



Overseas Voting

For most overseas Americans, the right to vote is their primary means of participating in the American democratic process. Civilian voter turnout overseas has increased steadily in recent years: overseas Americans are typically estimated by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) as representing 3+% of all votes cast, making the overseas vote a crucial component of every American election. In a population currently estimated by the State Department at 8.7 million.

The Military and Overseas Voter Empowerment (MOVE) Act of 2009 represented great progress for overseas voters and other voting groups. It modernized voting methods and ensured greater reliability and security in the overseas voting process and vastly expanded the use of electronic voter information and ballot delivery.

We support the US Vote Foundation (US Vote) proposal: “Act II of the MOVE Act” (<https://www.usvotefoundation.org/UOCAVA-reform-agenda>).

Our longstanding partner, US Vote and its Overseas Vote initiative are calling for a new round of overseas and military voting reforms to include::

1. Automatic registration for military voters
2. “Permanent” status option for Qualified Overseas Voters
3. Single, Simultaneous, Uniform Federal Overseas Voter Registration + Ballot Request + Ballot Package
4. State Department to Inform Overseas Citizens of Voting Rights
5. Uniform election dates and deadlines

American citizens who do not meet state residency requirements should have the right to vote in federal elections in all states and the District of Columbia at the legal voting residence of their US citizen parent(s). Today, 13 states deny the right to vote in Federal elections to Americans who do not satisfy those states residency requirements. FVAP recently pointed to this problem for “never resided” voters and encourages states to consider and address it.

We have worked since the 1970s first to obtain the right to vote for overseas citizens and then to ensure that absent military and overseas civilian voters enjoy an equal right and ability to vote. We all also support all current efforts for the adoption of UMOVA (the Uniform Military and Overseas Voter Act) at the state level. Together, we will continue to work with Congress and the Administration to find all appropriate and economically feasible ways to enhance the ability of absent uniformed service voters and overseas Americans in the private sector to register and vote absentee in US federal elections.