



December 7, 2020

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of our 75 partner organizations representing more than 45 million people, we write in strong support of the *For the People Act* (H.R.1/S.949), which Speaker Pelosi has pledged to introduce on the first day of the new Congress. We hope you will become a champion of this important legislation and ensure that it is a top priority for early passage in 2021. We also urge you to support and prioritize passage of two vital companion measures, the *John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act* (H.R.4) and legislation granting statehood to Washington, D.C. (H.R.51).

The *For the People Act* is a transformational measure that is vitally important to DI partner organizations and their constituents, including labor unions, environmental groups, and social justice and civil rights organizations. It will bring us one critical step closer to repairing our political system, revitalizing our democracy, and fulfilling the promise of our country's ideals. Our partners bring to this fight lived experience on the front lines of economic challenge and racial injustice, and a profound understanding that this is not just about democracy as an end in itself; it is a necessary step to achieving social and economic justice and building a better world for us all.

This past election shined a spotlight on critical vulnerabilities in our democracy. In the face of a deadly pandemic, people voted in record numbers despite orchestrated voter suppression designed to disenfranchise millions of Americans and bankrolled by corporate interests and the wealthy few. No one should ever have to choose between their health and their right to vote. And voters should not have to compete with wealthy corporate interests to have their say.

We need immediate structural changes beginning with those in the *For the People Act* to ensure that the people have a seat at the governing table and a voice on the essential issues that affect our lives. Without structural democracy reform, our nation will remain unable to fully address important substantive priorities for the American people, such as access to affordable healthcare, protecting the environment, ending racial injustice, protecting the rights of workers and creating millions of good-paying jobs.

The common-sense reforms in H.R. 1 are deeply popular and have passed in many states and localities, often with bipartisan support. These reforms will:

- 1) Protect and strengthen the right to vote and be fairly represented;
- 2) Blunt the influence of big money in politics; and,
- 3) Implement anti-corruption measures to help restore faith that government can accomplish the people's business.

We ask you to ensure that the *For the People Act* is a first priority when the new Congress is convened and to also assure the swift passage of the *John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act* and the *Washington, D.C. Admission Act*.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Lamson
Interim Executive Director
Democracy Initiative