

Declaration for American Democracy

Together, we must build a democracy where **everyone participates, every vote is counted**, and **everyone's voice is heard**. We deserve to have a say in decisions that affect our lives, and to be fairly represented by elected officials who are responsive to our needs in order to make our lives better.

Right now, our system is in crisis. Powerful corporate and wealthy interests regularly defy the foundational principles of fairness, equity, ethics, accountability, and respect for the rule of law, and we are heading towards an impending constitutional catastrophe. Some states are passing laws that make it harder for voters, particularly minority voters, to gain access to the ballot. Long-standing voluntary standards that created a framework for some executive branch accountability are no longer enough to forestall corruption, and our current system of laws is inadequate.

We know that from calamity, opportunities arise—as does the chance to collectively build the democracy we demand and deserve. Now is not the time to tinker around the edges. **Now is the time for bold, comprehensive and new solutions to create a government that's reflective, responsive, and accountable.**

* Our democracy must ensure the freedom to vote and have that vote counted.

A strong democracy is one where voting is a fundamental right and a civic responsibility. We need to actively encourage more people to cast their ballots and ensure those votes are counted, respected, and protected. This includes policies like automatic voter registration, fully restoring the Voting Rights Act, and ending partisan gerrymandering.

* Our democracy must be honest.

A strong democracy serves the people rather than the private interests of public officials and wealthy political donors. We must strengthen ethics and financial disclosure rules for Congress and the executive branch, and subject the president to them.

* Our democracy must have meaningful participation.

A strong democracy is one where our influence is based on the force of ideas, not the size of our wallets. Elected officials must be reflective of, and responsive to, their constituents and communities. We must create programs that give small donors a bigger say in our elections and make sure our campaign finance laws are enforced.

* Our democracy must provide transparency into our government and our elections.

A strong democracy is one where people know who is trying to gain influence over our representatives, who is trying to influence our votes, and how and why policy is being made. There needs to be more transparency of political spending, more access to government records, and the White House should be required to release visitor logs.

* Our democracy must be responsive.

A strong democracy works to respond to the needs of people and their communities, building trust in governance and equity. We need to make sure government agencies are doing what's best for Americans, not just special interests and slow the revolving door between public service and private gain.