



STATE OF MICHIGAN  
JOCELYN BENSON, SECRETARY OF STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
LANSING

May 10, 2021

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar  
United State Senate  
425 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
United State Senate  
260 Russell Senate Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Klobuchar and Ranking Member Blunt:

I am writing in strong support of the substitute amendment to S.1 and with gratitude to the collaborative, bipartisan approach with which the Senate Rules Committee has proceeded to develop the amendment in consultation with election administrators across the country. At a time when many state legislatures are carrying out a national, coordinated, and partisan attack on American citizens' freedom to vote, enacting laws to undo the very policies that worked to ensure the 2020 election was the most secure and accessible in our nation's history, we at the state and local level are in dire need of the federal government to exert its constitutional authority to provide a clear "floor" of voting protections for every American citizen.

This is one of the reasons I write you today in support of the *For the People Act*. While states always have and always will serve as the laboratories of democracy, testing innovations to make our elections more efficient, convenient and secure, S.1 and the substitute amendment would put in place critical, minimum standards needed to protect our democracy and every citizen's freedom to vote.

As you know, in Michigan we have already demonstrated that many of the components of the Act can be implemented effectively and efficiently when states utilize political will, funding, data, and national best practices. Indeed, this is precisely how we implemented automatic voter registration, same-day voter registration, no-excuse absentee voting, an independent citizens redistricting commission and more in the months after I was sworn into office. If we can do all of this in one election cycle, in the midst of a global pandemic and during one of the most significant and highly scrutinized election cycles in our lifetime, every state in the country can do the same in advance of future elections.

And voters want these reforms. Sixty-five percent of Americans support automatic voter registration, 64% support Election Day voter registration, 69% support the restoration of voting rights to people who have served felony sentences, and 71% believe all voters should have the

option to vote early or absentee.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, Michigan voters have demonstrated their support for these measures time and again. In 2018, they voted two to one in favor of a ballot initiative that enshrined these rights in our state constitution. In 2019 nearly 10,000 Michigan citizens applied to serve on the redistricting commission, and in 2020 we saw record-setting voter turnout, with a majority of citizens choosing to cast their ballot absentee.

The For the People Act is our best chance, and the U.S. Senate our greatest hope, to stop the rollback of voting rights and ensure the voice and vote of every citizen – no matter where they live or who they vote for – is protected. I urge you to advance this legislation and stand ready to assist with supporting its implementation here in Michigan, and nationwide.

Sincerely,



Jocelyn Benson  
Michigan Secretary of State

c: Senator Debbie Stabenow  
Senator Gary Peters  
Secretary of State Maggie Toulouse Oliver

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<sup>1</sup> “How Americans view some of the voting policies approved at the ballot box,” Pew Research Center, Nov. 15, 2018.