



Speak Out Now

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There's a Real Attack on Our Right to Vote

“Stop the Steal!” That’s what Trump has said since he lost the 2020 presidential election to Biden. His claim that the election was stolen led to legal challenges to vote counts across the country. More often than not the handful of votes that were counted incorrectly were for Biden, not Trump. Yet still, in poll after poll, more than 50 percent of Republicans believe Trump’s lie about the election being stolen.

“Stop the Steal” should be the demand of people across the U.S., not about the last elections, but about the upcoming 2022 elections. A massive plan to prevent people from voting is being conducted through the Republican Party – especially against people of color.

In 2021, nineteen states passed 34 laws making it more difficult to vote, and more than 440 bills restricting voting access were introduced in 49 states.

All sorts of restrictions are being placed on absentee ballots that will make it more difficult for many people to vote. They are restricting who can get an absentee ballot; the time during which you can apply for a ballot, and by when the ballot has to be returned; they are removing people from absentee voting lists; and limiting the number and location of mail ballot drop boxes.

The right of individuals to vote is under attack. Voters are being taken off voter lists without notification. In Georgia, officials have challenged the right of 364,000 voters. There are harsher voter ID requirements, polling stations in Black and brown neighborhoods are being eliminated, and the hours when polls are open are being reduced. And in some places it has been made illegal to give snacks and water to people standing in line while they wait for hours to vote.

This comes on top of gerrymandering — redrawing voting districts to eliminate those that are not majority white. Further, they want to control the vote count by taking over election monitoring positions like the secretary of state office and local election boards, or to give the state legislature control

over the final count. The importance of these positions became clear when Trump told the Georgia Secretary of State to “find 11,780 votes” to nullify Biden’s 11,779 vote lead, which he refused to do.

If there is any question about the goal of all these changes, Trump and others have made it clear. On Fox and Friends Trump said, *“They had things, levels of voting that if you’d ever agreed to it, you’d never have a Republican elected in this country again.”* Trump didn’t think this up. In 1980, Paul Weyrich, a leading conservative who co-founded the Heritage Foundation, the Moral Majority and other right-wing groups said, *“I don’t want everybody to vote....As a matter of fact, our leverage in the elections quite candidly goes up as the voting populace goes down.”*

The Democrats won’t get their voting rights bill passed with 100% of the Republicans opposing it. While the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that overturned open racial segregation in elections was introduced by the Democrats, it was the massive mobilization of people in the Civil Rights Movement that pushed both Democrats and Republicans to pass the Act.

We should not believe that the Democrats are our defenders, nor do they hold solutions to the problems we face. They are defending voter rights because they want to make sure they get elected.

However, a very basic right is under attack — the right to vote. While voting by itself won’t get us what we need, it is a tool we can use to express our common goals and sometimes get laws passed or programs established that benefit ordinary people.

This is NOT a “government of the people, by the people and for the people” unless the “people” are the wealthy minority who control things. The struggles we face won’t be won in the halls of Congress nor at the ballot box but as always, by mobilizing our forces in the workplaces and in the streets.

Attacks like these on our rights just make our struggles even more difficult. We must oppose them even if they are not happening right where we live.