

**Center for Biological Diversity \* Clean Water Action \* Climate Hawks Vote  
Earthjustice \* Earthworks \* Friends of the Earth \* Future Coalition  
Greenpeace USA \* Hip Hop Caucus \* League of Conservation Voters  
Natural Resources Defense Council \* Sierra Club  
Southern Utah Wilderness Alliance \* The Climate Reality Project  
Union of Concerned Scientists**

May 14, 2020

We, the undersigned environmental organizations, urge you to prioritize, in response to the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the appropriation of at least \$4 billion in state funding to ensure safe and secure elections in 2020. Protecting our air, water, climate, and communities are inextricably linked to the protection of our democracy, and we must work toward solutions that solve these issues in lockstep.

Our organizations believe we need a democracy that works for everyone in order to overcome this public health crisis, as well as to address the ongoing threats to our climate and communities. All communities, especially those who carry the greatest burden of environmental injustice, must have equal access to the pillars of our democracy, from equitable participation in elections, an equal seat at the table in government decision making, and equal access to justice in fair and independent courts.

We support immediate and comprehensive election funding that will protect the voice of communities who often see the worst of climate change and environmental degradation: communities of color, low-income communities, immigrant communities, native populations, the disabled, and young people in particular. These are the same communities suffering disproportionately from the COVID-19 pandemic. Our elected officials must ensure our public health and that everyone can register, cast a ballot, and have their vote counted. Rather than asking millions of voters to follow a one-size-fits-all approach, policymakers must give voters multiple options for casting a vote in this year's elections. This will be vital for people without Internet and mail access, those who need assistance voting in their primary language, and people with disabilities who rely on voting machines to vote. Efforts like these not only help prepare our states for elections this year but help to safeguard a more fair and equitable democracy moving forward.

The dual crises of rapid climate change and the global spread of the coronavirus has made it more clear than ever that proactive measures are needed to ensure that every voice is heard. We do not, and should not, have to choose between public health and a functioning democracy. We must advance our democracy so that it is representative of and responsive to 21st-century issues and all the people that call this country home. This means bold, comprehensive, democratic action to create an inclusive system that's responsive to all communities, no matter where they come from, how much money they have, and/or the color of their skin. Democracy means a government of, by, and for the people. All people.