

VOTING RIGHTS AMENDMENT

PROTECT AND EXPAND THE RIGHT TO VOTE

WHAT IS VOTER DISENFRANCHISEMENT?

Virginia is one of only three states the constitution of which permanently punishes people convicted of a felony by taking away their right to vote unless the governor individually gives it back. **The right to vote is fundamental to our democracy. It belongs to the people and should not be taken away as punishment in addition to a criminal sentence.**

THE SITUATION IN VIRGINIA

Every year our criminal legal system adds 12,000 people to the more than 300,000 people still disenfranchised. Gov. Ralph Northam's actions since his inauguration has re-enfranchised 33,000 people; that's about 9,000 more people than have been disenfranchised during his term in office. **At this rate of restoration, it would take over 30 years to give everyone their rights to vote back.**

According to previous data on the restoration of voting rights, white people have been re-enfranchised at a greater rate than people of color, despite the fact that black Virginians increasingly are felonized at a higher rate. It is time to remove the felony disenfranchisement provision from our constitution. **This Jim Crow-era law disproportionately affects communities of color, where one out of every five black Virginians cannot vote – that is 22% of the entire black population in the Commonwealth.**

OUR GOALS

The right to vote belongs to the people and should be something that the government cannot take away for any reason. **We call on the Virginia General Assembly to pass a constitutional amendment that guarantees the right to vote for every citizen and Virginia resident over the age of 18.**

FACTS



BLACK VIRGINIANS
CANNOT VOTE
BECAUSE OF FELONY
DISENFRANCHISEMENT.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Here are a few things you can do to get involved:

- Stay up-to-date on this issue through our social media.
- Subscribe to our email list: acluva.org.
- Take action through our Advocacy Toolkit: acluva.org/letpeoplevoteva.
- Become a member: [action.aclu.org/give/join-aclu-virginia](https://aclu.org/give/join-aclu-virginia)
- Start a People Power group to work on this issue: peoplepower.org

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