

MEMORANDUM

TO: Interested Parties

FROM: Reyna Walters-Morgan, DNC Director of Voter Protection & Civic Engagement

DATE: January 21, 2022

RE: DNC's Unprecedented Efforts to Protect the Vote

Protecting the right to vote is a key and central mission of the Democratic Party. From the polling place to the courtroom, the Democratic National Committee is fighting state by state, county by county, and voter by voter to make sure every eligible person gets to exercise their sacred right to vote. And we are using every tool available to ensure not just that ballots are cast, but counted transparently and accurately.

Because these are core principles of the Democratic Party, and because we must mitigate the damage done by Republican attacks on voting rights, the DNC and Chair Harrison, under the leadership of President Biden and Vice President Harris, have launched a whole-of-party effort and **built our largest voter protection team ever, earlier than ever before, with more efforts to combat Republican led election subversion still to come.** Our efforts put voters front and center, as we advocate for convenient polling places, additional early vote sites, and sound administration of mail voting. We provide clear and accessible information to voters about how to register and cast a ballot, and we fight against impediments placed in their way by Republican state officials. This work provides a critical and strong firewall to ensure voters always have an advocate to protect their right to vote.

Republicans are gaslighting the American people. They stand in the way of progress by repeatedly blocking federal voting rights legislation, while at the same trying to convince Americans that voter suppression does not exist—hoping they will ignore what is happening in states. In 2021, 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting. According to the Brennan Center, at least 152 bills are poised to carry over from last year and 13 restrictive voting bills have been pre-filed. Democrats will continue to do everything we can to fight back against these undemocratic and un-American efforts.

While efforts to pass federal legislation continue, and while the DNC works on additional plans to tackle subversion, the DNC has made an unprecedented and continuing commitment to ensuring fair and equal elections. Our experts are putting in the hard work day in and day out to protect our democracy, and we have innovated, using the data collected from previous elections to best understand how to address the needs of voters in the 2022 cycle and beyond. The DNC's efforts to protect our elections

this year have already been deep, substantial, and taken place earlier than ever – and this is still only the start.

The Largest Investment and Strongest Infrastructure to Date

In July 2020, Vice President Harris announced a historic \$25 million expansion of the DNC's longstanding "I Will Vote" Initiative to fund voter education, voter protection, targeted voter registration, and technology to make voting more accessible and to fight back against Republicans' unprecedented voter suppression efforts. This money specifically goes to making voting more accessible and addressing systemic issues we've long faced, while tackling new burdens being placed on voters. Our goal is simple: to invest more than ever before to help Americans overcome Republican obstacles to voting while we continue to fight back in courts and at the polls.

The expanded funding has helped grow the DNC's voter protection team to the most comprehensive and largest in size to date. The increased staff capacity has allowed our party to proactively build or expand voter protection programs in states across the country. In the past, voter protection staff were hired late in the election cycle to focus on GOTV and recount efforts. Thanks to increased funding from Democrats, we have built a lasting, year-round voter protection infrastructure.

In addition to the "I Will Vote" Initiative, the DNC has also invested significant resources in voter protection staffing in key states. As a part of our initial \$20 million midterm investment announced in April 2021 – our earliest ever investment in a midterm election – the DNC committed to funding coordinated campaign voter protection staff and programs in priority states across the country, including Arizona, Georgia, Kansas, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. These resources ensure that we have dozens of voter protection staffers as well as professional organizers and communicators to meet voters where they are and ensure they have the information they need to participate in our democracy.

Over the last year, the DNC has helped states create smart and diverse teams as well as cultivate the next generation of voter protection leaders.

In October 2021, the DNC worked with our sister committees and coordinated campaigns to host a train-to-hire Voter Protection Campaign Readiness Bootcamp to place talented and diverse voter protection staff in open staffing positions across the country. This is just one example of the voter protection training that the DNC provides-- we have expanded our training program to run year round, even in the "off years."

Democrats now have voter protection staff in 13 states, and the DNC's investment for state voter protection staff marks the earliest and largest midterm voter protection investment in recent history.

The DNC works with every state to build out voter protection programming. In states without voter protection staff, DNC staff works to customize scalable plans that meet the specific needs of their state. With this infrastructure in place, the DNC has been able to be an active participant in state legislative battles and serve as a critical tool for our state party partners in their efforts to combat Republican attacks.

Democratic Infrastructure In Action

Year-round infrastructure matters, particularly in states, and we already saw that play out in 2021. Last year, the DNC voter protection team provided critical data and resources for the California recall election; the Texas state party's voter protection team is currently running a strong education campaign to get vote-by-mail applications accepted despite a new voter ID matching law in their state; the New Hampshire voter protection team worked to defeat local ballot petitions that would have eliminated voting machines; and the Georgia voter protection team helped cure thousands of ballots during the Georgia runoff election and later in the year defend against election-related harassment.

Democrats are doing the work to beat back these new, harmful bills. While the DNC has funded staff, Democratic governors and legislators are also holding the line against Republican-led efforts to restrict voting access. In Pennsylvania, Governor Wolf vetoed a Republican-pushed bill that would have made voting more difficult by reducing the amount of time voters had to register and request mail ballots. In Michigan, Governor Whitmer vetoed a trio of Republican bills that could have disenfranchised 18,000 voters and disproportionately impacted voters of color. Republicans responded to the veto by threatening to undermine the democratic process and lead a petition that would exploit a loophole in Michigan law and enact voting restrictions that could bypass the governor's veto. The DNC helped fund the Michigan Democratic Party's legal costs related to the Secure MI Vote Petition Process. As a result of this work, the approved petition language gives voters an accurate description of what the petition would do if approved. The DNC will continue to support the state party's work.

Georgia, Florida, and Texas passed some of the most restrictive voting laws in 2021, despite heroic Democratic efforts to fight back and bolster voter protection programs. There are four things that those states have in common: a Republican-controlled House, a Republican-controlled Senate, a Republican secretary of state and a Republican governor.

These states aren't alone, Democrats need more seats at the negotiating table. That's why Chair Harrison introduced a brand new, seven-figure investment to put Republicans on defense and build tailored programs for traditionally Republican states: the Red State Fund. The Red State Fund includes \$2 million in direct investments and grants for states providing crucial funding to help build a bench in traditionally Republican states and give Democrats a stronger voice not only in issues of voting rights legislation but across the board.

Building the Tools To Win

The DNC is at the forefront of voter protection data and technology tools and resources. For all 50 states, the DNC provides continual voter protection data and technology resources to state parties. These tools include the DNC's Purge Tracker, which allows the DNC and our state party partners in impacted states to track anomalous voter file activity and minimize the impact of voter purges; election and voting incident monitoring and tracking tools, and countless other datasets, tools and dashboards to help campaigns maximize their voter protection program efforts and target resources where they can have the most impact. For example, the DNC spent over \$1 million to purchase lists of unregistered voters in 2021 in order to bolster our new voter registration efforts.

The DNC also built an innovative tool to track voter incidents and analyze incidents to provide landscape-level feedback on the types of incidents happening, where and to whom, so we can identify and fight malicious election operations. This tool is amplified by our Voting Location Prioritization tool that specifies where and how many incidents happen at every voting location and jurisdiction in their state, maximizing their voter protection program efforts and targeting resources where they can have the most impact.

This effort represents a significant investment from the DNC, where typically the state parties or campaigns have to spend tens of thousands of dollars for such crucial tools.

Educating and Expanding the Voter Base

With the rules constantly in flux as a result of Republican attacks designed to not only make it harder to vote, but to also confuse or discourage voters from voting, it is essential to provide every voter with the latest and most accurate information about where and how to vote. To support that effort, the DNC has committed millions of dollars for television and digital advertising to educate voters, and millions to fund innovative voter registration efforts targeting underserved potential voters.

IWillVote.com is the premier resource in the country for online voter information and education. Our team constantly updates IWillVote.com's voter education pages to help

provide a central resource for voters, informing them of where, when, and how to vote—or to register to vote—with detailed information for all 50 states.

The DNC has long operated a year-round voter assistance hotline to answer questions or resolve issues related to voting. The national voter assistance hotline operates Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. ET (with increased hours for GOTV and Election Days) and has served as a critical resource for voters seeking information about voting. In 2021, during an “off-cycle” year, volunteers dedicated nearly 5,000 hours and fielded thousands of calls to help voters.

Traditionally, voter registration has lived outside of the party infrastructure with non-profit groups leading the charge. With the expansion, under the leadership of President Biden, Vice President Harris, and Chair Harrison, we have flipped that dynamic on its head.

Democrats are back in the business of voter registration.

In September 2021, the DNC announced an initial investment of nearly \$5 million for a program to register voters, particularly in communities of color, across battleground states ahead of the 2022 midterms. This is the DNC’s biggest-ever commitment to voter registration in a midterm cycle. Since that announcement, the DNC tech team has analyzed our internal and external data to identify the top regions where our efforts can bear the most fruit to improve voter registration numbers. Taking that data’s findings, voter registration efforts have already begun in Florida, South Carolina, and Nevada with additional states to follow as further state-specific plans are finalized.

In the Courtroom

The DNC has long been a crucial litigator in the voting rights movement. In October 2021, the DNC and Pennsylvania Democratic Party intervened in litigation brought by 14 Pennsylvania Republican state legislators and a county election official, who claim that allowing all eligible Pennsylvanians to vote by mail is impermissible under the Pennsylvania Constitution — even though nearly all of them supported the law when it was enacted in 2019 with bipartisan support. The Republican lawsuit is an extension of their efforts to undermine Pennsylvanians’ access to the ballot, and the DNC and the Pennsylvania Democratic Party have intervened to protect Pennsylvania voters.

From state courts to the U.S. Supreme Court, the DNC has invested millions of dollars in the fight to protect voting access. The DNC has structured a program to seek judicial intervention that is strategically focused and built for success, and we are ready to engage in post-election challenges and vote counting procedures wherever we need to ensure the sanctity of the right to vote and the integrity of our democracy.

Conclusion

The DNC, with the support of President Biden and Vice President Harris, has already committed historic resources to protect the right to vote, built its largest voter protection team ever, and done it all earlier than ever before, with more still to come.

This work is absolutely necessary – it matters and has already proven to be a vital tool in helping to mitigate Republican attacks on voting rights. While we will continue to push for the passage of federal legislation, we will continue to fight in the states and fight with every resource available. The DNC is more committed than ever to doing essential work every day to protect voters where they are, and ensuring that they have the information and advocacy they need to have a voice in our democratic process.

###