 in matching funds for every \$1 that they raise from city residents (with a limit of \$175 per resident).⁶⁵ Candidates who participate in the program commit to limiting their total spending. The program reduces the influence of moneyed interests, permits middle-class candidates to run competitively (and win), and engages a broader segment of the population in the electoral process.⁶⁶ In 2015, Seattle passed an innovative "democracy voucher" system, which is in effect for the 2017 election cycle. Each resident who is eligible to vote receives four \$25 coupons to contribute to their preferred local candidates.⁶⁷ In return for accepting democracy vouchers, candidates agree to contribution and spending limits, as well as reporting guidelines.⁶⁸ Initial analysis shows that voucher users are more representative of the city's population than traditional donors.⁶⁹ In the first election since the program has been implemented, it is enabling participating candidates to compete successfully with a privately financed opponent, giving Seattle residents a stake in their local democracy.⁷⁰
- *Permanent Early Voting:* Phoenix, Arizona is currently considering a robust voter expansion reform package, including a policy that would add every registered city resident to the Permanent Early Voting List (PEVL) unless they decline to be added. All voters on the PEVL receive a ballot by mail several weeks in advance of any election in which they are eligible to vote. Not only does this make voting easier, but it also gives voters ample time to consider relevant issues and research the politicians involved in an election. Voters on the PEVL list are still given the option of voting in person.⁷¹ Additional reforms to increase rates of voter registration in Phoenix include the following: offering voter registration at city government service agencies, encouraging apartment complexes to include voter registration materials in their welcome packets, and increasing the number of city polling locations. Eventually, the city plans to add a voter protection wing inside Phoenix's city clerk department.

Lessons from the Field

Local voter expansion efforts is a relatively new and innovative area of policy reform. However, a handful of jurisdictions have successfully implemented local registration policies and offer important lessons to other localities considering similar reform. To fully realize the potential of proactive voter

registration expansion at the local level, cities and counties should draw from the experience of jurisdictions that are already implementing registration expansion reforms.

In addition to getting the policy right, expanding access to the ballot requires educating the public, encouraging buy-in from public agency staff, and creating a foundation of political support for the policy reform. It also requires developing local leadership to advance and implement policy reforms. Importantly, advocates and lawmakers cannot focus just on getting good laws on the books; they must also prioritize robust implementation strategies and plans for ensuring full compliance. The following examples from New York City and Fairfax County illustrate the need for effective implementation and ongoing compliance efforts in order to ensure that registration programs have maximum impact.

Case Study: Lessons from New York City

New York City was the first jurisdiction to adopt a comprehensive municipal voter registration program. While over a decade of lax and ineffective implementation⁷² limited the impact of the program, city reforms in the last three years have accelerated implementation and agency compliance, leading to a substantial increase in the number of New York City residents being added to the rolls through this program.

In 2000, New York City passed Local Law 29, known as the Pro-Voter Law, requiring 19 city agencies—including, for example, the Department of Consumer Affairs, the Department of Small Business Services, and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene—to implement and administer a voter registration program, in which public agency staff are required to register eligible voters when they apply for or renew city services.⁷³ For example, at the Department of Small Business Services, eligible New Yorkers that come through the agency to apply for business licenses are offered the opportunity to register to vote. In 2014, a coalition of organizations including the Center for Popular Democracy, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law, the Citizens Union of the City of New York, and the New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), released a report titled “Broken Promise: Agency-Based Voter Registration in New York City.”⁷⁴ The report found significant non-compliance with the Pro-Voter Law, revealing, for instance, that city agencies had failed to offer registration information in 84 percent of client interactions.⁷⁵ The coalition also found that agencies failed to comply with language access requirements and training requirements of agency staff.⁷⁶

On the basis of this report, and thanks to local advocacy efforts, the New York City Council passed new legislation in 2014 designed to increase compliance and expand the impact of the Pro-Voter Law. Under this legislation, the city added seven new agencies to the law and required all participating agencies to report their progress on a semi-annual basis.⁷⁷

Since 2015, New York City has made promising gains in its effort to register voters through city agencies, more than tripling the number of voter registrations at designated city agencies within the first six months of 2016 (14,300 registrations, compared to 5,900 registrations in the first six months of 2015). In the six month period that data is most recently available, city agencies sent more than 18,000 registration applications to the board of elections.⁷⁸ Based on the city’s reported progress with implementation, this number is likely to rise.

The city has also made significant progress toward improving language access. Voter registration applications have been translated into a number of additional languages: Arabic, French, Haitian, Creole, Russian, Urdu, Albanian, Greek, Tagalog, Polish, Yiddish, and Albanian.⁷⁹ As a result, over 90 percent of limited English proficient New Yorkers who are eligible to vote can now complete voter registration forms in their native language.⁸⁰

New York City's voter registration expansion efforts still face several challenges. For example, each city agency distributes voter registration forms differently and few agencies are physically integrating voter registration forms into their city intake forms and applications for city services, as required by the law. There is still work to do to realize the full potential of this reform to reach eligible voters through existing city services.⁸¹

Case Study: Lessons from Fairfax County, Virginia

In 2016, the Fairfax County Votes Initiative successfully worked with Fairfax County to expand electronic voter registration through administrative action at the county level. This was part of a successful two-pronged strategy at the state and county level to modernize electronic voter registration systems and increase access to registration through county agencies.

As a result of a coalition effort led by New Virginia Majority Education Fund, Planned Parenthood of Virginia, Virginia Civic Engagement Table, SEIU Virginia 512, ProgressVA Education Fund and the League of Women Voters, and national partners Center for Popular Democracy, Center for Secure and Modern Election and Planned Parenthood, the county successfully expanded registration access to Fairfax County residents. Together, the coalition worked with Fairfax County to provide residents access to the state online voter registration portal at designated county social service agencies. These agencies include the Community Services Board, the Redevelopment and Housing Authority, the Department of Housing and Community Development, the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services, the Department of Family Services, and the Health Department. Online voter registration was available to county residents before the 2016 voter registration deadline. The coalition also worked to identify, and advocate for, administrative strategies at the state and county level for implementing the data collection and electronic registration technology infrastructure necessary to expand online registration, to implement portability, and to prepare for additional modernization and security reforms in the future.

This effort has created a foundation for advancing local voter registration reforms in other cities and counties in Virginia, including Richmond and Charlottesville. The organizing work also builds a base of support for advancing further proactive voter reforms across the state.⁸³

Example: High School Registration in Harris County, Texas

The community-based Texas Organizing Project Education Fund (TOPEF) is currently partnering with the Texas Civil Rights Project (TCRP) to enforce state-mandated high school registration obligations and implement systematic voter registration programs in Harris County High Schools.⁸² The effort aims to ensure compliance by streamlining and enforcing existing high school registration requirements; compelling the Secretary of State to properly notify high school administrators of their legal obligations to register students; working with superintendents to increase compliance; and creating a standard mechanism to track high school registration.

The Impact of Local Reforms in Key States

The following analysis provides an entry point for further exploration by illustrating the potential reach and impact of local voter registration reforms in a given set of representative cities. The analysis estimates the size of the population eligible for each reform and, where possible, estimates the maximum number of people that could be registered to vote under the policy.

Every state has a different set of legal and administrative considerations that could affect the viability and impact of reforms at the local level. We do not attempt a 50-state survey of local jurisdictions, but instead provide compelling examples of viable high-impact voter registration reforms and their potential impact in select case study cities. As described above, these case study cities were chosen because they are located in states where voting rights are under attack, where reform is legally possible, and where there are local elected officials and community organizations poised to advocate for policy change.

Local jurisdictions considering reform should tailor proposed policies to their specific state- and municipal-level legal and administrative contexts. Cities, counties, and school districts will want to start with an evaluation of the political and legal authority of their jurisdiction as it relates to state laws regulating voter registration and election administration.⁸⁴

A Note on Interpreting the Data

Measuring Eligibility versus Impact of Voter Registration Reforms

When evaluating the potential reach of a reform, it is important to note that impact and eligibility estimates are different measures. *Eligibility* considers the total population that would qualify for the reform. Only a subset of this population would be reached by interacting with a set of city agencies that implements the reform. Though there is insufficient data to estimate the impact of this reform, eligibility estimates provide a helpful picture of the possible reach of local agency registration policies. *Impact* estimates refer to the maximum number of individuals that are likely to be registered as a result of the policy change.

The number used to estimate *eligibility* for local government agency registration is the unregistered Citizen Voting Age Population (CVAP); it does not estimate the number of people that would actually be registered as a result of the policy change—in other words, the subset of eligible voters that would interact with the city agencies implementing local registration efforts. Because we lack data on agency traffic or total numbers of eligible individuals served through local agency services (either the data is unavailable to the public, or programs within agencies report data in ways that make it difficult to disaggregate or determine discrete clients served), we are only able to provide an estimate of the total population that would be eligible for the reform. Only a subset of the unregistered CVAP would be reached and registered to vote through such a program.

Demographic Snapshots

The demographic information accompanying each state highlights the proportion of residents who are people of color, youth (aged 18–24), and those with low household incomes (under \$25,000). “People of color” is defined as those who identify as a race other than white alone (non-Hispanic or Latino) on the census, including Black or African American, Hispanic or Latino, Asian, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, and some other race. These groups are, on average, less likely to be registered to vote than the population as a whole. These snapshots aim to highlight how local registration policies could impact underrepresented and under-registered communities in these cities.

ARIZONA REFORMS

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



PHOENIX

TOTAL POPULATION: 1,514,200
PEOPLE OF COLOR: 55%
HOUSEHOLDS WITH ANNUAL INCOME UNDER \$25,000: 26%
POPULATION 18-24: 10%

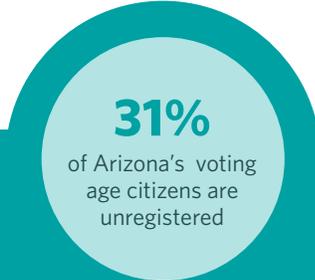
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Local Agency Registration

Arizona’s cities and counties could implement municipal agency registration at local agencies.⁸⁵

High School Registration

Arizona school districts could implement high school voter registration programs.⁸⁶



Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

Local Agency Registration (eligibility)

High School Registration Program (impact)

PHOENIX

97,800

22,300 per year



FLORIDA REFORMS

Local Agency Registration through Access to Online Portal

Florida’s enactment of an online voter registration system⁸⁷ provides the opportunity for municipalities to expand registration through the state’s online voter registration portal. Through the state’s online portal, Florida voters can now go online, fill out and submit a new registration application or update their existing registration.⁸⁸ Local jurisdictions could enact ordinances requiring local agencies to provide access and instruction on registering through the state’s online registration portal and the appropriate technology so individuals can register on the spot. Moreover, counties are particularly powerful in Florida so it is important to explore opportunities to expand voter registration at the county level to reach and impact a wide swath of voters.

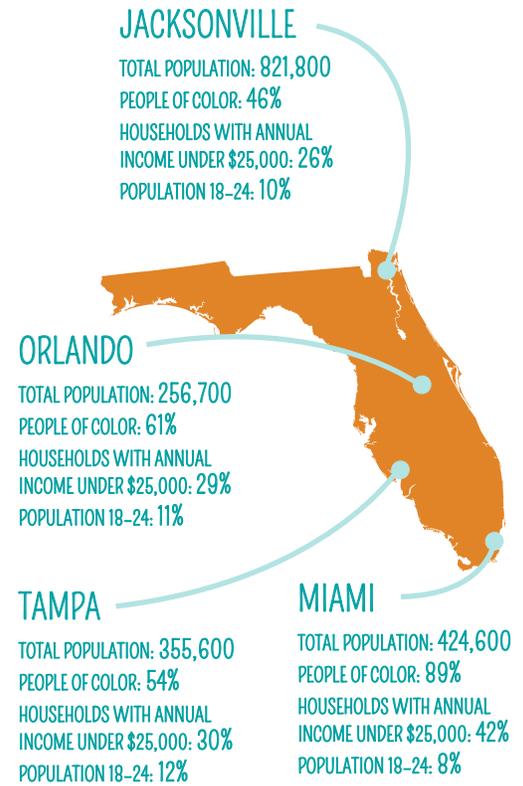
High School Registration through Access to Online Portal

Florida’s online voter registration system, discussed above, also provides the opportunity to expand voter registration among youth through targeted implementation in high schools. Additionally, state law authorizes county supervisors of elections to designate locations at which voter registration applications are to be distributed,⁸⁹ including high schools.⁹⁰

Pre-Registration of 16- and 17-year-olds

Florida state law permits pre-registration to vote starting at the age of 16⁹¹ and localities could provide access to pre-registration for eligible 16- and 17-year-olds.

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

33%

of Florida’s voting age citizens are unregistered

Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

	Local Agency Registration (eligibility)	High School Registration Program (impact)	Pre-Registration of 16- and 17-year-olds (impact)
MIAMI	27,000	3,800 per year	2,600 per year
JACKSONVILLE	23,200*	11,200 per year	8,300 per year
TAMPA	17,000	3,900 per year	4,400 per year
ORLANDO	10,700	2,700 per year	2,000 per year

*Registration numbers are only available for Duval County.

OHIO REFORMS

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT

CLEVELAND

TOTAL POPULATION: 390,600
 PEOPLE OF COLOR: 66%
 HOUSEHOLDS WITH ANNUAL INCOME UNDER \$25,000: 48%
 POPULATION 18-24: 12%

COLUMBUS

TOTAL POPULATION: 824,700
 PEOPLE OF COLOR: 42%
 HOUSEHOLDS WITH ANNUAL INCOME UNDER \$25,000: 27%
 POPULATION 18-24: 12%

CINCINNATI

TOTAL POPULATION: 279,400
 PEOPLE OF COLOR: 51%
 HOUSEHOLDS WITH ANNUAL INCOME UNDER \$25,000: 40%
 POPULATION 18-24: 14%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Local Agency Registration

Charter municipalities,⁹² including Cleveland, Cincinnati, and Columbus, could enact reforms to provide voter registration at local agencies.⁹³ Ohio state law anticipates organized registration efforts, requiring the Secretary of State to implement a training and registration program for any “compensated voter registrants.”⁹⁴ A jurisdiction planning to expand voter registration to its city or county agencies should draft policy in accordance with the state’s training and registration requirements.⁹⁵

High School Registration

Ohio charter municipalities could implement reforms to expand high school registration programs, which are already authorized at public high schools and vocational schools.⁹⁶ Policy should be drafted in accordance with state law requirements for in-class voter registration programs.⁹⁷

28%

of Ohio’s voting age citizens are unregistered

Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

	Local Agency Registration (eligibility)	High School Registration Program (impact)
CINCINNATI	10,100	3,600 per year
CLEVELAND	33,800	5,600 per year
COLUMBUS	32,500	8,700 per year

TEXAS REFORMS⁹⁸

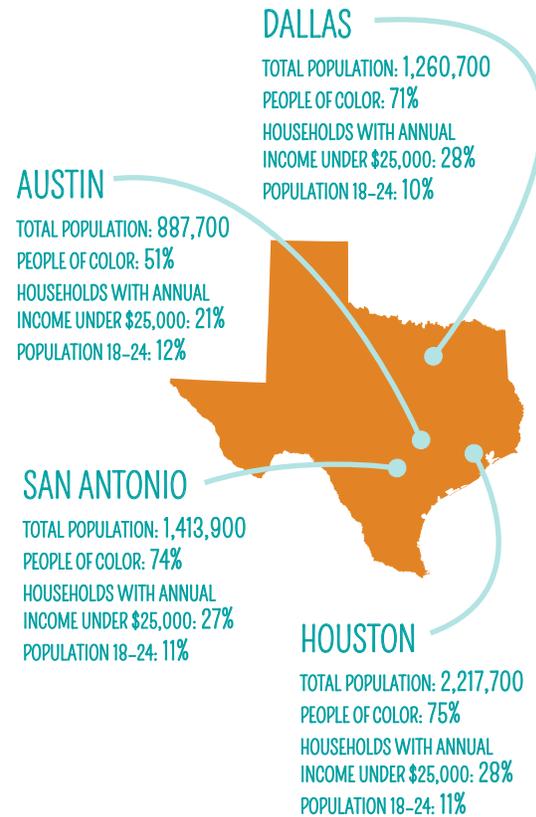
Local Agency Registration

Texas cities and counties could expand voter registration to local agencies under their home rule authority.⁹⁹ Texas Election Code anticipates voter registration activities at the local level, permitting an employee of a city or county who is a volunteer deputy registrar (VDR) to engage in official registration activities during working hours on work premises if authorized by that jurisdiction.¹⁰⁰ Cities planning to implement municipal voter registration programs should draft policies to comply with the state training and appointment process laid out in statute for VDRs.¹⁰¹

High School Registration

Voter registration programs could be expanded at Texas high schools. Under state law, high schools are required to provide voter registration at least twice per year.¹⁰² However, investigations have shown that many Texas high schools fail to comply because principals and other school leaders are unaware of their legal obligations, and because there are no measures to ensure compliance and implementation of the mandate.¹⁰³ Local policies to expand high school voter registration programs should be drafted to comply with the state mandate and adhere to the provisions for voter registrars.¹⁰⁴

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

33%

of Texas's voting age citizens are unregistered

Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

	Local Agency Registration (eligibility)	High School Registration Program (impact)
HOUSTON	242,000	26,200 per year
DALLAS	109,200	14,300 per year
SAN ANTONIO	191,800	19,100 per year
AUSTIN	62,000	8,400 per year

WISCONSIN REFORMS¹⁰⁵

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT



MILWAUKEE

TOTAL POPULATION: 599,500
 PEOPLE OF COLOR: 64%
 HOUSEHOLDS WITH ANNUAL INCOME UNDER \$25,000: 36%
 POPULATION 18-24: 13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Local Agency Registration

Wisconsin cities could expand voter registration to local agencies.¹⁰⁶ A complementary reform could provide the opportunity and technology to register eligible city residents electronically at city agencies through the state’s online voter registration portal.¹⁰⁷

High School Registration

Wisconsin localities could provide for voter registration at area high schools.

24%

of Wisconsin’s voting age citizens are unregistered

Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

Local Agency Registration (eligibility)

High School Registration Program (impact)

MILWAUKEE

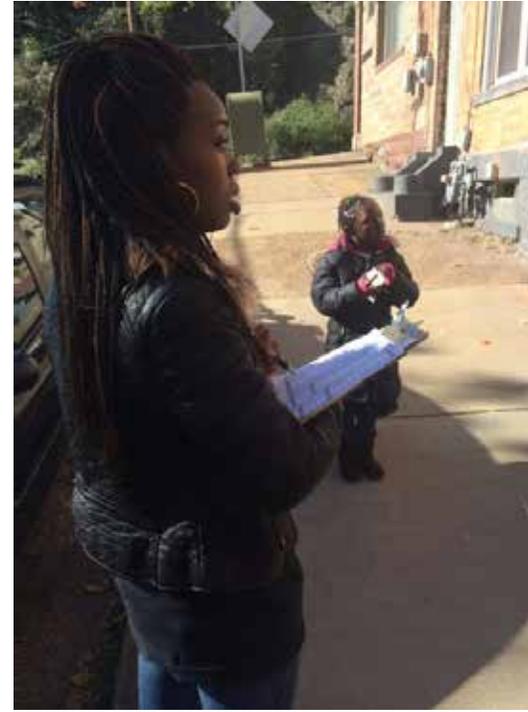
84,500

9,000 per year



Conclusion

Local jurisdictions have an increasingly important role to play in providing access to registration and voting in their jurisdictions. In the face of ongoing attacks on voting rights at the state and national level, local governments must ensure that eligible voters in their regions have access to the ballot. Where state reform is politically unfeasible, local jurisdictions have an opportunity and an obligation to step up and protect the democratic participation of their residents, and particularly focus on targeted communities including low-income communities, communities of color and young people. Local voter registration expansion efforts—including local agency registration, high school registration, and expanding the pre-registration of 16- and 17-year olds—are key strategies for advancing democracy-expanding reforms that increase voter registration and turnout.



Appendix

Methodology

Local Agency Registration

To estimate the population eligible for these reforms, this analysis looked at the difference between registered voters (obtained through city/county Board of Elections records) and total eligible voters in the voting age population that could potentially be reached through a municipal agency registration program (using Census data). This is a conservative measure of eligibility, since both active and inactive voters are included as part of the total pool of registered voters. There are likely many inactive voters who would need to be re-registered due to a change of address. Data analysis was conducted in 2016.

This analysis was unable to estimate the precise number of voters potentially registered by each municipal agency registration program because it was not possible to obtain consistent or comprehensive data sets on the total number of unique individuals served by each city agency through public data. Even when municipal agencies do provide public data, they often report metrics for only a handful of their programs, while others report on metrics that do not actually indicate the number of unique individuals served (for example, number of permits and licenses issued). Moreover, multiple municipal agencies are likely to serve some of the same individuals, so agencies would need to match their records to determine how many unique individuals are served citywide. To obtain an accurate count of unique individuals served by city agencies, each city would have to engage in a data matching process.

Because of the various data barriers, this study looks instead at the unregistered citizen voting age population (CVAP) in each city to estimate the total population that would be eligible for a municipal agency registration program. It should be noted that a small percentage of the CVAP may be ineligible to vote due to former felony conviction. Only a subset of this population would be reached by interacting with a set of city agencies that implements the reform. As a benchmark, well-administered voter registration programs established at public assistance agencies pursuant to federal law have helped register 15 to 20 percent of agency applicants.¹⁰⁸ Though there is insufficient data to estimate the impact of this reform, eligibility estimates help to provide a picture of the possible reach of local agency registration policies.

High School Registration

To determine the maximum number of students who would likely be impacted by a high school registration program, this analysis used the 2011–2015 American Community Survey, which shows the number of students enrolled in 12th grade, to establish the number of students who would turn 18 by the next election cycle. School enrollment numbers are expected to fluctuate from year to year.

While this provides the best possible approximation for impact, it should be noted that a handful of these students would not be eligible for the reform if they turn 18 after the next election. Some 11th graders would turn 18 before entering 12th grade, and so are also not included in this estimate. It should also be noted that these estimates include all students, including private school students and home schooled students.

This estimate excludes non-citizen students (both documented and undocumented) who would not be eligible to register. However, it should be noted that the Census has been shown to undercount the undocumented population, which may affect the estimate.

Pre-registration of 16- and 17-Year-Olds

To estimate the maximum number of students who would likely be impacted by a pre-registration program for 16- and 17-year-olds, this study uses the 2011–2015 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates to establish the number of 11th grade students. While this is a close approximation, it should be noted that some 16- and 17-year-olds are in 10th or 12th grades, so may not be accounted for in the total estimates. This estimate includes all students, including private school students and home schooled students. It should be noted that school enrollment numbers are expected to fluctuate from year to year.

This estimate factors out non-citizen students (documented and undocumented) who would not qualify for the reform, based on Census data. However, it should be noted that the Census has been shown to undercount the undocumented population, which may affect the estimate.

Notes

1. In 2013, the Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 2 (2013), struck down the coverage formula in Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which designated the jurisdictions with a history of discriminatory voting practices that were legally required under Section 5 to pre-clear any changes to their election laws with the Department of Justice.
2. The Rising American Electorate refers to Millennials (ages 18–34), people of color (defined by the census) and unmarried women, which now account for more than half of the voting age population in the US. See: “The Rising American Electorate,” The Voter Participation Center, Accessed November 2017, <https://www.voterparticipation.org/our-mission/the-rising-american-electorate/>.
3. Heidi M. Przybyla, “Trump directs panel to tackle voter ‘fraud’ during commission’s first session,” USA Today, July 19, 2017, <https://www.usatoday.com/story/news/politics/2017/07/19/trump-repeats-unsubstantiated-claims-voter-fraud-during-vote-panels-first-session/491919001/>; Peter Montgomery, “Trump’s ‘Election Integrity’ Commission: The lies and cold, hard facts,” People for the American Way, July 2017, <http://www.pfaw.org/report/trumps-election-integrity-commission-the-lies-and-the-cold-hard-facts/>.
4. “Voting laws roundup 2017,” The Brennan Center, May 10, 2017, <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/voting-laws-roundup-2017>.
5. “U.S. cities are home to 62.7 percent of the U.S. population, but comprise just 3.5 percent of land area,” U.S. Census, March 4, 2015, <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-releases/2015/cb15-33.html>; Walter Hickey and Joe Weisenthal, “Half of the United States lives in these counties,” *Business Insider*, September 4, 2013, <http://www.businessinsider.com/half-of-the-united-states-lives-in-these-counties-2013-9>.
6. “Voting and registration in the election of 2016,” Tables 4b, 7, 11, US Census Bureau, May 2017, <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/voting-and-registration/p20-580.html>.
7. “Voting and registration in the election of November 2016,” Table 2, US Census Bureau.
8. “Increasing compliance with section 7 of the Voter Registration Act,” US Commission on Civil Rights, September 7, 2016, <http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/NVRA-09-07-16.pdf>.
9. “High school voter registration FAQ,” Fair Vote, Accessed November 2017, http://archive.fairvote.org/media/rtv/HS%20Reg%20FAQ_July31.pdf.
10. “Youth voting: the 2016 youth vote,” Circle, Accessed November 2017, <http://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/>.
11. J. Mijin Cha and Liz Kennedy, “Millions to the polls: practical policies to fulfill the freedom to vote for all Americans,” Demos, 2014, http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/Millions%20to%20the%20Polls%20Pre%20Registration_0.pdf, 2.
12. “Voter pre-registration,” Fair Vote, Accessed November 2017, http://www.fairvote.org/voter_pre_registration#facts_about_voter_pre_registration.
13. “Madison landlords required to supply voter registration forms,” Wisconsin Radio Network, July 21, 2012.
14. Angela Migally and Susan Liss, “Small donor

- matching funds: The NYC election experience,” The Brennan Center, 2010, <http://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/Small%20Donor%20Matching%20Funds-The%20NYC%20Election%20Experience.pdf>; Elisabeth Glen, et al., “Donor diversity through public matching funds,” The Brennan Center and the Campaign Finance Institute, 2012, http://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/publications/DonorDiversityReport_WEB.PDF; “Democracy voucher program,” City of Seattle, Accessed November 2017, <http://www.seattle.gov/democracyvoucher>.
15. Correspondence with Fairfax Votes Campaign, March 2017.
 16. In 2013, the Supreme Court in *Shelby County v. Holder*, 570 U.S. 2 (2013), struck down the coverage formula in Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act, which designated the jurisdictions with a history of discriminatory voting practices that were legally required under Section 5 to pre-clear any changes to their election laws with the Department of Justice.
 17. The Rising American Electorate refers to Millennials (ages 18–34), people of color (defined by the census) and unmarried women, which now account for more than half of the voting age population in the US. See: “The Rising American Electorate,” The Voter Participation Center, Accessed November 2017, <https://www.voterparticipation.org/our-mission/the-rising-american-electorate/>.
 18. “New voting restrictions in America,” The Brennan Center, Accessed November 2017, <https://www.brennancenter.org/new-voting-restrictions-america>.
 19. *Ibid.*
 20. Przybyla, “Trump directs panel to tackle voter ‘fraud’ during commission’s first session”; Montgomery, “Trump’s ‘Election Integrity’ Commission: The lies and cold, hard facts.”
 21. Pema Levy, “Pence’s perch atop Trump’s voter fraud commission hints at suppression efforts,” *Mother Jones*, May 12, 2017, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/05/how-will-trump-turn-voter-fraud-accusations-voter-suppression/>.
 22. Ari Berman, “Trump election commissioner sought to exclude Democrats and ‘Mainstream Republicans,’” *Mother Jones*, September 13, 2017, <http://www.motherjones.com/politics/2017/09/trump-election-commissioner-sought-to-exclude-democrats-and-mainstream-republicans/>.
 23. Montgomery, “Trump’s ‘Election Integrity’ Commission: The lies and cold, hard facts.”
 24. In May 2017, Iowa passed a law that will require voter ID, restrict registration efforts, and impose new burdens on Election Day registration and early and absentee voting; Arkansas passed bills to bring back voter ID; North Dakota enacted legislation to re-impose a voter ID requirement; Indiana enacted a law that will purge registered voters from the rolls; Montana’s house and senate passed a bill that prevents civic groups and civic groups from helping other to vote absentee by collecting and delivering ballots; and Georgia’s passed a law that makes voting registration more difficult. See: “Voting laws roundup,” The Brennan Center.
 25. Vice Chair of Trump’s election commission, Kris Kobach, is the primary advocate for state laws requiring eligible voters to provide documentary proof of citizenship to register. Jessica Kwong “Trump election fraud panel leader sought to weaken federal voting rights, documents show,” *Newsweek*, October 6, 2017, <http://www.newsweek.com/trump-election-fraud-panel-leader-sought-weaken-federal-voting-rights-679962>; Bryan Lowry, “Federal court blocks Kansas voting rule,” *Wichita Eagle*, September 9, 2016, <http://www.kansas.com/news/politics-government/article100999387.html>; Editorial Board, “The man who may disenfranchise millions,” *Washington Post*, July 30, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-man-who-may-disenfranchise-millions/2017/07/30/47e54f64-7250-11e7-8f39-eeb7d3a2d304_story.html?utm_term=.4a2389f7334a.
 26. In 2016—without the full protections of the Voting Rights Act and with an increase of partisan-motivated state legislatures pursuing voter restrictions—fourteen states passed new laws restricting the right to vote, and states including Ohio and Georgia inappropriately purged registered voters off of the voting rolls. See: “New voter restrictions in America,” The Brennan Center; Liz Kennedy and Danielle Root, “Keeping voters off the rolls,” Center for American Progress, July 18, 2017, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2017/07/18/435914/keeping-voters-off-rolls/>. In recent years, a handful of states have passed laws imposing documentary proof of citizenship, which requires that eligible citizens must provide proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate or passport, in order to register to vote. The Supreme Court found that the National Voter Registration Act (NVRA) preempts these state law efforts when registering on the federal form, so states may not enforce these additional barriers. See: Michael Slater, “Victory in proof of citizenship case,” Project Vote, November 7, 2014, <http://www.projectvote.org/blog/victory-in-proof-of-citizenship-case/>.
 27. Liz Kennedy et al, “Automatic voter registration: Finding America’s missing voters,” Demos, 2015, http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/AVR_0.pdf, 19-20.
 28. Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford, “Report of the task force on the federal election system,” National Election Commission, <http://election2000.law.stanford.edu/wp-content/uploads/2013/03/task-force-reports-to-accompany-the-report-of-the-national-commission2001.pdf>, Chapter 2.

29. Brenda Wright, "Why are 51 million eligible Americans not registered to vote?" Demos, November 1, 2012, <http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/FreeTheVote-Brief.pdf>, 2.
30. "Voting and Registration in the Election of 2016," Table 1, US Census Bureau.
31. *Ibid.*
32. In a 2009 study, the Brennan Center for Justice at NYU School of Law found that 18 out of 20 countries and provinces have registration rates of more than 90 percent of eligible voters. The study looks at 16 countries and four Canadian provinces. Countries were selected based on a variety of factors, including high voter turnout rates and accessibility of information. See: Jennifer S. Rosenberg and Margaret Chen, "Expanding democracy: voter registration around the world," The Brennan Center, 2009, <https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/legacy/publications/ExpandingDemocracy.pdf>, 2; Wendy R. Weiser, "Automatic voter registration boosts political participation," The Brennan Center, January 29, 2016, <https://www.brennancenter.org/blog/automatic-voter-registration-boosts-political-participation>.
33. "Voting and registration in the election of 2016," Tables 4b, 7, 11, US Census Bureau.
34. "Voting and registration in the election of 2016," Table 2, US Census Bureau.
35. *Ibid.*
36. *Ibid.*
37. *Ibid.*
38. *Ibid.*
39. California, Colorado, Connecticut, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Maine, Maryland, Minnesota, Montana, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Wisconsin, Wyoming and the District of Columbia have now enacted the reform. See: Same-day registration," Demos and Project Vote, 2014, <http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/SameDayRegistration-2015.pdf>, 1.
40. Wendy R. Weiser, "Automatic voter registration boosts political participation."
41. Liz Kennedy et al, "Automatic voter registration: Finding America's missing voters," Demos, 2015, http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/AVR_0.pdf, 5.
42. Rob Griffin, Paul Gronke, Tova Wang, and Liz Kennedy, "Who votes with automatic voter registration?" Center for American Progress, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2017/06/07/433677/votes-automatic-voter-registration/>.
43. Reid Wilson, "New report finds that voter turnout in 2016 topped 2012," The Hill, March 16, 2017, <http://thehill.com/homenews/state-watch/324206-new-report-finds-that-voter-turnout-in-2016-topped-2012>.
44. Rob Griffin, Paul Gronke, Tova Wang, and Liz Kennedy, "Who votes with automatic voter registration?" Center for American Progress, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/democracy/reports/2017/06/07/433677/votes-automatic-voter-registration/>.
45. "Increasing compliance with section 7 of the Voter Registration Act," US Commission on Civil Rights, September 7, 2016, <http://www.usccr.gov/pubs/NVRA-09-07-16.pdf>.
46. *Ibid.*
47. "A broken promise: Agency-based voter registration in New York City," The Center for Popular Democracy et al, October 2014, <https://populardemocracy.org/news/broken-promise-agency-based-voter-registration-new-york-city>, 4.
48. "Youth voting: The 2016 youth vote," Circle, Accessed November 2017, <http://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/>.
49. William H. Frey, "Diversity defines the millennial generation," Brookings, June 28, 2016, <https://www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2016/06/28/diversity-defines-the-millennial-generation/>.
50. "More Americans of all ages spurning driver's licenses," University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute, January 20, 2016, <http://www.umtri.umich.edu/what-were-doing/news/more-americans-all-ages-spurning-drivers-licenses>.
51. "U.S. cities are home to 62.7 percent of the U.S. Population, but comprise just 3.5 percent of land area," U.S. Census.
52. Hickey and Weisenthal, "Half of the United States lives in these counties."
53. "Increasing compliance with Section 7 of the Voter Registration Act," US Commission on Civil Rights.
54. "A broken promise," The Center for Popular Democracy et al, 1.
55. *Ibid.*, 4.
56. "High school voter registration FAQ," Fair Vote, Accessed November 2017, http://archive.fairvote.org/media/rtv/HS%20Reg%20FAQ_July31.pdf.
57. "Youth voting: The 2016 youth vote," Circle, Accessed November 2017, <http://civicyouth.org/quick-facts/youth-voting/>.
58. John B. Holbein and D. Sunshine Hillygus, "Making Young Voters: The Impact of Preregistration on Youth Turnout," American Journal of Political Science, Volume 61, Issue 2, 505–507, March 2015; See: J. Mijin Cha and Liz Kennedy, "Millions to the polls," 2.,
59. "Voter pre-registration," Fair Vote.
60. *Ibid.*
61. "VRM in states: Pre-registration in states," The Brennan Center, March 24, 2017, <https://www.brennancenter.org/analysis/vrm-states-pre->

- registration-states.
62. Ibid.
 63. “Madison landlords required to supply voter registration forms,” Wisconsin Radio Network, July 21, 2012.
 64. “Expanding voting rights,” Local Progress, September 2013, <http://localprogress.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/09/Expanding-Voting-Rights.pdf>.
 65. Migally and Liss, “Small donor matching funds: The NYC election experience,” 1.
 66. Migally and Liss, “Small donor matching funds: The NYC election experience”; Glen, et al., “Donor diversity through public matching funds.”
 67. “Democracy voucher program,” City of Seattle.
 68. Ibid.
 69. “First Look: Seattle’s Democracy Voucher Program: Reducing the Power of Big Money and Expanding Political Participation” Win/Win Network and Every Voice Center, November 15, 2017, Accessed November, 2017, <http://honestelectionsseattle.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/FINAL-Seattle-Post-Election-Report-1.pdf>.
 70. Ibid.
 71. “Permanent early voting list information,” Maricopa County Recorder, Accessed November 2017, <https://recorder.maricopa.gov/earlyvotingballot/permanentevlistinfo.aspx>.
 72. “A broken promise,” Center for Popular Democracy et al.
 73. New York City Charter, Chapter 46, § 1057(a).
 74. “A broken promise,” The Center for Popular Democracy et al.
 75. Ibid, 2.
 76. Ibid.
 77. “Int 0493-2014,” New York City Council, 2014; “Int 0356-2014,” New York City Council, 2014.
 78. Correspondence Mayor’s Office of Operations, February 15, 2017.
 79. Correspondence with the Mayor’s Office of Operations, August 8, 2016 and October 3, 2016.
 80. “Mayor de Blasio expands voter registration forms to include six new languages, ensuring most limited English proficient New Yorkers can more easily vote at the polls in November,” Office of the Mayor, New York City, November 20, 2016, <http://www1.nyc.gov/office-of-the-mayor/news/758-16/mayor-de-blasio-expands-voter-registration-forms-include-six-new-languages-ensuring-most>.
 81. In November, New York City Council passed legislation to implement online voter registration. See: “Online voter registration to pass New York City Council,” New York City Council Member Benjamin J. Kallos, November 14, 2017, <https://benkallos.com/press-release/online-voter-registration-pass-new-york-city-council/>.
 82. Correspondence with the Fairfax Votes Campaign, March 2017.
 83. “Enforcing high school voter registration laws,” Texas Civil Rights Project, Accessed November, 2017, <https://www.texascivilrightsproject.org/en/our-work/voting-rights/enforcing-high-school-voter-registration-laws/>.
 84. A state’s constitution and statutes will determine the scope of local authority to pass policy on voting and voter registration. A legal analysis should evaluate what powers local jurisdictions have to pass voting and registration-expanding reforms and if state law restricts localities’ ability to act in these areas (i.e. preempted by state law).
 85. Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 16-134; 9-823 (2016); Ariz. Rev. Stat. § 16-131 (2017) (Arizona state law already provides for multiple registration locations “government offices, fire stations, public libraries and other locations open to the general public.”)
 86. Ibid.
 87. Fla. Stat. § 97.0525 (2016).
 88. Florida’s online voter registration portal is available at <https://registertovoteflorida.gov/en/Registration/CMS>.
 89. Fla. Stat. § 97.052(1)(b)(7) (2016).
 90. Fla. Stat. § 97.052(2016); “Engaging the youth electorate through high school voter registration,” Project Vote, 2010, <http://www.projectvote.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/HighSchoolRegistrationFactSheet-July2010.pdf>.
 91. Fla. Stat. § 97.041(1)(b) (2016).
 92. Chartered municipalities can enact ordinances authorizing voter registration at municipal agencies as an exercise of their local home rule authority provided for by Ohio law. Ohio Const. art. XVIII, § 3
 93. Ohio state law already designates certain agencies to provide opportunities to register to vote—including libraries, county treasurers, and agencies that distribute public benefits, like disability, Medicaid, food stamps, and financial assistance – and does not limit voter registration to these specified locations. Ohio Rev. Code Ann §§ 3503.10–.11, 329.051, 5115.05, 5101.54 (2015).
 94. Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3503.29 (“Training and registration of compensated voter registrants.”)
 95. See *ibid.* For instance, a city agency registration ordinance could include the requirement that the city ensure that all city staff that are charged with voter registration as part of their duties are trained and registered in compliance with the rules set forth by the Secretary of State under See Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3503.29.
 96. Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3503.10(B),(G) (2015).

97. Ohio Rev. Code Ann. § 3503.10(G)
98. While this report covers all Texas municipalities, it aims to specifically cover the following home rule charter cities: Austin, Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio.
99. Tex. Const. art. XI, § 5; *Proctor v. Andrews*, 972 S.W.2d 729, 733 (Tex. 1998); *City of Houston v. Bates*, 406 S.W.3d 539, 546 (Tex. 2013) (citing *Dallas Merchant's & Concessionaire's Ass'n v. Dallas*, 852 S.W.2d 490-91 (Tex. 1993)).
100. Tex. Elec. Code Ann. § 13.045 (“[T]he chief executive of a department of a city with approval of the city’s governing body, or a county officer may permit an officer or employee under the chief executive’s or officer’s supervision who is a volunteer deputy registrar to engage in official registration activities during working hours on the premises under the chief executive’s or officer’s control.”).
101. See gen. Tex. Elec. Code Ann. §§ 13.031-48
102. The Texas Election Code requires the principal of a public or private high school or the principal’s designee to serve as a deputy registrar for the county in which the school is located. The high school deputy registrar is responsible for distributing and collecting voter registration forms from students and employees at the school and is required to distribute applications at least twice per year. Tex. Elec. Code Ann. § 13.046.
103. Beth Stevens et. al, “The high school vote: How Texas fails to engage the next generation of voters,” Texas Civil Rights Project and Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under the Law, September 2017, <https://www.texascivilrightsproject.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/HSVR-Report.pdf>; Jim Malewitz and Alexa Ura, “Principals aren’t registering High Schoolers to vote. Texas is turning to superintendents,” *The Texas Tribune*, September 15, 2017, <https://www.texastribune.org/2017/09/15/principals-arent-registering-high-schoolers-vote/>.
104. Tex. Elec. Code Ann. § 13.046.
105. Milwaukee was the municipality principally considered for this analysis.
106. See gen. Wis. Const. art. XI, § 3(1); Wis. Stat. § 62.11(5) (2016); Wis. Stat. §§ 6.28 (1)(b) (2016) (Registration “may be made throughout the year at the office of the city board of election commissioners, at the office of the municipal clerk, at the office of the county clerk, or at other locations provided by the board of election commissioners or the common council in cities over 500,000 population or by either or both the municipal clerk, or the common council, village or town board in all other municipalities.)
107. Wis. Stat. § 6.30(5) (2016).
108. “A broken promise,” The Center for Popular Democracy et al, 4.