

Writing a Letter to the Editor This Election on Why We Need to Fix Our Inequitable Electoral System

Marginalized communities across the United States have effectively been disenfranchised through laws and policies that create barriers to their eligibility and ability to vote. And there have been ongoing efforts nationwide to further suppress people's ability to vote or fully engage in the policymaking process. Our communities are facing threats to health and safety; we should be able to utilize the democratic process to address these threats.

As scientists and advocates, it's not enough to push for science-based solutions to public health and environmental challenges—we also need to protect, and sometimes even fix, our democracy so those solutions become more achievable.

That's why this election, we need science advocates and supporters like you to take action on voting rights to advance environmental justice and true science-based safeguards.

We're calling on you to embrace your role as a scientist *and* constituent to join the movement to build a better democracy: one that represents the people and allows science to better serve the public and develop informed, equitable policy.

One way to shine a light and spark public dialogue during this election is to [write a letter to the editor \(LTE\)](#) of your local newspaper that connects the dots between voting rights and the health and safety of our communities.

Sample Talking Points:

- Always start off by telling a short “story of self” (one to two sentences) that connects you to the specific issue or value, so that people know who you are and why you're writing.
- We don't need to wait for Congress to act – **[add your state]** has a real opportunity to start fighting for real change this election.
- Our democracy is strongest when everyone has an equal voice in our elections, not just wealthy donors who can spend big. Restrictions on voting make it harder for communities to advocate for their own interests and fight for policies that benefit them.
- As scientists and advocates, it's not enough to push for science-based policy solutions to public health and environmental challenges—we also need to protect, and sometimes even fix, our democracy so those solutions become more achievable.
- **[add your state]** has taken important steps to improve access to the ballot, and now we have another chance to further strengthen our democracy. [use if applicable]

- **[add an ask here]** [e.g. *For all candidates who are running for president [or insert applicable office], what are you going to do to ensure that reform happens to our democratic institutions to protect voter access, representation, and turnout?*]

This election we're working to push candidates to address the most pressing issues of our time—voting rights, climate change, nuclear weapons, and the relentless assault underway on science, truth, and facts. Be sure to [let us know where you submitted your letter](#) so, we can bring published letters with us when we meet with legislators and campaign staff. For more information on our work to support a healthy democracy, [check out our webpage](#) and for information about other ways to get involved in voting rights work during this election, check out this [blog post](#).