

THE MOUNTING COST OF COVID INACTION: *THE ELECTION*

COVID-19 On July 13, 2020

U.S. Infections – 3,296,599
U.S. Deaths – 134,884

U.S. Unemployment – 11.1 Percent
Since House Passed Heroes Act – 60 Days

What Is Absentee Voting?

Absentee voting, also known as mail-in voting, allows voters who are unable or unwilling to vote in person, to vote by mail.

Voting Fact

Absentee voting has a long history in our country. About [150,000 Union soldiers voted absentee](#) during the presidential election of 1864, and the armed forces have used absentee voting for more than 150 years. In the 2018 elections, 31 million Americans, more than one-fourth of all voters, cast their ballots by mail. Even with this long history, there is no evidence of widespread voter fraud, with a [study by the Brennan Center for Justice](#) placing the risk of voting fraud somewhere between 0.00004 percent and 0.0009 percent.

What's The Problem?

[As of mid-May](#), there was a surge in requests for absentee ballots that surpassed 10 times that of the 2016 primary contests as voters sought to protect themselves, their families, and their communities from the coronavirus. Moreover, six out of 10 poll workers in 2018 were over the age of 61, placing them at a higher risk of coronavirus. As a result, traditional polling stations have also been impacted as older poll workers opt to stay home, which is creating a staffing crunch and longer lines at the polls. This is squeezing local budgets as officials race to accommodate the surge in absentee ballots and recruit a new class of younger, healthier poll workers. And this is just for the primaries. As the country marches toward the November general election the looming problem is coming into focus. Local officials do not have the resources they need to meet this new challenge to accommodate the surge in absentee ballots and the need for socially distanced voting. Securing larger polling locations, additional poll workers, more voting machines, personal protective equipment, expanded early voting, and educating the public will take time and resources. And time is running out.

What Can We Do?

Estimates place the need at around \$4 billion, and the CARES Act only provided a \$400 million down payment. The House-passed Heroes Act provides the remaining \$3.6 billion. Senate Republicans need to abandon their “wait-and-see” approach and Congress must provide the resources needed to protect our democracy and ensure that Americans can vote safely.

Where Can I Read More?

[From 47 Primaries, 4 Warning Signs About The 2020 Vote](#)

[Why A Vote By Mail Option Is Necessary](#)