

FLORIDA NEEDS ITS OWN VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Florida has a longstanding history and ongoing record of racial discrimination in voting and beyond. In the last ten years alone, Florida has passed several [anti-voter laws](#) and actively targeted fair and transparent democracy.

Florida can make history by enacting the Harry T. and Harriette V. Moore Voting Rights Act of Florida ([SB 1582](#) / [HB 1409](#), “FLVRA”) which would be only the second State Voting Rights Act in the South. The FLVRA would strengthen democracy for everyone in the Sunshine state and remove numerous obstacles to the ballot box that eligible voters of color currently face, and that have burdened voting rights throughout the state’s troubled history.

Florida Voters Face Persistent Barriers and Discrimination

Florida voters of color face severe racial discrimination in voting. Anti-voter laws and government decisions continue to result in racial disparities in voter registration and voter turnout. [Anti-voter laws](#) have also created barriers to every step of the voting process, including restrictions on drop boxes, restrictions on vote-by-mail, a ranked choice voting ban, restrictions on election funding, and harsh penalties on organizations conducting community voter registration. Returning citizens, who had their right to vote restored by Amendment 4 to the Florida Constitution, [are now left to discern](#) whether they have paid all outstanding financial obligations specified within a sentencing document before registering to vote.

Conditions that can foster voting discrimination — such as unfairly drawn districts that weaken the voting power of Black voters and other voters of color, inaccessible polling locations, insufficient language assistance for voters who don’t speak English comfortably, and outright voter intimidation — endure throughout Florida. And many of Florida’s counties and cities use at-large election structures or district maps that impair the ability of voters of color to elect candidates of their choice or influence the outcome of elections.



The FLVRA Will Protect Voters of Color and Strengthen Florida’s Democracy

If enacted, the FLVRA will strengthen democracy in Florida. **Key elements of the FLVRA include:**

Confronting vote suppression and vote dilution that weaken or drown out Black and Brown voters’ voices.

Launching a preclearance program administered by a new independent Florida Voting Rights Act Commission.

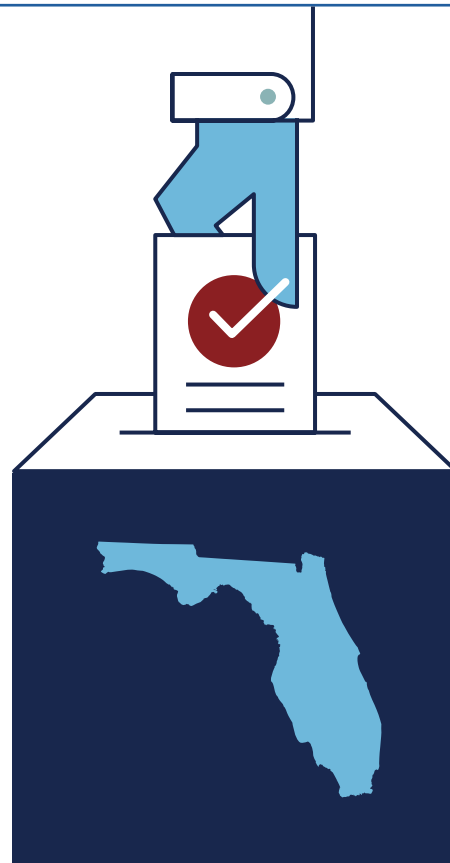
Expanding language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency so every voter can participate effectively.

Implementing a central public repository for election and demographic data with the goal of fostering transparent, evidence-based practices in election administration.

Combatting voter intimidation, deception, and obstruction with new tools to empower voters to protect their rights.

Establishing a paid holiday for Election Day, same-day voter registration, automatic voter registration through the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles.

Protecting returning citizens from unfair prosecutions by creating a centralized database for returning citizens to determine voter eligibility.



The Time is Now

The continued and escalating threats of racial discrimination in voting in Florida make this a perilous time for our democracy. The Florida Voting Rights Act would go a long way to counteract both recent and historical efforts to diminish the voting power of Black Floridians. Florida can and should lead in protecting the right to vote and promoting inclusive democracy by adopting the Florida Voting Rights Act.

