



## OUR CALL TO SUPPORT DEMOCRACY BY ASSURING A VOICE FOR ALL S.1: THE PEOPLE ACT OF 2021

We, the Sisters of St Joseph of Carondelet and our partners in ministry, are called by our mission of healing and reconciliation to help repair the fractured relationships that have divided us during this difficult election season and to reclaim our essential unity as a nation. We find our current system of election laws is inadequate and in need of democratic reform. Foundational to our form of government is the right to vote, to have a say in decisions that affect our lives, to be fairly represented by officials who are responsive to our needs.

**S.1: For the People Act of 2021** addresses the reforms needed. We urge our lawmakers to engage in bipartisan, good faith efforts to find common ground for the common good and enact legislation that addresses these concerns. The need is urgent and the time to pass this legislation is now.

### S.1 MAKES IT EASIER, NOT HARDER TO VOTE

- **Improves access:** S.1 reduces barriers to voting by increasing the options for voter registration, expanding early voting, enhancing absentee voting, simplifying voting by mail and modernizing America's voting system. It establishes same-day and online registration with proper documentation and protects against flawed purges by making sure eligible voters stay on the voter rolls.
- **Promotes integrity:** S.1 contains an express commitment to restore the full protections of the Voting Rights Act. It would reestablish the "pre-clearance" clause that requires certain states with a history of discriminatory practices to obtain approval from the federal government before implementing any voting rules changes. S.1 updates the 1965 law and is backed by a thorough legislative record documenting the recent history of voter suppression in U.S. elections. This crucial legislation must become law in order to fortify the right to vote and the integrity of our elections. S.1 commits us to this goal.
- **Restores voting rights to people with prior convictions:** S.1 adopts a simple and fair rule: If you are out of prison and living in the community, you get to vote in federal elections.

## ENDS THE DOMINANCE OF BIG MONEY IN OUR POLITICS

- **Allows for small donation matching:** The bill allows for small donor contributions of under \$200 to be matched by a 6:1 ratio, paid for through money collected for tax fraud.
- **Improves federal disclosure laws:** Some of the biggest challenges for our campaign finance system involve unknown groups spending limitless funds on electoral advocacy. Currently, there is no requirement that these groups be disclosed. S.1 requires all groups that spend significant amounts on campaigns to disclose the donors who pay for that spending. It also tightens restrictions on coordination between candidates and all outside groups that can raise unlimited funds.
- **Overhauls the Federal Election Commission:** S.1 reduces commissioners from six to five, with two from each party and one independent, who have term limits. It also has authority to investigate alleged campaign finance violations and dismiss frivolous complaints

## ENSURES PUBLIC OFFICIALS WORK FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST

- **Mandates redistricting reform:** S.1 requires states to use independent redistricting commissions to draw congressional maps and imposes a set of rules for how districts should be drawn. In effect, it ends gerrymandering, where politicians pick their voters rather than the voters choosing their politician. Commission business would be done in public rather than behind closed doors.
- **Ensures election security:** S.1 requires an individual paper record of each vote. It also provides funds for states to implement robust audits of election results to ensure that a sufficient number of paper ballots are checked to corroborate electronic vote tallies. The bill provides for greater federal oversight of the private vendors who design and maintain the election systems that store our personal information, tabulate our votes and communicate important election information to the public.
- **Establishes stronger ethics rules:** S.1 requires the president and vice president to disclose their tax returns, strengthens the Office of Government Ethics, strengthens constraints on the “revolving door” between government and industry, requires a code of ethics for the United States Supreme Court and strengthens congressional safeguards against congressional conflicts of interest.