DEEPENING OUR DEMOCRACY

How Localities Can Expand Voting Rights

Mayors Innovation Project Jan. 27, 2018

Presenter:
Emma Greenman
Director of Voting Rights & Democracy
@popdemoc

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
The Center for Popular Democracy works to create equity, opportunity and a dynamic democracy in partnership with high-impact base-building organizations, organizing alliances, and progressive unions. CPD strengthens our collective capacity to envision and win an innovative pro-worker, pro-immigrant, racial and economic justice agenda.
DEMOCRACY AT A CROSSROADS

Now is the Time to Champion Voting Rights

- Low voter participation
- Arcane hurdles and new barriers to voting
- Faith in democracy at risk
- Public hungry for change
- Opportunities with new energy and engagement
AMERICA’S VOTER REGISTRATION PROBLEM

ONE IN FOUR ELIGIBLE U.S. VOTERS ARE NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE. CITIES CAN CHANGE THIS.

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
AMERICA’S VOTER REGISTRATION PROBLEM

43% OF LATINX AMERICANS, 44% OF ASIAN AMERICANS, AND 30% OF BLACK AMERICANS ARE NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE. CITIES CAN CHANGE THIS.

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
AMERICA’S VOTER REGISTRATION PROBLEM

45% OF CITIZENS AGED 18 TO 24 WERE NOT REGISTERED TO VOTE AND 57% DID NOT VOTE. CITIES CAN CHANGE THIS.

57% DID NOT VOTE

55% REGISTERED

45% UNREGISTERED

#ExpandtheVote

#MayorInnovation
**WHAT WORKS**

Increasing voter registration to increase turnout

- Learning from Same Day Registration and AVR
- Putting missing voters on the rolls

Reduce barriers to registration and decrease disparities

- Looking beyond the DMV
- Register people where they are
- Make it integrated and “automatic”

*Make voter registration a bridge to participation*
CITIES CAN LEAD THE WAY

62.7%

of US lives in cities
CITIES CAN LEAD THE WAY

• Cities can reduce racial and generational disparities in registration and voting

• Leadership to protect and enfranchise voters

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
LOCAL REGISTRATION REFORMS

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
LOCAL REGISTRATION REFORMS

Local Agency Registration:
Expanding Voter Access to Underrepresented Communities

• City agencies offer opportunity and support to register at every transaction with eligible city resident
• Agency staff trained to support the voter registration of eligible persons submitting applications, renewals etc.
• Incorporate registration into forms and electronic systems
LOCAL REGISTRATION REFORMS

IMAGINE IF EVERY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT WAS REGISTERED TO VOTE BEFORE THEY LEFT HIGH SCHOOL.

#ExpandtheVote

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
LOCAL REGISTRATION REFORMS

High School Registration: Building a Generation of Active Voters

- Require high schools and youth-oriented city programs to reach and register students who are eligible to register
- In states that allow pre-registration of 16 and 17 year olds – include strategies to increase pre-registration

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
CITY AGENCY REGISTRATION

Case Study: New York City

Passed in 2000, significantly strengthened in 2014

Key Components of NYC Pro-Voter Law:

• 26 NYC agencies now incorporate voter registration into transactions
• Agency staff training
• Mandatory reporting on completed registrations at each agency
• Increased language access on registration forms – 90% of limited English proficient New Yorkers can now register in native language

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
CITY AGENCY REGISTRATION

Case Study: New York City

Challenges

• Agency compliance with adopting reforms
• Integration of registration applications into agency forms and work flow
• Creating a robust city framework within arcane state registration laws
LESSONS FOR POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION

1. Tailor reforms to agencies that reach a broad and diverse set of eligible city residents

2. Focus on agency adoption and compliance
   • Develop individual agency implementation plan with deadlines
   • Provide initial and ongoing training of agency staff and management
   • Include mandatory reporting from each agency to track compliance and process; make statistics public
   • Leadership and oversite from mayor’s office to coordinate implementation and compliance

3. Integrate registration into agency forms – electronic and paper – to make it seamless and increase accuracy

4. When possible – make it electronic

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
Case Study: Phoenix, Arizona

Arizona Voter Registration Reforms: Potential Growth in Registered Voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Local Agency Registration (eligibility)</th>
<th>High School Registration Program (impact)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>97,800</td>
<td>22,300 per year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31% of Arizona's voting age citizens are unregistered

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation
READ THE FULL REPORT
PopularDemocracy.org/ExpandtheVote

#ExpandtheVote
#MayorInnovation