

## Background Information

*Before exploring the sources provided to you, please read the following contextual information and respond to the questions on you the worksheet given to you as part of your “Do Now”*

As we have learned in previous lessons, prior to the signing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many states—particularly in the South—incorporated laws preventing black Americans from exercising their right to vote. Policies such as literacy tests, poll taxes, and the Grandfather clause were employed with the intentional effect of disenfranchising citizens of color.

Voting is a powerful tool in a democratic republic. As you have seen in the *Give Us the Ballot* speech by Martin Luther King Jr., enfranchisement allows for citizens to elect representatives that will have the power to pass legislation that could create positive change for and protect the constituencies they represent. These constituents, therefore, have a means through which to hold government officials accountable to the breaking of promises made to them during elections. Elections are a forceful means for citizens to have their voices heard on a regular basis.

Despite the undeniable progress America has seen, as a country, since the passing of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Twenty Fourth Amendment—banning the practice of poll taxes—some barriers to voting still remain. Each of these barriers serves a different political purpose, some more intentional than others. Voter Identification Laws are passed as a means for promising protections against voter fraud. The idea behind this is that, if citizens are forced to present IDs at the polls, the likelihood that elections can be tampered with by improper voting practices can be tampered. Poll Closures come typically as a means of saving funds in state’s whose budgets for elections are struggling in one way or another. Incarceration—or rather, the percentage of those incarcerated—come from pushes amongst politicians to represent themselves as tough on crime. This is something that many deemed as a positive quality throughout the end of the Twentieth Century as well as the beginning of the Twenty-first. Gerrymandering allows for politicians to ensure a higher likelihood of reelection for their party within their state—ideally guaranteeing their ability to hold the majority within their states’ legislature.

While not all of these barriers are employed to intentionally disenfranchise a portion of the population—as did the legislation of the Jim Crow era did—it is undeniable that these policies may have an adverse effect on a similar demographic to those impacted by these historic laws. Throughout this lesson, you will explore how these different policies could create an environment in which it is more difficult for minority voters—specifically African Americans—to practice their right to vote.

Although this may be true, it is improper to see these circumstances as irreparable. Both through the actions of the people effected as well as the interventions of organizations—such as the ACLU—citizens have made sure to make their voices heard despite these barriers.

It has been noted that in elections in which African Americans are inspired by a particular candidate—such as in the election of President Obama in 2008—voter turnout grows significantly. Part of the importance of the right to vote is that it allows citizens to elect government officials they believe in, and that they believe will create policies that benefit them. In circumstances where this is perceived as a possibility, African American citizens are considered to be an especially important voting bloc to politicians because of the voting power held in their hands.

In addition to this, in situations where the rights of African Americans have been seen to have been violated by these policies, organizations—such as the ACLU and NAACP among many others—step in to pursue legal resource and potentially have these policies overturned (typically in the courts). For example, in issues where evidence of racial gerrymandering exists, often the ACLU will step in in order to demonstrate to the courts the significance of the action. Federal courts, in recent years, have served as an important ground to fight against potential disenfranchisement by the barriers included in this activity. They also serve as a tool to inform Americans of the potential outcomes causes by these barriers’

existence. Their websites offer statistics and articles that make this information more readily available to the public. There are also other specific interest groups, such as the Sentencing Project—which focuses on incarceration rates—which function in a similar manner of distributing information.

# Gerrymandering

Excerpt from “Reconsidering Racial and Partisan Gerrymandering” (2011)

“If, as a number of political scientists purport to find, the strategy of setting aside some number of districts to be controlled by African-American voters has, as a byproduct, the effect of making legislative bodies as a whole more Republican, then a purely partisan Republican legislature would prefer to create as many minority districts, with as large minority populations, as possible. The strategy of partisan gerrymandering includes wasting as many votes of the other side's partisans as possible by concentrating those voters into a few districts. ... If there are no geographic constraints on the redistricting process, particularly where race is involved, Republicans would be less fettered in pursuit of their optimal partisan strategy, which would appear to include crafting as many districts (baroque or not) to concentrate as many African- American voters as possible.” pg. 560

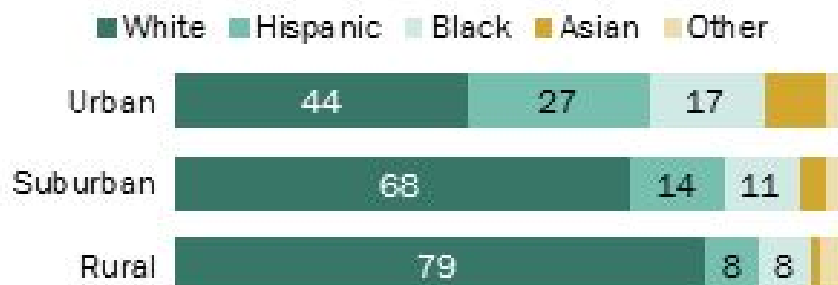
“If minority voters were distributed evenly throughout the ideological spectrum, then redistricting authorities motivated by partisanship would have no reason to pay attention to race. Of course, minority voters are not so evenly distributed. In particular, African American voters--the voters with whom the VRA has historically been most concerned--have a strikingly different ideological distribution from white voters. This, we argue, would lead a redistricting authority who is interested only in partisan advantage to treat African American voters differently from white voters when assembling elect” pg. 572

Cox,  
Adam B.,  
and Richard T. Holden. “Reconsidering Racial and Partisan Gerrymandering.” *The University of Chicago Law Review*, vol. 78, no. 2, 2011, pp. 553–604. *JSTOR*,  
[www.jstor.org/stable/41553096](http://www.jstor.org/stable/41553096).

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## U.S. urban counties have no racial or ethnic majority

*% of total population in each county type who are ...*



Note: Racial groups include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race. Asians include Pacific Islanders. County categories based on the National Center for Health Statistics Urban-Rural Classification Scheme for Counties.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of 2012-2016 American Community Survey data.

"What Unites and Divides Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities"

**PEW RESEARCH CENTER**

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Parker, Kim, et al. “Demographic and Economic Trends in Urban, Suburban and Rural Communities.” *Pew Research Center's Social & Demographic Trends Project*, 22 May 2018,  
[www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/05/22/demographic-and-economic-trends-in-urban-suburban-and-rural-communities/](http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2018/05/22/demographic-and-economic-trends-in-urban-suburban-and-rural-communities/).

← → ↻ [ballotpedia.org/Demographics\\_of\\_congressional\\_districts\\_as\\_of\\_2015\\_\(as\\_percentages\)](http://ballotpedia.org/Demographics_of_congressional_districts_as_of_2015_(as_percentages)) ☆ 📄 📄 📄

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**Demographics of United States Congressional districts, 2015** [hide]

District	Hispanic or Latino of any race	White	Black or African American	American Indian and Alaska Native	Asian	Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	Other	Multiple races
<b>United States total</b> ↕	<b>17.58%</b> ↕	<b>61.46%</b> ↕	<b>12.32%</b> ↕	<b>0.64%</b> ↕	<b>5.31%</b> ↕	<b>0.16%</b> ↕	<b>0.22%</b> ↕	<b>2.31%</b> ↕
District 1, Alabama	3.02%	65.00%	28.15%	1.07%	1.26%	0.00%	0.30%	1.19%
District 2, Alabama	2.99%	62.25%	31.60%	0.25%	0.96%	0.04%	0.06%	1.85%
District 3, Alabama	3.00%	68.05%	25.12%	0.23%	1.51%	0.01%	0.04%	2.03%
District 4, Alabama	6.34%	83.90%	7.14%	0.38%	0.41%	0.10%	0.04%	1.69%
District 5, Alabama	5.06%	72.79%	17.39%	0.47%	1.64%	0.04%	0.17%	2.44%
District 6, Alabama	4.18%	76.83%	15.50%	0.19%	1.93%	0.02%	0.02%	1.33%
District 7, Alabama	3.20%	31.41%	63.38%	0.13%	0.72%	0.15%	0.17%	0.84%
District (at large), Alaska	7.02%	61.27%	3.35%	13.31%	6.20%	0.86%	0.30%	7.69%

“Demographics of Congressional Districts as of 2015 (as Percentages).” *Ballotpedia*, 2015,  
[http://ballotpedia.org/Demographics\\_of\\_congressional\\_districts\\_as\\_of\\_2015\\_\(as\\_percentages\)](http://ballotpedia.org/Demographics_of_congressional_districts_as_of_2015_(as_percentages)).

**EXCERPT FROM: “VOTER ID LAWS PROTECT THE INTEGRITY OF OUR DEMOCRACY” (2012)**

**BY HANS A. VON SPAKOVSKY**

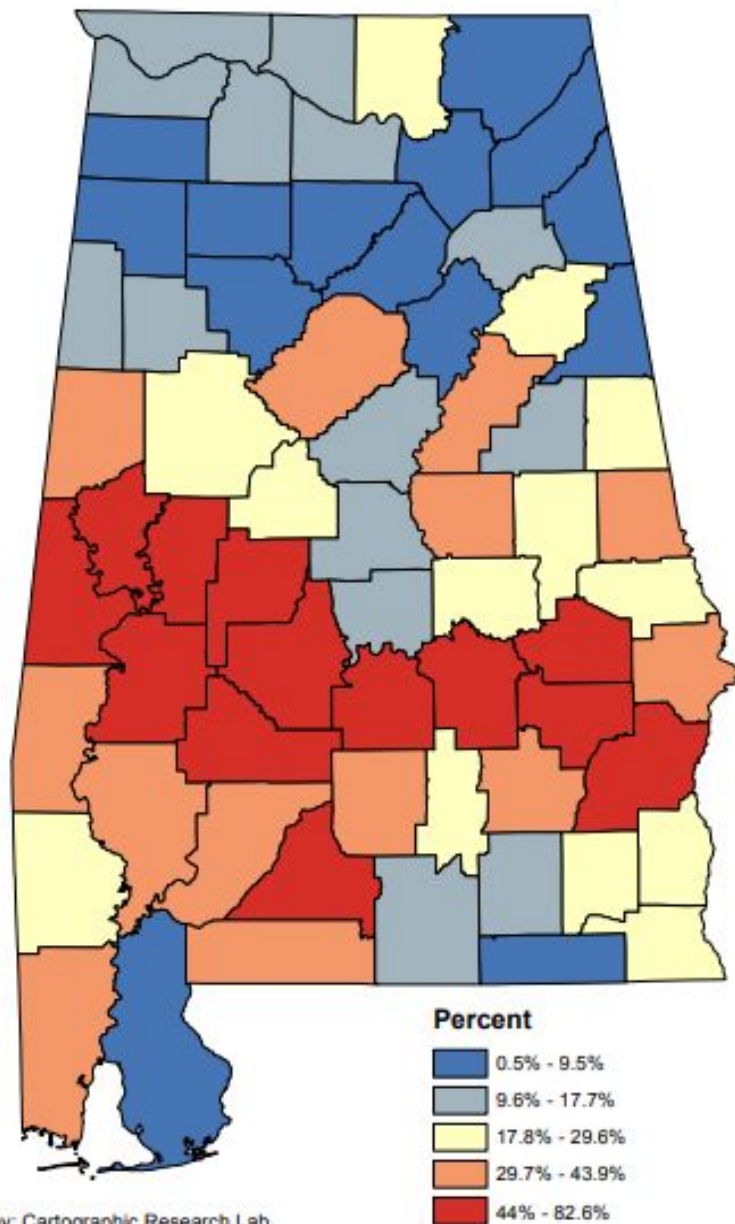
**“ALL STATES SHOULD** require photo ID both to vote in person and to vote by absentee ballot (by providing a copy of the ID). This is a basic requirement to help ensure the integrity of elections. All Americans who are eligible should have the opportunity to vote, but their ballots should not be stolen or diluted by fraudulent votes.

The vast majority of Americans of all racial and ethnic backgrounds support such common-sense election reform. Voter ID can significantly defeat and deter impersonation fraud at the polls, voting under fictitious names or in the names of dead voters, double-voting by individuals registered in more than one state, and voting by individuals who are in the United States illegally. The Supreme Court has upheld voter ID since "flagrant examples of [voter] fraud ... have been documented throughout this nation's history."

No one claims that there is voter fraud in every election. But, as the Supreme Court said, 'not only is the risk of voter fraud real,' but 'it could affect the outcome of a close election.' And it wasn't too long ago that we had a presidential election decided by only about 500 votes. Voter ID also increases the public's confidence in election results, an essential element in a stable democracy.”

Von Spakovsky, Hans A. "Voter ID Laws Protect the Integrity of Our Democracy." *U.S. News & World Report*, U.S. News & World Report, 12 July 2012,  
[www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-photo-id-be-required-to-vote/voter-id-laws-protect-t  
he-integrity-of-our-democracy](http://www.usnews.com/debate-club/should-photo-id-be-required-to-vote/voter-id-laws-protect-the-integrity-of-our-democracy).

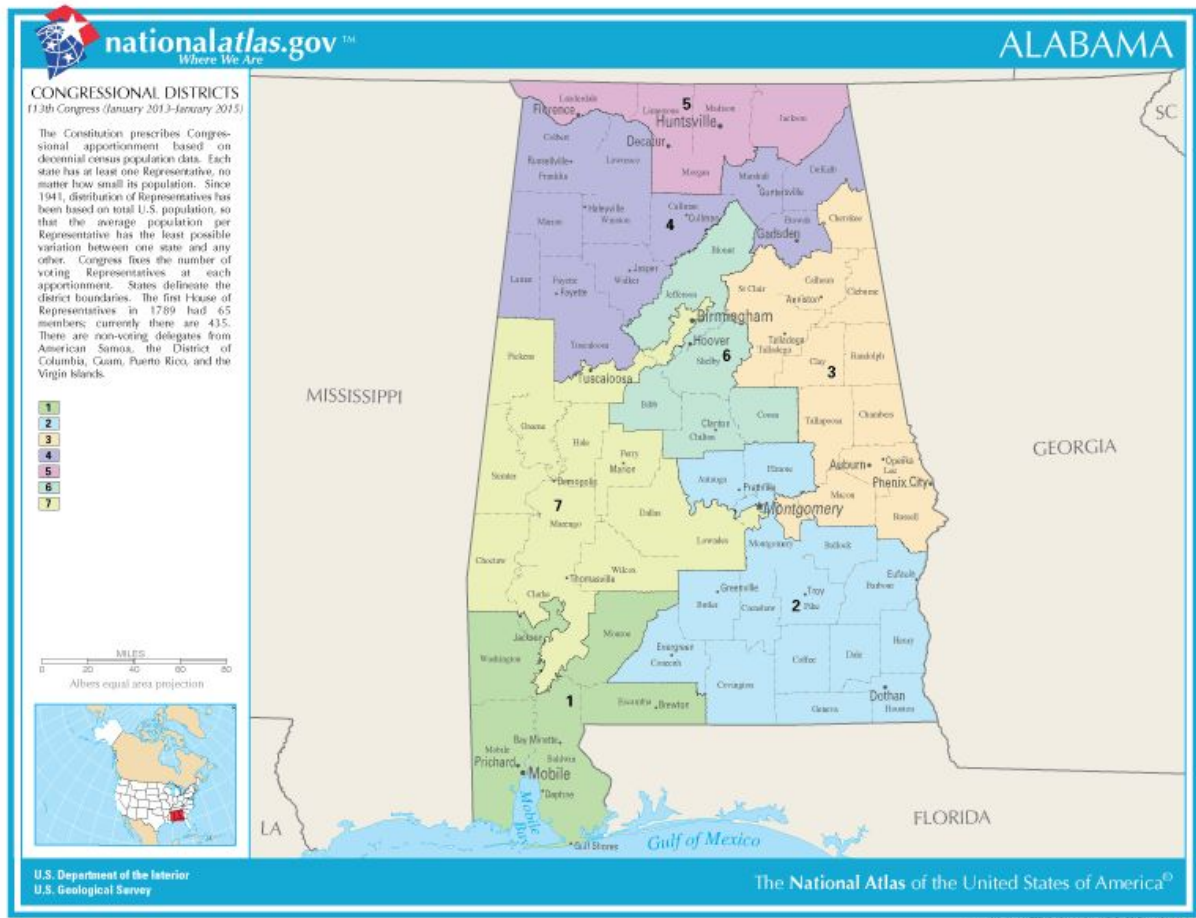
### Black Population, 2010



Produced by: Cartographic Research Lab  
Department of Geography  
University of Alabama  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

“Black Population 2010.” *Alabama Maps - Demographics*, University of Alabama,

<http://alabamamaps.ua.edu/contemporarymaps/alabama/demographics/index.html>.



This map contains outlines of the seven Congressional Districts currently drawn in the state of Alabama. Compare the districts in the map above to the map titled: “Black Population, 2010”.



The National Atlas of the United States of America. “Printable Maps – 113<sup>th</sup> Congressional Districts.” *Printable Maps*, U.S. Department of the Interior, 6 Feb. 2017,

[http://nationalmap.gov/small\\_scale/printable/congress.html](http://nationalmap.gov/small_scale/printable/congress.html).

Excerpts from: “How racial gerrymandering deprives black people of political power” (2019)

*“Typically the goal in [packing minorities into a district] is not to reduce minority representation in the adjacent districts; it’s to reduce Democrats’ representation in those districts,” said Nicholas Stephanopoulos, a professor at the University of Chicago Law School. “They’ve been arguably using the racial demographics as a way to enact a Republican gerrymander.”*

*“Much like political gerrymandering, it limits black influence in surrounding districts. It would require the creation of, for instance, a 50 percent and a 10 percent black district, rather than two 30 percent black districts. In other words, the requirement would give black voters one representative of their choice rather than two.*

*You might be thinking that, if only 30 percent of a district’s voters are black, it will be hard for African Americans to elect their preferred candidate. But that’s increasingly not the case. The reason: the decline of racially polarized voting. Minority and white voting patterns used to be starkly divergent, but now, more whites vote for the minority-favored candidate, especially in primaries. This change came about as racial divisions, beginning with the decline of segregation and explicit racism, have faded (though obviously not disappeared), and the interests of politically like-minded blacks and whites have aligned. As a result, fewer minority voters are required for a district to elect their favored candidate.”*

*“The partisanship is especially clear when seeing how the district lines change census-to-census. Stephanopoulos said Republican legislatures take districts ‘that were already electing minority representatives and pack more minority voters into them,’ and Democratic legislatures tend to ‘unpack ... minority districts.”*

Soffen, Kim. "How Racial Gerrymandering Deprives Black People of Political Power." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 29 Apr. 2019,

[www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/06/09/how-a-widespread-practice-to-politically-empower-african-americans-might-actually-harm-them/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/06/09/how-a-widespread-practice-to-politically-empower-african-americans-might-actually-harm-them/)

# Voter ID Laws



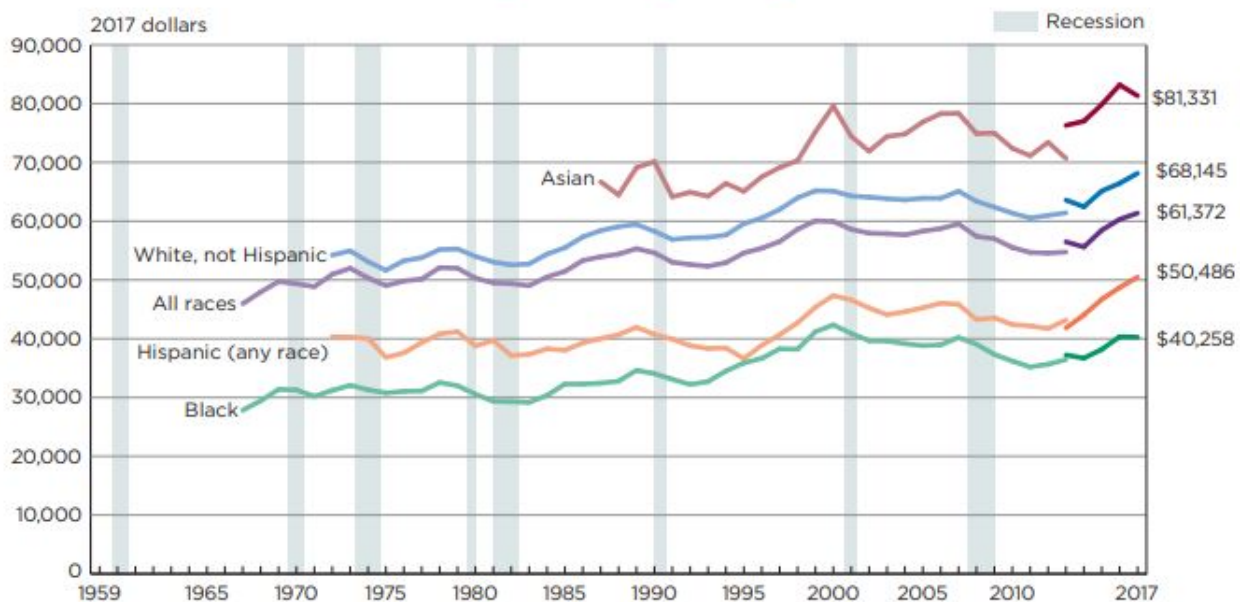
Underhill, Wendy. "Voter Identification Requirements: Voter ID Laws." *Voter Identification Requirements* | *Voter ID Laws*, National Conference of State Legislatures, [www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx](http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx).

**Table 1: Voter Identification Laws In Force in 2019\*\***

	<b>Photo ID</b>	<b>Non-Photo ID</b>
<b>Strict</b>	Georgia Indiana Kansas Mississippi Tennessee Virginia Wisconsin [6]	Arizona North Dakota [7] Ohio
<b>Non-Strict</b>	Arkansas[1] Alabama[2] Florida Hawaii Idaho Louisiana Michigan Rhode Island South Dakota	Alaska Colorado Connecticut Delaware Iowa Kentucky Missouri Montana New Hampshire North Carolina[5] Oklahoma[3] South Carolina[5] Utah Washington West Virginia

Underhill, Wendy. "Voter Identification Requirements: Voter ID Laws." *Voter Identification Requirements* | *Voter ID Laws*, National Conference of State Legislatures, [www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx](http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/voter-id.aspx).

Figure 1.  
**Real Median Household Income by Race and Hispanic Origin: 1967 to 2017**



Note: The data for 2013 and beyond reflect the implementation of the redesigned income questions. The data points are placed at the midpoints of the respective years. Median household income data are not available prior to 1967. For information on recessions, see Appendix A. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <[www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar18.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar18.pdf)>.


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 1968 to 2018 Annual Social and Economic Supplements.

One of the most common critiques of voter identification laws is that they adversely impact lower income citizens due to the costs associated with obtaining a government-issued ID.

“Income and Poverty in the United States: 2017.” Edited by Jessica Semega et al., *The United States Census Bureau*, US Census Bureau, 12 Sept. 2018, [www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2018/demo/p60-263.html](http://www.census.gov/library/visualizations/2018/demo/p60-263.html)

Excerpt from: “The Politics of Race and Voter ID Laws in the States: The Return of Jim Crow?” (2014)

Rene R. Rocha and Tetsuya Matsubayashi



“OTHER REFORMS, SUCH AS MORE STRINGENT VOTER IDENTIFICATION REGULATIONS, HAVE BEEN SEEN BY SOME RESTRICTING ACCESS TO THE BALLOT IN THE BUILDUP TO THE 2012 ELECTION. VOTER ID LAWS ARE THOUGHT TO DISCOURAGE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION, ESPECIALLY AMONG GROUPS THAT HAVE BEEN HISTORICALLY MARGINALIZED BY THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. THE UNEVEN CONSEQUENCES OF PARTICULAR RULES RESULT FROM VARIANCE IN THE COST OF VOTING ACROSS DEMOGRAPHIC AND PARTISAN GROUPS. IN SHORT, LAWMAKERS APPEAR WELL AWARE THAT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION REFLECT, IN PART, THE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH VOTING. CHANGES TO ELECTION PROCEDURES CAN CHANGE THESE COSTS AND MAGNIFY OR DIMINISH THE

Rocha, Rene R., and Tetsuya Matsubayashi. "The Politics of Race and Voter ID Laws in the States: The Return of Jim Crow?" *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 67, no. 3, 2014, pp. 666–679. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24371900](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24371900).

Excerpts from: "A Principle or a Strategy? Voter Identification Laws and Partisan Competition in the American States" (2015)

By William D. Hicks, Seth C. McKee, Mitchell D. Sellers and Daniel A. Smith

The partisan election margin describes the absolute percentage difference in votes earned by all of a state's Republican and Democratic legislative candidates. Higher values suggest little competition in state legislative elections, as one party earned a greater share of the two-party vote, and lower values suggest extensive competition, as the collective votes earned by the parties' candidates are roughly equivalent (Carroll and Eichorst 2013). Our explanation for the introduction and adoption of restrictive voter ID bills suggests that not all Republican governments are the same. Indeed, we argue that a greater presence of GOP lawmakers in a given legislature more strongly influences the introduction of voter ID bills and the adoption of voter ID laws as the competitiveness of state legislative elections increases or as the partisan election margin shrinks. In other words, while we expect the main effect of the percent of GOP lawmakers on voter ID bill introductions and voter ID policy adoptions to be positive and significant, we argue that this effect should reduce in size and significance as the partisan election margin increases.

□ pg. 22

pg. 29 □

The right to vote has been treated with the esteem worthy of the most sacred democratic principle in American politics. Yet in the new millennium, the protection of voting rights palpably changed. Among a host of election administration and voting rights controversies, the battle over voter ID has become an issue where the two major political parties have sharply divided. We suspect that the most plausible reason for a shift toward contracting the right to vote, at least with regard to increasing some of the costs involved with exercising the franchise, stems from party competition and its grounding in coalitional politics.

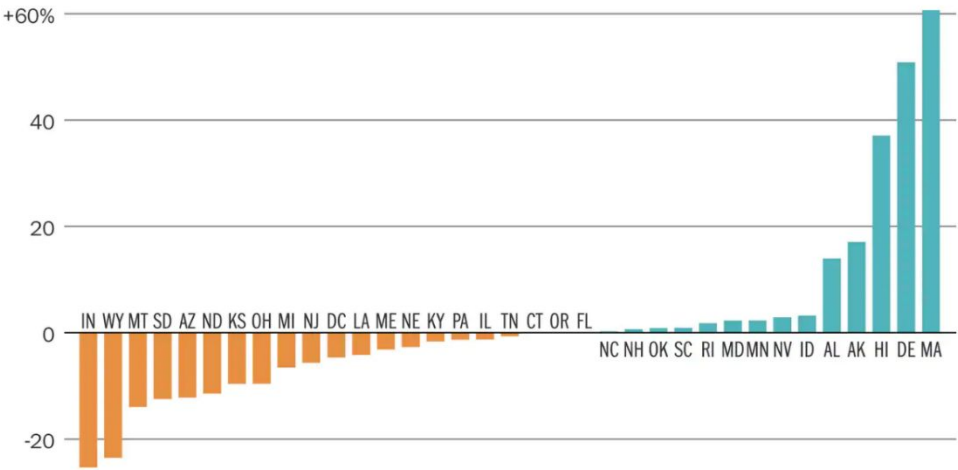
Hicks, William D., et al. "A Principle or a Strategy? Voter Identification Laws and Partisan Competition in the American States." *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 1, 2015, pp. 18–33. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/24371969](http://www.jstor.org/stable/24371969).

# Poll Closures



Many states have reduced their number of physical polling places

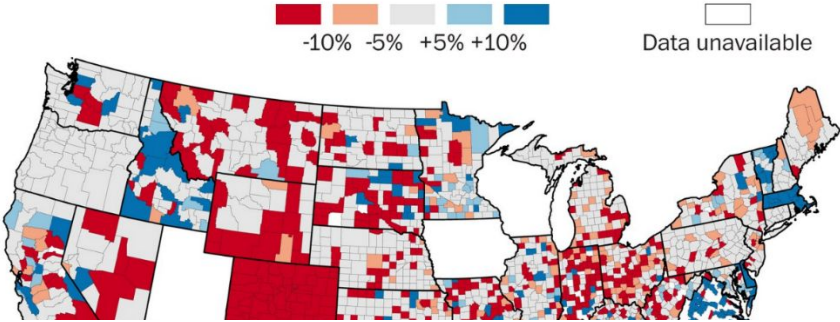
Percent change in number of physical polling locations reported to the U.S. Election Assistance Commission from 2012 to 2016.



Source: 2012 and 2016 Election Administration and Voting Surveys

Poll closures

Percent change in number of physical polling locations reported to the Election Assistance Commission, 2012 to 2016



Ingraham, Christopher. "Thousands of Polling Places Were Closed over the Past Decade. Here's Where." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 25 Oct. 2018, [www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/26/thousands-polling-places-were-closed-over-past-decade-heres-where/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/26/thousands-polling-places-were-closed-over-past-decade-heres-where/)

Excerpts from the Washington Post article: "Thousands of polling places were closed over the past decade. Here's where."

By Christopher Ingraham

*Access to the ballot box has become a contentious issue in the 2018 midterm election cycle. Georgia authorities were forced to backtrack this year from a plan to close all but two polling locations in a majority-black county. Authorities in majority-Latino Dodge City, Kan., announced they would be offering free bus rides to the sole polling place for the city of 28,000 after public outcry over a decision to move the voting site outside the city limits, a mile from the nearest public transit stop.*

*Federal data suggests that if current voting site trends continue, such disputes may become more common: Between the 2012 and 2016 elections, the number of physical polling places reported to the Election Assistance Commission by local authorities fell by nearly 3,000, from 119,968 locations in 2012 to 116,990 in 2016, according to data released late last year by the agency. That followed a drop from over 132,000 polling places reported in 2008.*

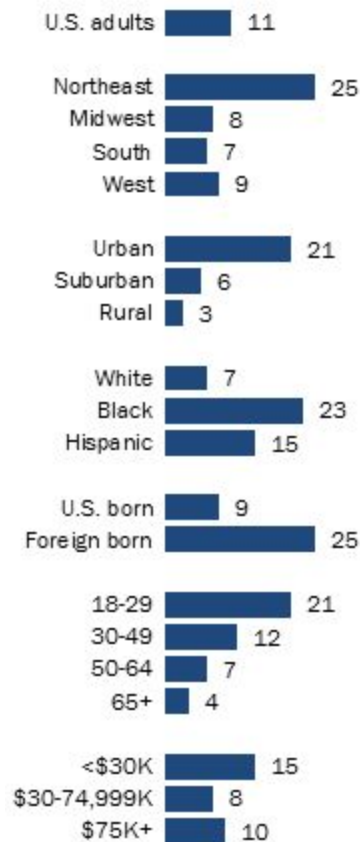
*Beyond those issues, any poll closures in the former pre-clearance states are of potential concern simply because those states tend to have some of the strictest*

Ingraham, Christopher. "Thousands of Polling Places Were Closed over the Past Decade. Here's Where." *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 25 Oct. 2018, [www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/26/thousands-polling-places-were-closed-over-past-decade-heres-where/](https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/26/thousands-polling-places-were-closed-over-past-decade-heres-where/).

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## Public transit use varies by demographic group

*% of U.S. adults who say they take public transportation (like a bus, subway or train) on a daily, almost daily or weekly basis*



Note: Whites and blacks include only non-Hispanics. Hispanics are of any race.

Source: Survey conducted Nov. 24-Dec. 21, 2015.

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Anderson, Monica. "Who Relies on Public Transit in the U.S." *Pew Research Center*, Pew Research Center, 7 Apr. 2016,  
[www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/](http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/)

Excerpts from "Closed voting sites hit minority counties harder for busy midterm elections"  
Mark Nichols USA TODAY

However, days from what many expect will be one of the busiest midterm elections in decades, the burden of Americans' shrinking access to in-person voting options is falling more heavily on urban areas and minority voters, a USA TODAY analysis of national and state data shows.

Voting rights advocates say the disappearance of polling sites could create confusion about where to vote, and thinner staffing of remaining sites could mean longer lines.

Those problems, they fear, could shrink voter turnout in some neighborhoods.

In majority-minority urban counties, voters lost an average of seven polling places and more than 200 of the workers who help them cast ballots between 2012 and 2016.

The number of voting sites has continued to shrink in 2018, according to election officials, voting rights experts and the publicly-available lists of polling sites for next month's midterms.

A 2011 study by the American Political Science Review found that consolidating polling places in Los Angeles led to increased transportation costs for residents in some neighborhoods – and lower turnout

A 2011 study by the American Political Science Review found that consolidating polling places in Los Angeles led to increased transportation costs for residents in some neighborhoods – and lower turnout

Nichols, Mark. "Closed Voting Sites Hit Minority Counties Harder for Busy Midterm Elections." *USA Today*, Gannett Satellite Information Network, 31 Oct. 2018,  
[www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/10/30/midterm-elections-closed-voting-sites-impact-minority-voter-turnout/1774221002/](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2018/10/30/midterm-elections-closed-voting-sites-impact-minority-voter-turnout/1774221002/).

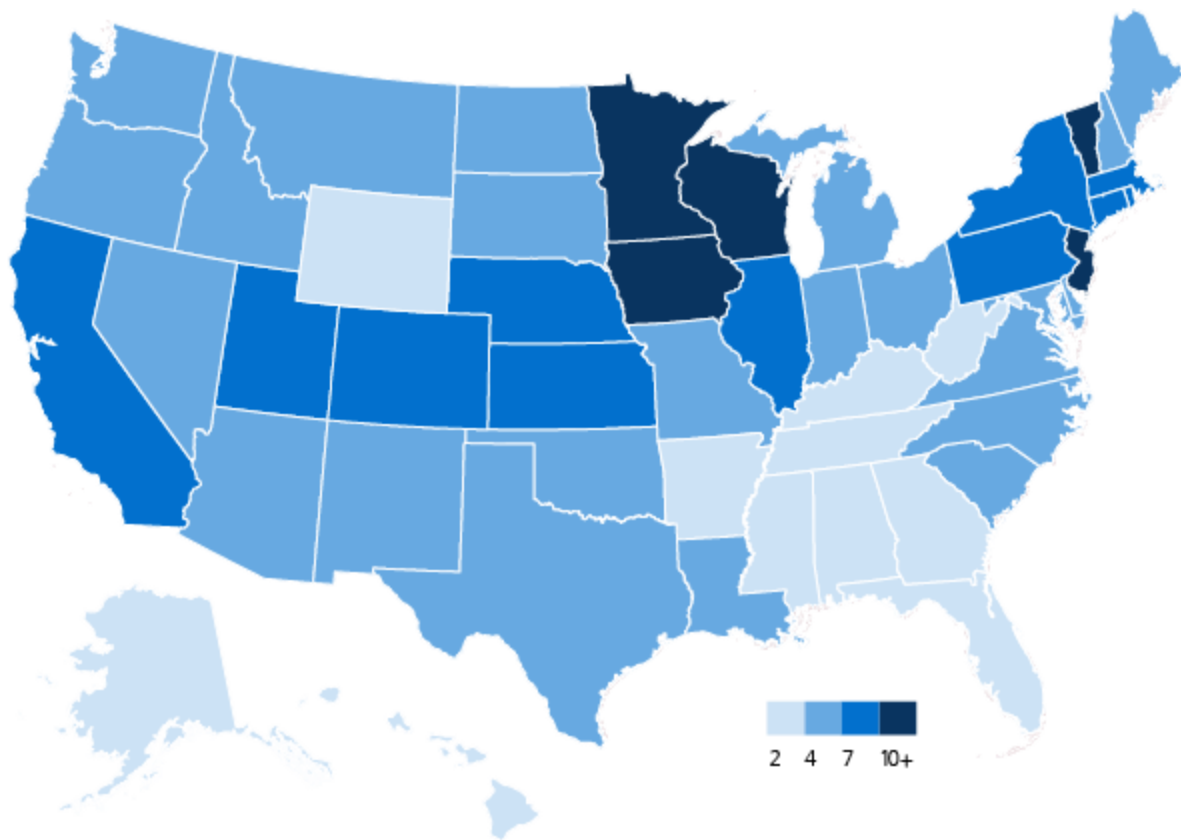
# Incarceration

<b>Never Lose Right to Vote</b>	<b>Lost Only While Incarcerated   Automatic Restoration After Release</b>	<b>Lost Until Completion of Sentence   In Some States a Post-Sentencing Waiting Period   Additional Action Required for Restoration (1)</b>	<b>Lost Until Completion of Sentence (Parole and/Probation)   Automatic Restoration After</b>
Maine	Colorado	Alabama	Alaska
Vermont	District of Columbia	Arizona	Arkansas
	Hawaii	Delaware	California (2)
	Illinois	Florida (4)	Connecticut
	Indiana	Iowa	Georgia
	Maryland (3)	Kentucky	Idaho
	Massachusetts	Mississippi	Kansas
	Michigan	Nebraska	Louisiana
	Montana	Tennessee	Minnesota
	Nevada	Virginia	Missouri
	New Hampshire	Wyoming	New Jersey
	North Dakota		New Mexico
	Ohio		New York (5)
	Oregon		North Carolina
	Pennsylvania		Oklahoma
	Rhode Island		South Carolina
	Utah		South Dakota
			Texas
			Washington
			West Virginia
			Wisconsin

***National Conference of State Legislatures is a bipartisan non-governmental organization established in 1975 to serve the members and staff of state legislatures of the US.***

Potyondy, Patrick. "Felon Voting Rights." *National Conference of State Legislatures*, National Conference of State Legislatures, 14 Oct. 2019, [www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx](http://www.ncsl.org/research/elections-and-campaigns/felon-voting-rights.aspx).

### Black/white incarceration ratios



Data Sources: United States Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics. *National Prisoner Statistics, 1978-2014*. Bibliographic Citation: ICPSR36281-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2015-10-09; U.S. Census Bureau (2013). *2013 Population Estimates. Annual estimates of resident population by sex, race, and Hispanic origin for the United States, states and counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013*. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

Image visually compares the number of black citizens incarcerated in each state against the number of white citizens.



Nellis, Ashley, and Kara Gotsch. "The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons." *The Sentencing Project*, The Sentencing Project, 14 June 2016,

[www.sentencingproject.org/publications/color-of-justice-racial-and-ethnic-disparity-in-state-prisons/](http://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/color-of-justice-racial-and-ethnic-disparity-in-state-prisons/).

<b><i>State</i></b>	<b><i>Rate of Adult Black Male Imprisonment</i></b>
Vermont	1 in 14
Oklahoma	1 in 15
Iowa	1 in 17
Delaware	1 in 18
Connecticut	1 in 19
Arizona	1 in 19
Idaho	1 in 20
Pennsylvania	1 in 20
Louisiana	1 in 20
Wisconsin	1 in 20
Texas	1 in 20
Arkansas	1 in 21
Michigan	1 in 21
Oregon	1 in 21
Missouri	1 in 21
Indiana	1 in 22
Ohio	1 in 22
Florida	1 in 22
Nebraska	1 in 22
California	1 in 22
Rhode Island	1 in 22
Kansas	1 in 23
Colorado	1 in 23
Illinois	1 in 23
Alabama	1 in 25
Nevada	1 in 25
Montana	1 in 26
State Average	1 in 26
Kentucky	1 in 27
Virginia	1 in 27
Alaska	1 in 27
Utah	1 in 28
Minnesota	1 in 28
South Dakota	1 in 30
Tennessee	1 in 30
Mississippi	1 in 30
New Jersey	1 in 31
Georgia	1 in 33
Washington	1 in 34
South Carolina	1 in 34
West Virginia	1 in 36
Maine	1 in 37
New Mexico	1 in 37
North Carolina	1 in 37
Wyoming	1 in 38
New York	1 in 40
Maryland	1 in 41

Nellis, Ashley, and Kara Gotsch. "The Color of Justice: Racial and Ethnic Disparity in State Prisons." *The Sentencing Project*, The Sentencing Project, 14 June 2016, [www.sentencingproject.org/publications/color-of-justice-racial-and-ethnic-disparity-in-state-prisons/](http://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/color-of-justice-racial-and-ethnic-disparity-in-state-prisons/).

New Hampshire	1 in 41
North Dakota	1 in 49
Massachusetts	1 in 54
Hawaii	1 in 61

*United States Department of Justice. Office of Justice Programs. Bureau of Justice Statistics. National Prisoner Statistics, 1978-2014. Bibliographic Citation: ICPSR36281-v1. Ann Arbor, MI: Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research [distributor], 2015-10-09; U.S. Census Bureau (2013). 2013 Population Estimates. Annual estimates of resident population by sex, race, and Hispanic origin for the United States, states and counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013. Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.*

Following is the prepared text of President Reagan's speech today at the Department of Justice (1982):

"I am delighted to be here but I want to say at the outset that I did not come today just to give a pep talk or exchange niceties. Those of you engaged in law enforcement have struggled long and hard in what must have often seemed like a losing war against the menace of crime. I am grateful to you for that and so are the American people. But besides being grateful, I have some good news for you: a major initiative that I believe can mark a turning point in the battle against crime.

As all of you know, crime today is an American epidemic. It takes the lives of over 20,000 Americans a year, it touches nearly a third of American homes and results in about \$8.8 billion a year in financial losses.

These statistics suggest that our criminal justice system has broken down, that it just isn't working. And many Americans are losing faith in it. Nine out of ten Americans believe that the courts in their home areas are not tough enough on criminals.

And the cold statistics do demonstrate the failure of our criminal justice system to adequately pursue, prosecute and punish criminals. In New York City, for example, less than 1 percent of reported felonies end in a prison term for the offender. 'A New Privileged Class'

The perception is growing that the crime problem stems from the emergence of a new privileged class in America: A class of repeat offenders and career criminals who think they have a right to victimize their fellow citizens with virtual impunity. They are openly contemptuous of our way of justice; they do not believe they will be caught, and if they are caught, they are confident that once their cases enter our legal system the charges will be dropped, postponed, plea-bargained away or lost in a maze of legal technicalities that make a mockery of our legitimate and honorable concern with civil liberties.

Once again, the research shows that this common perception has a strong basis in fact. Just take one limited part of the crime picture: transit police in New York estimate that only 500 habitual offenders were responsible for nearly half of the crimes committed in their subways last year.

This rise in crime, this growth of a hardened criminal class, has partly been the result of misplaced Government priorities and a misguided social philosophy. At the root of this philosophy lies utopian presumptions about human nature that see man as primarily a creature of his material environment. By changing this environment through expensive social programs this philosophy holds that Government can permanently change man and usher in an era of prosperity and virtue. In much the same way, individual wrongdoing is seen as a result of poor socio-economic conditions or an underprivileged background. This

philosophy suggests, in short, that where there is crime or wrong-doing, society, not the individual, is to blame. 'Consensus Rejects This View'

But what has also become abundantly clear in the last few years is that a new political consensus among the American people utterly rejects this point of view. The increase in citizen involvement in the crime problem and the tough new state statutes directed at repeat offenders make it clear that the American people are reasserting certain enduring truths: The belief that right and wrong do matter, that individuals are responsible for their actions, that evil is frequently a conscious choice and that retribution must be swift and sure for those who decide to make a career of preying on the innocent."

"TEXT OF PRESIDENT'S SPEECH ON DRIVE AGAINST CRIME." *New York Times*,

October 15, 1982, vol. cxxxii, no. 45,486. p. 20

### ***Graphics made by the Sentencing Project***

Sentencing Project is a Washington, D.C.-based research and advocacy center working to reduce the use of incarceration in the United States and to address racial disparities in the criminal justice system.

**6.1  
MILLION**

Americans

**CANNOT  
VOTE**

because of  
a felony conviction



**1 OF EVERY 13**

African Americans

has **LOST THEIR  
VOTING RIGHTS**

due to felony

disenfranchisement

laws, vs. **1 IN EVERY**

**56** non-black voters

---

**1** in every **10** black

men in his thirties

is in **prison**

or **jail** on any

given day



Chung, Jean. "Felony Disenfranchisement." *The Sentencing Project*, The Sentencing Project, 26

Nov. 2019, [www.sentencingproject.org/issues/felony-disenfranchisement/](http://www.sentencingproject.org/issues/felony-disenfranchisement/).

Excerpts from: ***Report to the United Nations on Racial Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice System (2018)***

Created by the Sentencing Project

*Edits have been made to this source for visual appeal and navigability*

In 2016, black Americans comprised **27% of all individuals arrested** in the United States—**double their share of the total population**. Black youth accounted for 15% of all U.S. children yet made up 35% of juvenile arrests in that year. What might appear at first to be a linkage between race and crime is in large part a function of **concentrated urban poverty**, which is far more common for African Americans than for other racial groups. This accounts for a substantial portion of African Americans' increased likelihood of committing certain violent and property crimes. But while there is a higher black rate of involvement in certain crimes, **white Americans overestimate the proportion of crime committed** by blacks and Latinos, overlook the fact that communities of color are **disproportionately victims of crime**, and discount the prevalence of bias in the criminal justice system

More than **1 in 4 people arrested for drug law violations in 2015 was black**, although **drug use rates do not differ substantially by race** and ethnicity and drug users generally purchase drugs from people of the same race or ethnicity.<sup>15</sup>) For example, the ACLU found that **blacks were 3.7 times more likely to be arrested for marijuana** possession than whites in 2010, even though their rate of marijuana usage was comparable

Once pulled over, black and Hispanic drivers were three times as likely as whites to be searched (6% and 7% versus 2%) and **blacks were twice as likely as whites to be arrested**. These patterns hold even though police **officers generally have a lower "contraband hit rate" when they search black versus white drivers**

Although African Americans and Latinos comprise **29% of the U.S. population**, they make up **57% of the U.S. prison population**. This results in imprisonment rates for African-American and Hispanic adults that are 5.9 and 3.1 times the rate for white adults, respectively—and at far higher levels in some states

Of the 277,000 people imprisoned nationwide for a drug offense, **over half (56%) are African American or Latino**

Nearly half (48%) of the 206,000 people serving life and “virtual life” prison sentences are African American and another 15% are Latino.

Gotsch, Kara. “Report to the United Nations on Racial Disparities in the U.S. Criminal Justice

System.” *The Sentencing Project*, The Sentencing Project, 19 Apr. 2018,

[www.sentencingproject.org/publications/un-report-on-racial-disparities/](http://www.sentencingproject.org/publications/un-report-on-racial-disparities/).

Excerpts from: “Felon Voting Disenfranchisement” (2000)

Marc Mauer

*“Thus, for example, an 18-year-old convicted of felony drug possession in Virginia who is sentenced to a treatment program which he successfully completes is disenfranchised for life even though he may not have spent a day in jail.” pg. 248*

*“In his 1999 Congressional testimony, Roger Clegg of the Center for Equal Opportunity voiced his concern that ‘we do not want people voting who are not trust worthy.’ In other words, ex-felons would presumably vote for policies that help criminals, not otherwise law-abiding members of the community.” pg. 249*

*“Carrying the above one step further, Roger Clegg also asserts that we should exclude from the electoral process people who are not ‘loyal to our republic.’” pg. 250*

*“Yet another concern is that felons, by the nature of their criminal backgrounds, would interfere with the voting process itself. While there might be some validity to this argument for felons convicted of electoral fraud, it is hard to imagine why a car thief or drug seller would have an interest in, or knowledge of, committing electoral fraud” pg. 250*

*“Given that convicted felons are disproportionately low income it would not be surprising if their rates of electoral participation reflected the lower than average rate of these groups in general. But this is an argument related to the political efficacy of convicted felons, not to the policy question of whether*

Mauer, Marc. "Felon Voting Disenfranchisement: A Growing Collateral Consequence of Mass Incarceration." *Federal Sentencing Reporter*, vol. 12, no. 5, 2000, pp. 248–251. *JSTOR*, [www.jstor.org/stable/20640279](http://www.jstor.org/stable/20640279).