



## **Bipartisan Support for Mail-In Ballot Expansion**

### **Safeguarding the 2020 Election Cycle**

*The ability to safely participate in the democratic process amid COVID-19 should be a nonpartisan priority for elected officials and for nonprofits sector-wide. Congress must appropriate \$3.6 billion to defray the costs associated with implementing the necessary adjustments for polling places to remain open and in compliance with public health guidelines during this national emergency. Expanding inexcusable mail ballot processing and administrative capacity to safeguard the 2020 election cycle is a concept that has been endorsed by experts and officials across the political spectrum in every level of government.*

#### **National Support Among Elected & Appointed Officials:**

“Ensuring that Americans can vote safely and securely amidst the pandemic is not a partisan issue. It’s good for Republicans, Democrats, and everyone else. Let’s remember that voting isn’t a privilege, it’s a responsibility of citizenship. Responsibility also rests with government to make certain that every American has the right to vote safely during this public health crisis.”– **Tom Ridge, Former Governor and First Secretary of Homeland Security (R-Pennsylvania)**

*Additional information regarding Secretary Ridge’s “VoteSafe” initiative can be accessed [here](#).*

“In the face of a pandemic, massive economic upheaval, and renewed calls for racial justice, it’s more important than ever that Illinoisans can hold accountable a truly representative and transparent government - and that means ensuring all eligible residents can wield their right to vote in a way that doesn’t risk their personal health” – **Governor JB Pritzker (D-Illinois)**

*Governor Pritzker’s full statement can be accessed [here](#)*

“I want Iowa voters and poll workers to be safe during this pandemic while we conduct a clean, fair and secure election. After consulting with all 99 county auditors, I believe the best way to accomplish that goal is by mailing an absentee ballot request form to every active registered voter in the state.” – **Secretary of State Paul Pate (R-Iowa)**

*Secretary Pate’s full statement can be read [here](#).*



“Times of turbulence and upheaval like the one we Georgians face require decisive action if the liberties we hold so dear are to be preserved. I am acting today because the people of Georgia, from the earliest settlers to heroes like Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Congressman John Lewis, have fought too long and too hard for their right to vote to have it curtailed. Georgia has faced challenges before and overcome them, and we can do so again through the grit and ingenuity that has made America a shining example for democracies around the world.” – **Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger (R-Georgia)**

*Learn more about Secretary Raffensperger’s [efforts](#) to increase voter access and protect public health through increased mail in voting*

“Even voting by mail requires processing, counting, and reporting votes by an army of people, often working in close proximity. This means that mail-in elections reduce, but do not eliminate, the need for in-person engagement, and we must adapt accordingly. We should also expand in-person and remote options to all eligible voters. This includes an extended early in-person voting period allowing citizens to vote over several weeks rather than in a cluster on Election Day. Additional funding will be critical to protecting polling places for those who choose to vote in person, from distancing voters in line to ensuring election workers have the space and equipment they need to stay safe.” – **Secretaries of State Kim Wyman (R-Washington) and Katie Hobbs(D-Arizona)**

*More information about election officials’ bipartisan op-ed can be accessed [here](#).*

“For nearly a decade, Ohioans have received an absentee ballot request ahead of the Presidential and Gubernatorial General Election, and today’s controlling board action ensures that will be the case again this year. Sending the request – not the ballot – helps voters participate in the election and means each registered voter in Ohio can continue to choose one of three options available to them – early voting, absentee voting by mail, or voting in person on Election Day.” – **Secretary of State Frank LaRose (R-Ohio)**

*Learn more about Secretary LaRose’s bipartisan “[Ready for November](#)” taskforce and its [initiative](#) to send absentee ballot request forms to all 7.8 million registered voters in Ohio.*

“This pandemic was not in anyone’s budget. State and local governments are in charge with funding their elections, but they were expecting and budgeting to run their traditional election. We see a lot of ramping up for increased absentee and mail ballots. In addition to the costs associated with mail voting like envelopes and postage, personal protective equipment (PPE) is needed for people at polling places. The \$400 million is very much needed but the costs are going to be significantly higher.” – **Chairman Ben Hovland, U.S. Election Assistance Commission**

*More information about the Chairman’s comments on federal relief funding can be viewed [here](#).*



“On the ground, Governors from both parties are moving to vote-from-home measures to protect access to free and fair elections during the pandemic. But implementing new voting measures costs money that cash-strapped states don’t have.” – **Governor Kate Brown, Democratic Governors Association (D-Oregon)**

*Learn more about the Democratic Governors Association’s [“Every State Every Vote”](#) project*

“It’s time for conservatives to get behind much broader use of mail-in absentee ballots and consider a broader switch to voting by mail. During the coronavirus crisis, both practices would help more people vote safely without offering a clear advantage to any faction. – **Michael Steele, Former Republican National Committee Chair**

*Click [here](#) to view Chairman Steele’s full op-ed*

"The American people can be confident that your state and local election officials will adjust to any contingency and ensure all Americans have the opportunity to vote. The EAC is working expeditiously to distribute this federal money that will help states to protect voters and the integrity of our election process." – **Vice Chairman Don Palmer, U.S. Election Assistance Commission**

*Resources and information provided by the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) can be viewed [here](#)*