

DEFEND THE VOTE





DEFEND THE VOTE AND DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND FIGHT TO PRESERVE OUR MOST VALUABLE AMERICAN FREEDOM: THE RIGHT TO VOTE.

To that end, the electoral operation, Defend the Vote PAC (DTV) this year launched its Action Fund (DTV-AF), a 501c(4) organization, to leverage its resources, communications, and political relationships in support of pro-democracy, pro-voting policies, and to hold members accountable for their commitment to voting rights. Specifically, DTV-AF is advocating for federal comprehensive democracy reform legislation—like the Freedom to Vote Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act—and adequate and consistent election funding through Congress’ annual spending bills. DTV-AF is also working in key states to provide programmatic support to organizations that protect, recruit, and train election officials, poll workers, voters and volunteers.

DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND PRIORITY: PASSAGE OF FEDERAL DEMOCRACY LEGISLATION

While recent elections have shown that Americans and those overseeing its elections are willing to stand up for our democracy, [existential threats remain and continue to evolve and grow](#) ahead of the 2024 election. Whether it's the continued existence of the Big Lie, the rise of political violence and partisan election interference, or wide state-level passage of restrictive voting laws and extreme gerrymandered maps, it is clear that existing federal and legal guardrails are not enough to ensure the protection of the freedom to vote and our elections.

Both [election officials](#) and the [public at-large](#) continue to be overwhelmingly concerned about these growing threats to democracy, and want Congress to pass federal legislation to safeguard it. Enactment of the Freedom to Vote Act and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act will address the biggest problems currently facing our democracy by setting national standards to protect access to the vote, stop restrictive and racist voter suppression laws, end partisan gerrymandering, and create safeguards against subversion of the electoral process. Simply put, these bills will protect America's democracy.

FREEDOM TO VOTE ACT H.R. 11/S.1

- Sets standards for safe, convenient practices like early voting, automatic voter registration, and vote-by mail;
- Adds new safeguards against election sabotage, such as partisan efforts to remove local election administrators and harass poll workers and voters;
- Bans gerrymandering by requiring non-partisan, transparent, and protected redistricting; and
- Shines a light on secret political spending and gets big money out of politics.

JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT H.R. 14/S.4

- Restores and strengthens key sections of the Voting Rights Act, including an updated formula to determine areas subject to federal oversight;
- Permits courts to bail jurisdictions into federal preclearance that are found to have violated race-based voting discrimination;
- Creates a new practice-based preclearance formula; and
- Eliminates the heightened standard recently created by SCOTUS for challenging voter suppression.

DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND PRIORITY: INCREASED ELECTION FUNDING

Federal funding for elections has been irregular, unpredictable, and insufficient, making it difficult for election administrators to use the funds efficiently or effectively. In 2022 Congress appropriated \$75 million in HAVA election security funds - a stark contrast to the [up to \\$50 billion](#) experts estimate is needed to adequately fund U.S. elections over the next decade. Roughly [three-fourths of local election officials](#) say they need more funding to address their growing needs, and a 2023 Citizen Data poll found that nearly [70% of Americans](#) believe the federal government should play a bigger role than state or local governments in funding elections.

Similarly, the U.S. Election Assistance Commission (EAC) - the main federal commission charged with aiding election officials - has faced over a decade of significant fiscal constraints, as well as Congressional [attempts to try to terminate it and cut or eliminate its funding](#). Even as the events over the past few elections have made clear the necessity of the EAC's role and functions, the Commission has continued to stress its need for more consistent and adequate support from Congress to help address the growing challenges facing elections.

EXPERTS ESTIMATE UP TO

\$50

BILLION

IS NEEDED TO

ADEQUATELY FUND U.S.

ELECTIONS OVER THE

NEXT DECADE.

DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND PRIORITY: PROTECT ELECTION WORKERS

No one has been [more of a target](#), or brunt more of the impact, of the attacks on America's democracy than its election workers.

Under a constant barrage of threats, [one in three election officials and workers](#) have quit their positions due to threats and fears for their safety. [52 percent of election jurisdictions](#) reported that it was difficult to obtain poll workers for the 2020 election, and [20 percent of local election officials](#) said they were at least somewhat unlikely to stay on until the 2024 election, with at least one election official estimated to quit every day between the 2020 and 2024 elections. As a result, jurisdictions are being forced to fill many of these positions with people with little or no previous experience, including at least [15 new chief election officials](#) starting the job this year. Similarly, more than half of election officials say the attacks they have been facing make it harder to recruit and retain new poll workers.

This hollowing out the ranks of election workers has also provided an opening for anti-democratic forces. In 2022, the Republican National Committee had prolific election conspiracy theorists [pilot an "election integrity" operation](#) that recruited and coached thousands of poll workers in battleground states, and it has reported that it intends to replicate its efforts in 2024. Adding to this danger are the [prominent election deniers elected this year](#) as their state's GOP party chair, a position that often plays a large role in choosing poll workers and watchers.



PARTY LEADERS HAVE CENSURED AND REPLACED OFFICIALS

who refused to bow down to their demands to overturn free and fair elections.



LEGISLATORS HAVE INTRODUCED BILLS TO IMPOSE CRIMINAL PENALTIES ON ELECTION OFFICIALS AND WORKERS

for taking steps to improve voting access and education.



OFFICIALS HAVE FACED DEATH THREATS,

harassment, abuse, and even armed vigilantes showing up at ballot drop boxes.



POLITICIANS ARE ATTEMPTING TO INTERFERE

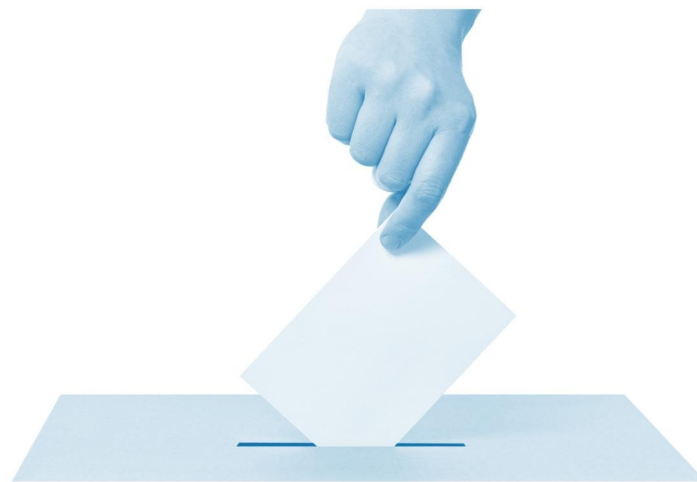
with, and even outright strip, election officials of their duties so they can take over these powers to push partisan agendas and outcomes, with over half of local election officials worried about political interference.

DEFEND THE VOTE AND DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND ADVOCATES FOR: FEDERAL DEMOCRACY LEGISLATION AND ELECTION FUNDING

DTV-AF's federal advocacy efforts are focused on building support for comprehensive democracy reform legislation like the Freedom to Vote Act and John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act; and for federal election funding reform, including sustained funding for the Election Assistance Commission and for the Help America Vote Act funds it distributes to states.

DTV and DTV-AF's ongoing Hill advocacy efforts have included meetings, briefings, and various other forms of engagement with leadership, Members and staff, caucuses, and other key stakeholders leading on these issues.

In particular, DTV and DTV-AF have focused on partnerships with diverse sets of congressional factions that represent marginalized voting communities and that are heavily focused on democracy issues, including, but not limited to, the Task Force on Strengthening Democracy and the Congressional Tri-Caucus (Congressional Black Caucus, Congressional Hispanic Caucus, and Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus).



2024 DTV & DTV-AF OBJECTIVES



STRATEGICALLY CONNECT POLICY AND ADVOCACY WORK

By electing and reelecting pro democracy officials at the state and federal level.



EXPAND AND DEEPEN RELATIONSHIPS

with Congressional Leadership – both House and Senate, key committees, and leading pro-democracy policymakers - to advance legislation that will protect and fund federal and state elections.



SERVE AS A KEY CONVENER

for diverse sets of Congressional Members and factions that have demonstrated prioritization of and leadership on democracy reform issues, including the Task Force on Strengthening Democracy, the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC), Congressional Hispanic Caucus (CHC), Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), and House and Senate Frontline Democrats.

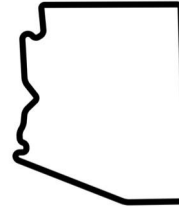
DEFEND THE VOTE ACTION FUND ENGAGES STAKEHOLDER SUPPORT: FOR ELECTIONS AND ELECTION WORKERS

Defend the Vote Action Fund is launching multi-faceted campaigns in target areas to aid and partner with leading in-state organizations that are working to address the most pressing issues impacting elections and election workers. Leveraging DTV-AF's expertise and on-the-ground relationships, DTV-AF's efforts are strategically focused on providing essential services and resources including, but not limited to: the recruitment, training, and support of election workers; stopping political violence, intimidation, and misinformation; and voter registration and education.

DTV-AF is also supporting partners advocating for aligned policy goals in priority states and counties, including protections for election workers, voters, and volunteers; and funding to help recruit, train, and protect election officials and poll workers.

This work is designated for battleground states that will be at the center of determining the outcomes of the upcoming elections, and that are all but guaranteed to continue to face rising threats - making DTV-AF's early investments critical to ensuring pro-democracy allies are best armed to combat them.

ARIZONA



MICHIGAN



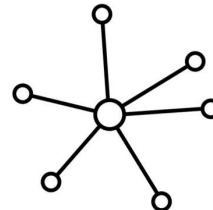
NEVADA



DTV-AF'S EFFORTS ARE STRATEGICALLY FOCUSED ON PRIORITY AREAS IN THE ABOVE STATES, WHICH HAVE SEEN:

- **Armed** and other threatening voter intimidation tactics;
- The target of **anti-democratic** poll worker recruitment efforts;
- Election officials **leaving in record numbers**;
- **Big Lie forces** that tried to overturn the 2020 election; and
- Politicians trying to **stop the counting** of valid votes and take control over elections.

DTV-AF OBJECTIVES



Support and coordinate with high-performing in-state partner organizations in critical areas of the country to safeguard election workers, voters and voting access.

DEFEND THE VOTE ELECTS: PRO-DEMOCRACY CHAMPIONS THROUGH POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

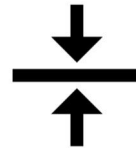
Defend the Vote (DTV) PAC is dedicated to electing pro-voting candidates, up and down the ballot, who will preserve our democracy by fighting to safeguard free and fair elections, protect the right to vote, and increase voter access.

Founded in the fall of 2021, Defend the Vote PAC helps elect candidates who prioritize comprehensive voting rights and democracy reform legislation. In 2022, DTV's first cycle, the PAC invested over \$1.1 million to support pro-voting [House](#) and [Senate](#) candidates. Of the candidates DTV supported, 55 won their House races (including 41 incumbents and 14 Red to Blue candidates) and five won Senate races (including 4 incumbents).

DTV will more than double its investment in the 2024 cycle and plans to invest over \$1.5 million directly to House candidates and over \$1.3 million to Senate candidates. These investments are strategically placed to focus on Frontline, Red to Blue, and House Leadership races, as well as priority Senate contests in Nevada, Montana and Wisconsin. DTV will also make strategic investments to support attorneys general, secretaries of state, and election official races throughout the country.

DTV OBJECTIVES

2024 ELECTION CYCLE



ALIGN DTV-AF'S LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY

with DTV's political program, maximizing virtuous dynamics and capitalizing on opportunities to lift-up pro-democracy champions



CONTINUE TO PRIORITIZE AND SUPPORT VOTING CHAMPIONS

by nearly tripling DTV's \$1.1M electoral investment in 2022, to over \$2.8M in 2024.



CULTIVATE NEW VOTING RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY CHAMPIONS

through strategic support of emergent candidates in Red to Blue races, districts disproportionately impacted by voter suppression, and Black and Brown candidates for Congress..

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