



Institute for
Policy Studies

REPAIRERS
OF THE BREACH

THE REPAIRER'S BRIEF

Facts and Focus to Empower the Fight For a Third Reconstruction

VOTER SUPPRESSION

What is voter suppression?

Any attempt to discourage or create barriers to voter registration and casting ballots. These measures often target specific groups based on race, ethnicity, political affiliation, age, or other aspects of voters' identities.

What are the most widely used forms of voter suppression?

Discriminatory voter ID and proof-of-citizenship restrictions, reduced polling place hours in communities of color, the elimination of early voting opportunities, restrictions on mail voting, and illegal purges of voters from the rolls.

What are some of the most common myths behind voter suppression efforts?

Myth: Mail-in voting is rife with fraud

The U.S. Postal Service takes extraordinary measures to ensure [secure delivery](#) of election ballots. One conspiracy theory holds that ballots sent to deceased people are filled out by others. This is extraordinarily rare. One study of Washington state's universal vote-by-mail program found only [0.0003% of ballots](#) appeared to have been cast after the voter's death.

Myth: Voting machines are insecure

There is [no evidence](#) that voting machine manipulation has changed the outcome of a federal election. In reality, there are many guardrails to ensure security. Voting machines are [tested and certified](#) by the U.S. Election

Assistance Commission and most states require [additional testing](#). A tabulation of [paper ballots](#) most often supplies the final assurance of accuracy.

Myth: Undocumented people are voting and some people are voting twice

Noncitizens face criminal penalties for trying to register to vote. Documented cases of noncitizen voting – whether intentionally or mistakenly – are very [rare](#). One [study](#) of 42 jurisdictions found that only 0.0001% of votes were flagged as even *suspected* noncitizen votes. The prevalence of double voting is also [exceptionally rare](#) – likely considerably less than 0.02%.

What is the real intent of voter suppression efforts?

The aim is to gain political advantage by shrinking the voting pool, particularly to undermine the growing political power of Latinos and other communities of color. Brennan Center for Justice [research](#) finds a consistent pattern linking support for voter suppression efforts and perceptions among some white Americans that they are losing power to other racial groups.

What is the status of voter suppression efforts at the state level?

- At least 19 states have enacted 44 restrictive voting laws since January 2025.
- Over 40 states have considered more than 300 voter-restriction bills so far in 2026 and [12 have passed](#).
- Unprecedented [mid-decade redistricting](#) ahead of the 2026 midterm elections has potentially made voting less representative and more partisan.
- The [Louisiana v. Callais](#) Supreme Court decision has [further weakened](#) representation of Black and other minority voters by restricting the right to challenge racial gerrymandering.

What is the status of voter suppression efforts at the federal level?

- The Trump administration is trying to impose restrictions on mail voting and voter registration through executive action. So far, federal courts [have blocked](#) these efforts.
- 22 federal courts have [rejected](#) Trump's efforts to obtain sensitive data in unredacted state voting rolls.
- The U.S. House of Representatives has [passed](#) the SAVE America Act, legislation that would require proof of U.S. citizenship at voter registration and a specific government photo ID at the ballot box for federal elections.

- An estimated 21 million voters [don't have ready access](#), or in millions of cases, access at all, to the type of documents the Save America Act would require to vote.
- House leaders are attempting [to force](#) the Senate to pass the legislation – or elements of it – in broader budget bills.
- Voters who would suffer disproportionately negative effects are [rural](#), [lower-income](#), [older and people with disabilities](#), as well as [married women](#) whose legal names differ from their birth certificate name and younger voters who may not yet have passports, driver's licenses, or government-issued IDs.

What other tactics might be used to subvert the 2026 midterm elections?

In addition to voter restrictions, analysts are raising serious alarms that the [administration could](#):

- Deploy [federal law enforcement](#) to polling places for the purpose of intimidation
- Attempt to illegally invoke the Insurrection Act or other emergency executive powers
- Try to sow doubt in election results by calling the vote fraudulent as it's occurring or launching countless lawsuits once the results are known
- Pressure secretaries of state, state legislatures, and other state electoral bodies to change votes in close races

What can I do to make sure my vote is counted?

- Research your polling location, what forms of ID you will need to vote, and seek information about early voting and voting by mail.
- If you have the option of mail voting, pay attention to deadlines. The Postal Service recommends mailing your completed ballot at least 1 week before the deadline.
- Even if you're registered to vote, check your status online or with your local election office. This is especially important if you've recently moved or changed your name.