



Origin: Coffee Party position papers are developed by volunteers (lay people, not attorneys or policy writers) in the Strategic Implementation Work Group, who research, debate and then write the position paper. Our goal is to outline principles and propose a healthy system on the issue presented. The Board of Directors votes to amend or approve the position papers presented by the work group. This position paper was approved as amended April 2017.

Position Paper on Voting Rights

GOAL: Elections should be open and honest, with voting accessible to all citizens.

Summary

Coffee Party USA advocates an accessible, effective and efficient election processes at all levels. We recommend Federal election standards to provide a high level of consistency nationwide. We recognize the vital contribution of dedicated, experienced state and local election officials. We also acknowledge that state and local officials have an excellent understanding of “what works here”. Federal standards, while establishing consistency, must also allow discretion at the local level so that efficiency and effectiveness is not diminished.

We support Federal standards and guidelines for

- Duration of voting and early voting periods
 - Federal Election Day holiday
 - Federal Election Timetable
- Allocation and site location of polling places
 - Polling place accessibility
- Vote counting, recounts and count audits
 - Preservation of physical ballots
 - Random and standardized local audits
- Voter registration
 - Accessibility
 - Identification requirements
- Voter identification
 - Identity verification

Federal Standards for Voting

Because federal elections involve our entire country, fairness on a federal level must include standardization of federal election procedures across state lines. Coffee Party USA supports new federal laws and audit standards pertaining to fair, equal and efficient federal elections. In so doing, we recognize the following:

Precepts

- That states have the right to manage and implement their own unique state standards on state and local ballot initiatives and elections



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- That states currently provide a valuable service to the federal level by providing local access to, and the administration of federal elections and ballot initiatives
- That it is the responsibility of the federal government to ensure fair, equal and efficient federal-level elections on all federal elections and ballot initiatives, without undue interference in state business and state elections
- That the need to rely on state help for federal election assistance has created non-standardized and unequal access to federal elections and federal ballot initiatives

The Coffee Party USA supports the enactment of new federal laws pertaining to the federal election timetable, polling place accessibility and equipment, audit standards, voter registration accessibility and ID requirements across all states. With fairness and equity in mind, Coffee Party USA advocates the following standards:

Federal Election Holidays

in order to encourage an active electorate and to turn the tide on the increasingly disaffected nature of the American voting public, Coffee Party USA recommends that Congress enact a federal holiday for federal election days and ballot initiatives, as applicable.

Federal Election Timetable

in order to better permit access to voting opportunity for all interested and eligible voters in an equal and fair manner, Coffee Party USA recommends that Congress enact a standard period of early voting (specifically, we recommend three weeks), and a standard mail-in or absentee voting procedure and time period on all federal elections.

Polling Place Accessibility

in order to ensure that all eligible voters have a fair and equal distribution, quality and accuracy of voting, we recommend that Congress prescribe that all federal jurisdictions have an equal distribution of polling places. The distribution of polling places must be represented in direct proportion to the population of eligible voters, with each polling place being provided with an equal proportion and type of voting equipment.

Random and Standardized Precinct Audits and Preservation of Physical Ballots

In light of our increasingly polarized public discourse and cynical views on the fairness of elections, Coffee Party USA recommends the federal government regularly audit every federal election, across all states, jurisdictions and precincts (precinct audits). The audits should be in a standard form, be randomly assigned, and carry a punishment for precinct officials in audited precincts that show fraud or mismanagement, and may be funded through the federal budget for elections.

In conjunction with and to aid in these precinct audits, Coffee Party USA recommends that the federal government adopt standards for the voting procedures it will audit. Standard procedures should include a paper ballot for each vote cast, either manually or electronically generated to



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document each vote. Should the need arise, these paper ballots would provide both the substance for the federal audit and the documentary evidence of the votes, assisting in the case of legal challenge, audit or recount. Automatic audits will be triggered for each county where votes for federal elections are within .2% (.002), or 100 votes whichever is greater, for the top two vote getters. Automatic recounts and audits for federal elections will be funded through the federal budget for elections.

Voter Registration Requirements:

The integrity of our voting system requires participation of citizens. Coffee Party USA supports voter registration for citizens online, through the DMV, and through military draft registration.

- For first-time registrations, valid identification (ID) must be provided. Acceptable ID includes one of the following:
 - Valid photo identification, including driver's license.
 - Paycheck stub with name and address.
 - Utility bill with name and address.
 - Bank statement with name and address.
 - A government document with name and address.
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm> for instructions to obtain birth certificates, state by state.
- Access to registration facilities should be available to all. Accommodations should be made for the disabled, the elderly and those with limited access to transportation.
- Coffee Party USA also believes that people who have completed their incarceration have the right to vote.
- Restoration of voting rights must be easy and free for formerly incarcerated or mentally disabled people.

Voter ID at the polls and time of voting

Coffee Party USA does not support Voter ID laws that require proof of identity or citizenship at the time of voting. Providing identity and citizenship proof at time of registration is more efficient. There is not enough evidence of non-citizen voting, voter impersonation and in-person voter fraud to justify passing extra expense and hardship to voters. Coffee Party USA will stand to repeal voter ID laws that seek to suppress any voter. Voter Registration cards issued by states shall be considered sufficient ID to vote.

All persons who are currently registered to vote are grandfathered in and should not need to re-register due to new voting laws.

Access to proof of citizenship and photo ID



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- Access to photo id's, or other proof of citizenship should be easy and free for everyone. This includes certified copies of birth certificates and copies of social security card if needed.
- <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/w2w/index.htm>

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