

HOW THE FOR THE PEOPLE ACT ADVANCES JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY IN THE U.S. TERRITORIES

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America needs comprehensive, structural reform to protect our nation's ideals and our democratic process. Among its many important provisions, the *For The People Act* takes vital steps to improve justice and democracy in the U.S. Territories, where millions of Americans currently have weak or limited representation in Congress even though most residents are U.S. citizens and follow U.S. laws. It's time to stop treating millions of Americans like second-class citizens just because of where they live. It's anti-democratic. The *For the People Act* seeks to remedy this injustice.

The *For The People Act* is a transformational clean elections reform package that protects our access to the ballot box, reduces the influence of big money in politics, strengthens ethics rules for public servants, and implements anti-corruption measures to protect our democracy. Passing H.R. 1 will empower the American people and restore faith and integrity to our government.

VOTING RIGHTS IN THE U.S. TERRITORIES

U.S. citizens in the territories are unable to vote in presidential elections and lack voting representation in Congress. Despite being qualified for military service and being treated, in other respects, as full Americans, close to 3.5 million otherwise eligible men and women were barred from participating in the 2020 general election despite its enormous impact on their lives. Blocking territorial residents from fully participating in our democratic processes limits their ability to make Congress take their needs seriously. House Democrats support establishing a Congressional Task Force responsible for recommending changes that would extend full and equal voting rights to residents of U.S. Territories in federal elections.

H.R. 1, SUBTITLE D – TERRITORIAL VOTING RIGHTS

The *For The People Act* establishes a twelve-member Congressional Task Force on Voting Rights of United States Citizen Residents of Territories of the United States, to be terminated upon issuing its report to Congress. Task Force members will be appointed by the Speaker of the House, the House minority leader, the Senate majority and minority leaders, and various members of majority and minority leadership across several committees.

The Task Force is required to provide a status update by September 30, 2021, to Congress with any information collected and urgent matters for consideration by Congress. The Task Force must also submit a report to Congress by December 31, 2021, of its findings regarding economic and societal consequences of political disenfranchisement of U.S. citizens in the territories, impediments to expanding voting rights to U.S. citizens in the territories, impediments to full and equal voting representation in the House of Representatives, and any recommended changes that would allow for full and equal voting rights and voting representation for the U.S. Territories.

The Task Force is granted the authority to hold hearings, take testimony, receive appropriate evidence, consult with the governments of each of the five U.S. Territories, and utilize existing resources of Congress in order to carry out its duties.

