

## Talking Points

# Freedom to Vote Act

### National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

Throughout its history, NCJW has worked to expand voting rights, drive voter turnout, educate on the issues, and engage advocates. The Freedom to Vote Act (HR 11/S 1), introduced by Representative John Sarbanes (D-MD) and Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), would protect our democracy by implementing systemic changes to improve voter access, election integrity, and civic participation and empowerment. As we continue to see unprecedented attacks on our democracy, we need basic national standards to ensure every eligible voter can cast a ballot and have their ballot count. Congress must pass the Freedom to Vote Act so that every voice is heard in our elections.

- **Democracy is a pillar of our nation, where every person has the right to vote.** The right to vote, to have one's voice heard, is the cornerstone of our democracy. Yet the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision opened the door to voting discrimination that continues to have a devastating impact on people of color. Facilitating the full participation of all citizens and communities in our political process ensures that everyone has a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect our lives, our families, and our future and a strong democracy.
- **Barriers and structural gaps prevent safety, security, and equal representation in elections that we value.** Barriers to voting disproportionately impact Black, Brown, and Indigenous people from casting their ballots. Voter suppression, restrictions on how to register, election interference, and other discriminatory efforts have impacted the ability of every voice to be heard in our elections. We must promote the full participation of all citizens, help thwart the relentless assault by states on voting rights, and advance commonsense election integrity reforms to safeguard and strengthen our democracy.
- **The Freedom to Vote Act would remove barriers and implement protections to maintain free and fair elections.** This bicameral legislation would improve access to the ballot for Americans and advance commonsense federal election standards and campaign finance reforms. Additionally, the Freedom to Vote Act would make Election Day a public holiday; modernize voter registration opportunities; set minimum, nationwide standards for voting opportunities; improve access for voters with disabilities, military, and overseas voters; protect election records, election infrastructure, and ballot tabulation; implement voter-verified paper ballots, reliable audits, and voting system upgrades; combat dark money and election interference; and end partisan gerrymandering.