



# DEMOCRACY

## INITIATIVE

## Petition Engagement Guide

### Democracy Initiative's #DontMessWithOurVote! Petition

**You have a critical part to play in raising awareness about voting rights and building grassroots demand for 21st Century Democracy.** With fewer than 100 days until the next midterm election, democracy is facing an uphill battle in 2018. As many as 40 million Americans who voted in 2016 will not cast a ballot in the 2018 midterm election—with two thirds of those drop-off voters being voters of color, young people, and the working class.

Making matters worse, between the 2014 and 2016 elections, roughly 16 million names nationwide were purged from voter rolls. Several new risks have emerged in voter purges in the recent year:

- The growth of the flawed interstate crosscheck system with database of 100 million voters, purports to detect possible cases of people voting in multiple states but gets it wrong 99% of the time
- Increase number of states scouring their rolls to identify alleged noncitizens registered to vote
- Conservative activist groups have sued states and local jurisdictions to force them to purge their rolls more aggressively

### SHOWING OUR SOLIDARITY

**Our coalition has been vocal about the need to demonstrate our collective power by mobilizing our 40 million members across the country to create a reflective democracy that works for all.** The voting rights petition is intended to provide DI partners with a tool to raise awareness and educate members on election preparedness between now and the election and help facilitate deeper engagement around 21st century democracy in 2019.

**Collectively, our goal is for 100,000 people to lift up the vision of an inclusive democracy. We want to build a base to show elected officials we stand together to protect our right to vote.** Unifying around a set of principles and engaging our members by linking democracy to the issues they care about, we can collectively broaden their understanding. Participation in the democratic process means taking action leading up to and beyond Election Day.

# The Democracy Initiative invites partners to sign-on and share the Don't Mess With Our Vote! Petition.

## TAKE ACTION

Please send 1-2 email blasts to your membership sharing the voting rights petition to show our unified strength. The DI encourages you to craft an email that makes the most sense for your members and will provide a specific URL link with the pledge for your organization to move members from education to action. We can create a specific URL link is unique and secures captured data of members available ONLY to your organization.

### How to think about prioritizing email blasts:

**STEP 1: Invite your national list to participate as part of your civic engagement program by sending the voting rights petition in an email.** Ask your members to sign the petition for a democracy that works for all. Begin to identify members within your organization passionate about democracy and infrequent voters who are vulnerable to voter purging. Potential hooks include anniversary of the Voting Rights Act, National Voter Registration Day, and Election Protection.

**STEP 2: Send the voting rights petition in an email to your active campaign states in Florida, Maryland, Michigan, and Missouri.** Connect the ongoing democracy campaigns to the need for us all to join together in solidarity for a democracy that works for all. As you continue to engage your members on these specific democracy campaigns ballot initiative, invite them to also sign a pledge to vote or send them information about voting in their state to ensure they are equipped to vote this fall.

**STEP 3: Send the voting rights petition in an email to states where purges have happened, or states you have identified for a 2018 voting rights campaign.** In states with voter purging procedures (Ohio, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Oregon, Oklahoma, West Virginia and Montana), or states that participate in the flawed interstate crosscheck system, your members are on the front lines defending democracy. The pledge is an opportunity to call members together in action to stay vigilant.

**STEP 4: Share the petition on social media.** You can use our sample tweets, FB posts, and images in this guide, which also includes a sample email to your members.

