ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO VOTE

HEARING

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED TENTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

HELD IN WASINGTON, DC, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

Printed for the use of the Committee on House Administration

Available on the Internet:
http://www.gpoaccess.gov/congress/house/administration/index.html

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ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO VOTE

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to call, at 2:00 p.m., in Room 1310, Longworth House Office Building, Hon. Robert A. Brady (chairman of the committee) Presiding.

Present: Representatives Brady, Davis of California, Davis of Alabama, and Ehlers.

Staff Present: Thomas Hicks, Senior Election Counsel; Janelle Hu, Election Counsel; Jennifer Daehn, Election Counsel; Matt Pinkus, Professional Staff/Parliamentarian; Kyle Anderson, Press Director; Kristin McCowan, Chief Legislative Clerk; Daniel Favarulo, Legislative Assistant, Elections; Robert Henline, Legislative Assistant; Fred Hay, Minority General Counsel; Ashley Stow, Minority Election Counsel; Bryan T. Dorsey, Minority Professional Staff; and Salley Collins, Minority Press Secretary.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to call the hearing on House Administration to order. Today's hearing will focus on voting for college students, the difficulties they face, and how we can ensure their right to vote. I would like to recognize myself for an opening remark.

In 2008, 44 million Americans 18 to 29 years old are eligible to vote, more than one-fifth of the voting population. And young voters in primaries and caucuses this year have more than doubled their turnout from previous elections. Students are also volunteering in greater and greater numbers.

The historic 2008 Presidential election clearly has young voters energized like never before; however, college students today face barriers to vote, restricting or vague residency requirements confuse both election officials and students. Many States require forms of identification at the polls that students simply do not have. Some election officials still believe the myth that young people don't care about voting and don't provide enough machines in college towns. Even worse, deceptive fliers on college campuses have threatened students' financial aid and health care if they register to vote on campus.

Several of our witnesses today have done a great job of protecting the rights of college students to vote. I hope this hearing today sends the message to election officials and university presidents to take steps to encourage and protect student voting rights.

We also will hear from students and student advisor organizations who have encouraged students to vote in this historic Presidential election. Studies have shown that for the first-time voters cannot register and vote the first time they try, they will be less likely to participate in future elections. We owe it to our young voters and our democracy to do what we can to encourage a new generation of American voters.

[The statement of Mr. Brady follows:]

CHA Subcommittee on Elections:
"Ensuring the Right of College Students to Vote"

1310 Longworth House Office Building
Thursday, September 25, 2008
1:30 p.m.

The hearing will come to order. Good morning Members of the Committee, witnesses and guests. Today's hearing will focus on voting and college students—the difficulties they face and how we can ensure their right to vote.

In 2008, there are 44 million 18-29 year olds eligible to vote—more than one-fifth of the voting population. And young voters this year in primaries and caucuses have more than doubled their turnout numbers from previous elections. Students are also volunteering in greater and greater numbers. The historic nature of the 2008 presidential election clearly has young voters energized like never before.

However, college students today still face numerous barriers to successful voting. Overly restrictive or vague residency requirements in state law confuse both election officials and students seeking to register alike. Because of this confusion, college students across the country have received false or misleading information on their eligibility to vote and the consequences of registering to vote. Many states require forms of identification at the polls that college students simply do not have. Some election officials still believe the myth that "young people don't care about voting" and do not fully equip polling places in college communities with enough machines. This false idea led to students in Ohio having to endure waits of up to 10 hours to vote in the 2004 presidential election. Even worse, there have been reports of deceptive flyers appearing on college campuses threatening students with the loss of financial aid or health care if they register to vote on campus.

All this is wrong. But several of our witnesses today have done a great job of protecting the right of college students to vote and I am eager to take their testimony today. I hope this hearing today sends a message to election officials and university presidents that positive steps can be taken to encourage and protect student voting rights. And I am also pleased to take testimony from the students and the student advocacy organizations here today who have worked tirelessly to encourage students to vote in this historic presidential election. They are doing great work and I applaud their efforts.

Many young voters are first time voters. Studies have shown that if first time voters cannot register and vote the first time they try, they will be less likely to participate in future elections. We owe it to our young voters and our democracy to do what we can to encourage a new generation of American voters.

The CHAIRMAN. I will now ask our Ranking Member Mr. Ehlers if he has any statement.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do.

I thank you for calling today's hearing on this important and timely issue. With the excitement surrounding the upcoming election, particularly with young Americans who may be casting a vote for President for the first time, we must do everything that we can to encourage participation in the elections process. I know I personally have been involved when I was a professor at a small, but excellent college. I was involved in recruiting people to register students to vote, putting them at the end of the registration line and nabbing the students as they came out of their college registration, and saying, "hey, you registered at the college, now register to vote." And we got quite a few that way. It is a good thing to do.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on the efforts to educate student voters. We must also ensure that voting advocacy groups that tour college campuses respect the laws of each State they visit and adjust their instructions accordingly, as many States have varying residency requirements to cast a ballot. And I want to emphasize that because of my work in this committee, I have encountered shady registration practices in various States where the registrars simply disregard the rules and tell the students they can do anything they want. That is not true. We have to follow the laws of the State. It is not Federal law, but State law.

In order to get young people excited about participating in the electoral process, elections administrators and third-party groups must find new and creative ways to reach out to college-age voters. One such approach that I am very proud to say comes from my home State of Michigan is a mobile branch office which is established by Michigan's forward-thinking Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land. Michigan's mobile branch office has traveled more than 125,000 miles while registering voters, issuing driver's licenses, answering questions and offering all the services found at a traditional secretary of state branch office. Since 2004, the mobile branch office has visited Michigan's public universities to assist students in registering to vote just before major elections, and it is scheduled to visit Michigan's 15 public universities before the deadline to register to vote passes. I hope they can also go to the smaller private universities. Following the introduction of the mobile branch unit, its popularity has resulted in a number of universities reserving a spot on the vehicle's calendar months in advance in order to coordinate complementary voter education activities.

Unfortunately, Secretary Land could not be with us today to discuss this innovative program as she is busy ensuring that Michigan is prepared for the upcoming election. However, if there are no objections, I would like to submit a description of the mobile branch office program for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you.

[The information follows:]

STATE OF MICHIGAN
TERRI LYNN LAND, SECRETARY OF STATE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE
LANSING

Michigan Secretary of State's Mobile Branch Office

Since hitting the road more than 10 years ago, the Michigan Secretary of State's Mobile Branch Office has proved to be an effective way of helping young adults register to vote.

It has traveled more than 125,000 miles, registering voters, issuing driver's licenses, answering questions and offering all the services customers find at a traditional Secretary of State branch office. The mobile office provides veterans, college students, senior citizens, and rural and inner-city residents a convenient option to conduct their Secretary of State business.

As someone active in politics from an early age, Secretary of State Terri Lynn Land believes strongly in encouraging young people to take an interest in politics and their communities. Since 2004, Land directed the mobile office to visit Michigan's public universities to assist students in registering to vote prior to major elections. In September and October 2008, the mobile office will visit each of Michigan's 15 public universities just before the registration deadline.

As a Secretary of State office on wheels, the mobile office allows students to register in person, which then lets them vote absentee if they are first-time voters. If a student registers by mail or through a third party organization's registration drive, he or she must vote in person the first time they cast a ballot per the federal identification requirement. The mobile office also allows students to change their address, letting them choose whether to vote from their parent's address or from their campus address.

(more)

In addition to registering to vote, students can have their questions answered about the voting process and what to expect when they head to their polling location in November. Knowledgeable Secretary of State staff people are available to field questions, hand out informational literature about the process and direct students to the online Michigan Voter Information Center at www.Michigan.gov/vote. Plus, news media coverage of the mobile office visits help to publicize critical election information and deadlines.

The convenience that the mobile office offers has been noticed by student leaders throughout the state. For example, a number of universities now reserve their stop months in advance so they can coordinate other voter-information activities around the mobile office visit. As the student newspaper at Michigan State University, which has more than 15,000 students living on campus, editorialized in 2006, "(I)t is fortunate for MSU students that the Secretary of State will provide a mobile voter registration office on campus."

Even the national Commission on Federal Election Reform chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former U.S. Secretary of State James A. Baker III singled out the mobile office for praise in its 2005 report about improving the U.S. elections system in a section about expanding access to elections. The report called Michigan's mobile office a "model" that "should be extended to all the states."

Michigan residents can be proud of their state's mobile office and the work it does to register students to vote and educate them about what they'll experience as they cast their ballot for the first time.

Mr. EHLERS. The success of Michigan's mobile branch program has made it a model for other election programs around the Nation, but it is only one solution. Through our efforts such as today's hearings, we may look for additional ways to increase the youth vote in this country and perhaps inspire a lifetime of involvement in the elections process. I thank you, Mr. Chairman. I reserve the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Ehlers follows:]

COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLICAN OFFICE

Committee on House Administration Hearing
Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote
September 25, 2008

Thank you, Chairman Brady, for calling today's

hearing on this important and timely issue. With the

excitement surrounding the upcoming election, particularly

with young Americans who may be casting a vote for

president for the first time, we must do everything that we

can to encourage participation in the elections process.

I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today on

their efforts to educate student voters. We must also

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before major elections, and it is scheduled to visit

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could not be with us today to discuss this innovative

program as she is busy ensuring that Michigan is prepared

for the upcoming election, however, if there are no

objections, I would like to submit a description of the

Mobile Branch Office Program for the record.

[Michigan Mobile Branch Office Description is

admitted to the record]

COMMITTEE ON
HOUSE ADMINISTRATION
REPUBLICAN OFFICE

Committee on House Administration Hearing
Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote
September 25, 2008

The success of Michigan's Mobile Branch program

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as today's hearing, we may look for additional ways to

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inspire a lifetime of involvement in the elections process.

Thank you, and I reserve the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Any other statements?

With none, we would like to get on with our first witness, the Honorable Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, representing the Ninth Congressional District of Illinois' House of Representatives. She currently serves on the House Democratic leadership as a chief deputy whip and as a member of the Steering and Policy Committee. Representative Schakowsky has been a leading advocate for students' voting rights, and I commend her for her leadership in introducing the Student VOTER Act.

I would also like to take time to make part of the official record testimony submitted by Senator Durbin, who has been a leader on the issue and introduced similar legislation in the Senate.

[The statement of Senator Durbin follows:]

House Administration Committee
September 25, 2008
Hearing -- "Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote"

Written Testimony from U.S. Senator Dick Durbin

I commend Chairman Brady and the Committee on House Administration for holding today's hearing and putting a spotlight on the issue of student voting. College students throughout the country face too many hurdles when it comes to exercising one of the most fundamental rights of American citizenship: the right to vote. It is time for Congress to address this problem and seek solutions.

College students should not have to jump through extra hoops simply to register to vote. They should not be given misinformation about voter registration and residency requirements by local registrars. Students should not be subjected to burdensome ID requirements. They should not have to wait in longer lines at the polls than other voters. In short, college students should not be treated like second-class citizens when it comes to participating in the democratic process.

These barriers to student voting may help explain why voter turnout among young Americans has declined since the first election after the ratification of the 26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1971, which lowered the voting age in America to 18. In 1972, 52% of Americans ages 18-24 voted for President but in every election since 1972, less than half of young people ages 18-24 voted, and only 36% of this group voted in 1996 and 2000. In contrast, nearly 70% of Americans ages 45 and older voted in the 2004 presidential election. Although we have seen positive trends in student voting this year, the larger trends are troubling.

What can Congress do to address this problem? In July, I introduced a bill in the Senate (S. 3390) – and Representatives Schakowsky and LaTourette introduced one in the House (H.R. 6704) – that would require colleges and universities that receive federal funds to offer voter registration to students at the same time they register for classes. Our bill – the Student Voter Opportunity To Encourage Registration Act of 2008, or the "Student VOTER Act of 2008" – would vastly expand the number of college students who are registered to vote in America.

Our bill would not impose a heavy burden on colleges and universities. It builds on the successful model of the "Motor Voter" law, which brought voter registration to DMV offices across the country and added five million voters to the rolls in the eight months after its passage by Congress in 1993. While some DMV offices simply mail completed registration forms to the appropriate clerk or registrar, others now use efficient, easy-to-use computer software to submit registrations electronically.

This means that the price tag of the Student VOTER Act to colleges and universities is at most a 42-cent stamp for each student. I think my colleagues would agree that this is not too high a price to pay for a lifetime of civic engagement.

The Student VOTER Act may also serve to de-politicize voter registration efforts on college campuses. Polls consistently show that young voters are less likely to identify with a political party than older voters. Polls generally show that more than four in ten young voters identify as independents, with roughly three in ten young voters identifying with each of the two major political parties. On many college campuses today, partisan student groups are the main voter registrants, which can alienate undecided and independent voters. The Student VOTER Act would institutionalize the voter registration process and register students in a systematic, non-partisan manner.

The Student VOTER Act has been referred to the Committee on House Administration, and I hope you will give it consideration. On the Senate side, the bill has been referred to the Senate Rules Committee, on which I serve, and I hope we will consider this bill next year in the 111th Congress.

The success of America's experiment in democracy lies in broad participation and deep civic engagement. From the Reconstruction Amendments, to women's suffrage, to the abolition of the poll tax, and finally the ratification of the 26th Amendment, we have witnessed a steady but difficult march toward a more inclusive nation. To realize the full potential of these great strides, the Student VOTER Act provides a pathway to participation for America's youth.

The CHAIRMAN. I thank my colleague today and look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF THE HON. JAN SCHAKOWSKY, A REPRESENTA-TIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Mrs. Davis. I am so happy to be here today. I appreciate your opening statements that really show your support of students having greater access and participation in our electoral process.

I represent the Ninth Congressional District, which is not so unusual, and also representing colleges and universities, Northwestern University, Loyola University of Chicago, Oakton Community College, Truman College. And I want to talk to you about this bipartisan legislation and thank my friend Congressman Steve LaTourette of Ohio, who is cosponsor with me to reduce some of the barriers that college students face when trying to vote.

I want to extend a particular thank you to Matthew Segal, who actually brought this legislation to me. And he is the founder and executive director of the organization SAVE and will be testifying before you.

But I know there are a number of college students here who themselves are advocating on their own behalf, and I want to welcome them as well.

I believe the foundation of America's democracy lies in civic engagement and broad participation in government. And from the civil rights amendment to women's suffrage to the abolition of the poll tax, and finally to the ratification of the 26th amendment, this Nation has embarked on a difficult, but steady march toward being a more inclusive Nation.

So in July I introduced H.R. 6704, the Student Voter Opportunity to Encourage Registration Act, the Student VOTER Act of 2008, which is a continuation of that progress, because it provides a pathway to participation for America's youth. The need for this bipartisan bill is clear. Despite a small rise in youth voting in 2004's Presidential election, young voters, all the data shows us, are far less likely to vote than older voters. In the 2004 Presidential election, only 47 percent of the 18- to 24-year-olds voted compared to 66 percent of citizens 25 and older. This marked the eighth straight Presidential contest in which less than half of young Americans voted.

While there is a number of factors that contribute to this trend, one is clearly the fact that many college students are first-time voters and often are unfamiliar with how to register. The Student VOTER Act offers a straightforward solution. It requires colleges and universities that receive Federal funds to provide students the opportunity to register to vote on campus. The Student VOTER Act does this by amending the National Voter Registration Act of 1993, also known as Motor Voter, to designate colleges and universities that receive Federal funds as voter registration agencies.

This legislation will not present a substantial burden to our Nation's universities. Already the Federal Election Commission has created the national mail voter registration form, which allows Americans to register to vote from anywhere in the United States. This form can easily be used at any university providing registra-

tion services for its students. For example, even before registration begins, Brown University in Rhode Island, just one example, provides its students with voter registration materials.

I am here today to talk with you about my bill, but I also understand that my legislation addresses only one of the challenges I believe young people will face when they attempt to vote this fall. As we have already seen in this election year, enthusiasm and interest in the political process is stronger among young voters than perhaps at any other time in our Nation's history. While this is grounds for optimism, I am also troubled by efforts to intentionally mislead young voters and/or prevent them from voting. I was shocked to learn about a misinformation campaign at Virginia Tech earlier this year where fliers were printed and posted around campus that said that students who registered to vote in Virginia could no longer be claimed as dependants on their parents' tax returns. Aside from being wholly inaccurate, this type of misinformation can have a devastating consequence by intimidating young voters into not voting.

Another obstacle for young voters is stringent voter ID laws. Seven States specify that voters must show a photo ID before being permitted to vote. According to a Rock the Vote survey, 19 percent of young adults 18 to 29 report they don't possess a government-issued photo ID with their current address. As a result, thousands, if not hundreds of thousands, of college students will be forced to vote provisionally this September, for which they may not even receive verification as to whether or not their ballots count.

These examples of the barriers students face today when attempting to register to vote demonstrate the importance of today's hearing. And again, I want to say that my bill takes one step forward by making it easier by making registration more available to students on college campuses around the country. And I thank the committee very much for inviting me today.

I yield back my time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and thank you for participating. And thank you for your introduction to the Student VOTER Act. It is very much needed and appreciated.

[The information follows:]

110TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 6704

To amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for the treatment of institutions of higher education as voter registration agencies.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 31, 2008

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY (for herself and Mr. LATOURETTE) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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A BILL

To amend the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 to provide for the treatment of institutions of higher education as voter registration agencies.

1   *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*

2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4   This Act may be cited as the "Student Voter Oppor-

5 tunity To Encourage Registration Act of 2008" or the

6 "Student VOTER Act of 2008".

2

1 **SEC. 2. TREATMENT OF UNIVERSITIES AS VOTER REG-**

2 **ISTRATION AGENCIES.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 7(a) of the National Voter

4 Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg–5(a)) is

5 amended—

6 (1) in paragraph (2)—

7 (A) by striking "and" at the end of sub-

8 paragraph (A);

9 (B) by striking the period at the end of

10 subparagraph (B) and inserting "; and"; and

11 (C) by adding at the end the following new

12 subparagraph:

13 "(C) each institution of higher education

14 (as defined in section 101 of the Higher Edu-

15 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001)) in the

16 State that receives Federal funds."; and

17 (2) in paragraph (6)(A), by inserting "or, in

18 the case of an institution of higher education, with

19 each registration of a student for enrollment in a

20 course of study" after "assistance,".

21 (b) AMENDMENT TO HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF

22 1965.—Section 487(a) of the Higher Education Act of

23 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1094(a)) is amended by striking para-

24 graph (23).

○

The CHAIRMAN. Does anybody have any questions for the Congresslady?

Thank you very much again.

The CHAIRMAN. We would like to call panel number one up please. And while you are doing that, I would like to recognize somebody in the audience. With us is Mr. Ken Smuckler. He is president of the InfoVoter Technologies. InfoVoter manages and operates the Tom Joyner hotline, the largest national voter hotline in the country.

Please raise your hand, and thank you for participating and your interest.

He is somebody that is going to—is participating or listening today that knows he is going to be hearing something that he can hopefully won't hear on election day. He is in charge of trying to make a lot of problems that happen on election day go away or try to solve them at that particular 16- or 13- or 12-hour window that we have, and hopefully he can hear some things today that can maybe help before election day happens. And we appreciate your attention and your participation.

I would like to call the panel up to the desk, please. I would like to welcome and thank our panel of witnesses today. And we start off with Ms. Sheri Iachetta. Thank you. Ms. Sheri Iachetta currently serves as a registrar for the city of Charlottesville, Virginia. As a registrar Ms. Iachetta has had the opportunity serve on many task forces that have been important in shaping election administrative procedures, such as the State Board of Elections Committee on Electronic Poll Books, the State Task Force on Electronic Voting, and the National Election Center Task Force on Poll Working Training.

Thank you, and appreciate your testimony today. Just push that button and speak right into the microphone.

STATEMENTS OF SHERI IACHETTA, REGISTRAR, CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA; NEIL ALBRECHT, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, CITY OF MILWAUKEE ELECTION COMMISSION; MARVIN KRISLOV, PRESIDENT, OBERLIN COLLEGE; AND CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, INSTITUTE OF POLITICS, HARVARD UNIVERSITY

STATEMENT OF SHERI IACHETTA

Ms. IACHETTA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the committee. Thank you for giving me this opportunity.

During my 10 years as registrar in the city of Charlottesville, this subject is a significant subject that is an integral part of my day-to-day activities, but it is not just ensuring that college students have the right, it is ensuring that all citizens have the right to vote regardless of what group they may be identified with.

In the city of Charlottesville, we are home of one of the State's largest universities. My long-standing policy has been to accept at face value what the voter has written on their registration form when they fill out their registration form wishing to vote. The statement that they sign on their voter registration form says, I swear and affirm under felony penalty for making willfully false material statements or entries that I am a U.S. citizen and a resi-

dent of Virginia. The information that I have provided on this form is true.

I don't believe that I have reasonable cause to question the statement of a voter simply because they are part of a particular group. To do so would create a special class of voter. And as you are aware, Virginia falls under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and any attempt to create a special class of voters would run afoul of this act.

One of the recurring themes that we hear in Charlottesville and in any university community is that students could have more than one residence. They have a residence in a dormitory, as well as a possible second residence at their family's home, which may or may not be in the same State as their college. Some of my colleagues in Virginia are not comfortable registering students with a dormitory address. Dorms may be a more traditional dwelling; however, some students do have off-campus apartments. Since all voters must be treated in the same manner, our inability to identify a voter situation simply based on their address precludes my office from treating all students to the same standards.

We also have a significant number of residents in Charlottesville that we term "snow birds," and they have a residence here for part of the year and then a warmer climate for part of the year. They have nearly the same identical housing situation as students and need to determine their legal residence just as students must.

A second issue that arises is whether students have the expressed intent to remain at their address indefinitely. Determining a voter's future intent is beyond the purview of my office. Due to the presence of the University of Virginia, there are any number of transient professionals who may have an expressed intent—who may not have the expressed intent to remain at their Charlottesville address indefinitely: doctors in residents, visiting professors. There has been no call to preclude these individuals from registering to vote. Again, to determine the intent of any member of the general population is beyond the scope of local resources.

A third issue raised regarding the registration of students is whether they have a vested interest in the operation of local government. To this I would answer that students are a regular and frequent user of city resources, including the roads, emergency services and police resources. They are a valuable source of volunteers to any number of community-based programs. They are directly affected by all the local ordinances, such as bicycles, noise control, trash collection and more. I use University of Virginia students as interns in my office, as election officials and as volunteers. Moreover, students are a significant source of fiscal resources in this community not only for the tax dollars that they bring in, but since they are included in the census count of local populations, significant Federal tax dollars are allotted for this locality based on their presence. If their Federal taxation dollars are awarded locally, then their representation should also be local.

In summary, students are an integral part of this community and, in my opinion, should be afforded the same voter registration opportunity as any other citizen residing in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

I hope to continue to work with the Virginia General Assembly also to make the laws on residence and domicile more definitive and equitable as they relate to students and other voters in similar circumstances. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Iachetta follows:]

TESTIMONY OF SHERI IACHETTA
GENERAL REGISTRAR,
CITYOF CHARLOTTESVILLE – CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA
SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

Committee Members:

Good Morning. Thank you for the opportunity to talk about "Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote."

I am the General Registrar of an independent City in the Commonwealth of Virginia that is home to one of the State's largest Universities and the home of one of our Founding Fathers, Thomas Jefferson. During the 10 years I have served in this office, the issue of student registration has come up time and time again. My long standing policy has been to accept at face value what the voter has written and signed on their registration form. The statement to which they sign their name says, *"I swear/affirm, under felony penalty for making willfully false material statements or entries, that I am a US citizen and a resident of Virginia, the information I have provided on this form is true....."* I don't believe I have reasonable cause to question the statement of a voter simply because of the fact they are part of a particular group. To do so would create a special class of voter and as you are aware, Virginia falls under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965; any attempt to create a special class of voters would run afoul of this act.

One of the recurring themes we hear is that students have more than one residence. They have a residence in the dormitory as well as a possible second residence (their family home) which may or may not be in the same state as their college. Some of my colleagues are not comfortable registering a student with a dormitory address. Dorms may be the more traditional dwelling; however, some students have apartments off campus. Since all voters must be treated in the same manner, our inability to identify a voter's situation based simply on address precludes this office from holding all students to the same standard. We also have a significant number of residents we term "snowbirds" who have a residence here for part of the year and in a warmer climate for the remainder of the year. They have a nearly identical housing situation as students and need to determine their legal voting residence just as students must.

A second issue that arises is whether students have the expressed *intent* to remain at their address indefinitely. Determining a voter's future intent is beyond the purview of this office. Due to the presence of the University of Virginia, there are any number of transient professionals who may not have the expressed intent to remain at their Charlottesville address indefinitely—doctors in residence, visiting professors. There has been no call to preclude these individuals from registering to vote. Again, to determine the intent of any other member of the general population is beyond the scope of local resources.

A third issue raised regarding the registration of students is whether they have a vested interest in the operation of local government. To this, I would answer that students are regular and frequent users of City resources including roads, emergency services, and police resources. They are a

valuable source of volunteers to any number of community-based programs. They are directly affected by local ordinances regarding use of bicycles, noise controls, trash collection and more. I use University of Virginia students in this office – as Election Officials and as staff interns. Students are a significant source of fiscal resources in this community, not only for the tax dollars that they bring in, but because they are included in the census count of local population, therefore significant federal tax dollars are allotted to this locality based on their presence. If their federal taxation dollars are awarded locally then their representation should also be local.

In summary students are an integral part of this community and in my opinion should be afforded the same voter registration opportunity of any other citizen residing in the Commonwealth. I hope to continue to work with the Virginia General Assembly to make the laws more definitive and equitable as they relate to students and other voters in similar circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,

Sheri Iachetta
General Registrar
City of Charlottesville

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Neil Albrecht. Neil Albrecht is a deputy director of the City of Milwaukee Election Commission and has held that position since 2005. A life-long resident of the city of Milwaukee, Neil has a professional background in finance and non-profit management. Milwaukee has done a great job working with area universities to register and assist student voters, and we are happy to have Mr. Albrecht here with us today.

Also, your statements will be also put into the record in its entirety. So, Mr. Albrecht.

STATEMENT OF NEIL ALBRECHT

Mr. ALBRECHT. Thank you. Good afternoon, members of the committee, Chairman Brady. Thank you for this opportunity to speak today on the important issue of ensuring rights of college students to vote.

Wisconsin experienced the second highest voter turnout of any State during the 2004 Presidential election. Turnout in the city of Milwaukee was equally significant. The demographics of those voting represented the vast diversity of the city's residents, including tremendous participation by student voters attending local colleges and universities.

Wisconsin's success in maintaining and inspiring voter participation is rooted in the State laws which recognize that barriers do exist that can prevent an individual from exercising their constitutional right to vote. These barriers can be particularly profound for people in low socioeconomic classes, seniors, and for students.

For students, some of the most significant barriers include identification requirements, producing an identification document that includes the student's name and residential address for voter registration purposes. This can be particularly challenging for students attending school away from their home State. Many of these students live in campus housing, and most college and university ID cards do not include residential address information. Additionally, students living in roommate housing situations may not appear on leases, utility bills or other documents often used as proof—to fill proof of residence requirements.

Secondly, students are often challenged by a lack of easily accessible information or inaccurate information relating to a State's voter qualification laws and voter registration process.

Thirdly, the challenge of actually completing the voter registration process prior to an election, given a lack of information, complex schedules, the proximity of the election to the start of a semester, and an obvious focus on academics.

Lastly, as laws vary from State to State, there is often confusion and/or the dissemination of incorrect information regarding registration requirements, absentee ballots and voting requirements. Misinformation is particularly problematic when it implies a false connection between residency for tax filing and residency to register to vote.

Wisconsin's election laws and rules clearly recognize these barriers and include provisions that allow and even encourage students, many of them first-time voters, to participate in the democratic process. Most notably Wisconsin allows election day registration. During Wisconsin's last gubernatorial election, over 90 per-

cent of the voters at one polling site near Marquette University registered to vote on the day of election. Beyond any doubt, the opportunity for election day and registration in Wisconsin allowed thousands of students to vote in the last election and is key to ensuring the student vote.

In addition to election day registration, since 1980, colleges and universities in Wisconsin may provide municipalities with lists of students residing in campus housing prior to an election. These lists are distributed to the appropriate voting sites, and students appearing on these lists may use their student ID cards without an address as proof of residence. The success of the single provision— I am sorry, the success of the single provision in Milwaukee has been significant. For students in noncampus housing, Wisconsin allows a voter to appear at a voting site with a corroborating witness. A corroborating witness may certify the name and address of another voter by signing their registration application and providing a proof of residence demonstrating their own residency.

It is essential to recognize the importance of technology when discussing student participation in elections. The Milwaukee Election Commission posts on the city's Web site comprehensive and accurate information as well as all forms necessary to register to vote, request an absentee ballot and serve as an election worker.

While any State or municipality such as Milwaukee can choose to philosophically embrace the importance of the student vote, real voting policy is determined by State and Federal law. We must do everything possible to encourage voter participation. The opportunity to vote in an election is important to all qualified electors and equally important to the principle of democracy. I believe this opportunity, free from intentional and unintentional barriers, is particularly important to students as first-time voters. A problematic or disillusioning first-time voting experience can shape an individual's voting participation in all future elections.

I am hopeful that this information provides an insight into the important steps Congress can take to encourage student voting. I am honored to be here today and proud of the role the city of Milwaukee and the State of Wisconsin have taken to ensure access to the polls.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Albrecht follows:]

TESTIMONY OF NEIL ALBRECHT,
CITY OF MILWAUKEE ELECTION COMMISSION
TO THE COMMITTEE ON HOUSE ADMINISTRATION HEARING
SEPTEMBER 25, 2008

Good afternoon members of the Committee on House Administration. My name is Neil Albrecht. I am a lifelong resident of the State of Wisconsin and, since 2005, have been the Deputy Director to the City of Milwaukee Election Commission.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak today on the important issue of ensuring the rights of college students to vote. Wisconsin experienced the second highest voter turn out during the 2004 Presidential Election. The demographics of those voting represented the vast diversity of Milwaukee residents, including tremendous participation by student voters attending local colleges and universities.

I firmly believe the success of Wisconsin in maintaining and inspiring voter participation is rooted in the state laws which recognize the barriers that can prevent an individual from exercising their constitutional right to vote. These barriers can be particularly profound for people in low socio-economic classes, seniors, and for students.

For students, the most significant barriers include:
- o Identification requirements: producing an identification document that includes the student's name and Wisconsin residential address for voter registration purposes. This can be particularly challenging for students that are from out-of-state but are residing in Wisconsin for purposes of attending school. Many of these students live in campus housing and most college and university IDs do not include residential address information. Additionally, students living in roommate housing situations may not appear on leases, utility bills or on other documents often used to meet proof of residence requirements.
- o The challenge of completing the voter registration process prior to an election given complex schedules, the proximity of the election of the start of a semester, and an obvious focus on academics.
- o A lack of easily accessible information relating to a state's voter qualification laws and the voter registration process.
- o Lastly, as laws vary from state to state, there is often confusion and/or the dissemination of incorrect information regarding registration requirements, absentee ballots and voting requirements. Misinformation is particularly problematic when it relates to tax filings and declaring residency for voting purposes.

Wisconsin's election laws and rules clearly recognize these barriers and include provisions that allow and even encourage students, many of them first-time voters, to participate in the democratic process.

Most notably:

o Wisconsin allows Election Day registration. During Wisconsin's last gubernatorial election, over 90% of the voter's at a polling place near Marquette University registered to vote on the day of an election.

o Since 1980, colleges and universities in Wisconsin may provide municipalities with lists of students residing in campus housing ten days or less before an election. These lists are distributed to the appropriate voting sites and those students appearing on these lists may use their student ID cards, without an address, as proof of residence. The success of this single provision in Milwaukee has been profound. In fact, prior to coming today, I spoke to John Wirth, the Chief election judge at Milwaukee's UW-Milwaukee campus voting site. Nearly 3,500 voters reside in UW-Milwaukee campus housing. He estimated that as many as half of these voters rely on the student list in order to meet the proof of residence identification requirement.

o Corroborating witness
Wisconsin law also allows a voter to appear at a voting site with a corroborating witness. A corroborating witness may certify the name and address of another voter by signing their registration application and providing a proof of residence demonstrating their own residency in the City of Milwaukee. The opportunity to appear at a voting site with a corroborating witness has proven particularly helpful to students residing in housing with roommates where the lease or utilities are listed in only one person's name.

o Easy access to voting information.
It is essential to recognize the importance of technology when discussing student participation in elections. The Milwaukee Election Commission posts on the City's website comprehensive and consistent information as well as all forms necessary to register to vote, request an absentee ballot, and serve as an election worker. Links have been established with many if not all of the local colleges and universities. An exceptional example of this service is Marquette University, which developed a web page of information and links specific to the upcoming Presidential election.

In addition to these key provisions, the City of Milwaukee:
o Assigns additional staff at voting sites near colleges and universities to reduce long waits. While each and every voter can be challenged by election day lines, students are often placed in a position of choosing between waiting to vote and missing a class.

The opportunity to vote in an election is important to all qualified electors and equally important to the principle of democracy. I believe this opportunity, free from intentional and unintentional barriers, is particularly important to students as first-time voters. A problematic or disillusioning first-time voting experience can shape an individual's voting participation in all future elections.

I am hopeful that this information provides an insight into the important steps congress, a state or a municipality can take to encourage student voting.

The CHAIRMAN. Marvin Krislov. Marvin Krislov is currently professor of Oberlin College in Ohio, which has made major strides in protecting student voting rights. Prior to Mr. Krislov's work in Oberlin, he was vice president and general counsel at the University of Michigan.

I thank you for coming here today. We look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF MARVIN KRISLOV

Mr. KRISLOV. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you members of the committee. I am very pleased to be here and talking about this important issue.

I also want to recognize Congresswoman Kaptur, who has focused her leadership on providing opportunities for students to vote in our district.

I am here on behalf of Oberlin College and Oberlin College students. We are celebrating our 175th anniversary. We are known in history for being the first college in America to admit students regardless of race or ethnicity, and the first to admit women to a coed baccalaureate program.

I am here today to talk to you about some of the practical issues facing students and young people, and hoping that the Oberlin experience will help us think about how we can address these challenges.

The most significant recent development at Oberlin in Ohio came on February 22nd of this year, when, at the urging of students from Oberlin and Ohio colleges, the Office of Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner issued a memorandum ruling that colleges and universities can issue utility bills to their students, thus enabling them to fulfill the State's proof of voter residency requirements. These bills require no payment since they reflect services such as telephone, Internet access and electricity already provided to students. Oberlin now issues such bills to our students. That ruling was the result of a 2-year struggle by student and statewide organizations to make it easier for Ohio's college students to exercise their right to vote.

The progress we are making on these student voting issues is due in large part to the hard work, intelligence and persistence of student leaders at Oberlin and other schools. I am so proud of their determination to be engaged students and citizens and to defend their voting rights.

While we have made much progress, much work remains. As you know, Ohio had been a battleground State in many Presidential elections. In recent elections there have been significant complaints that many Ohioans, including college students, encountered significant obstacles when they tried to vote. Countless news articles have reported that certain Ohio precincts provided an insufficient number of voting machines.

Prior to the 2004 election, some election officials let it be known that they would vigorously challenge out-of-State students who chose to vote in Ohio by requiring a photo identification card bearing a current voting address. In 2004, such identification was actually not legally required. The problems caused by these actions are well documented. In the 2004 elections, there were lengthy lines

and delays at polling places. Some students, faculty and staff at Kenyon College, for example, waited in line for up to 12 hours. In Oberlin some students, faculty and staff, and Oberlin citizens, waited up to 5 hours to cast their ballot.

In 2006, Ohio voting law was changed. All Ohioans are now required to produce a current and valid photo ID such as an Ohio driver's license, which does not need to show a current address, or a State ID or government identification or a military identification. If the person does not have a photo ID, he or she can still vote by producing a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or other government document.

While it is established law that students have the right to live and vote in those communities where they attend college, practical obstacles to student voting still exist. While the majority of Oberlin students have a driver's license, these are often issued by the State where their parents reside. Most of our students, for example, live in residence halls or co-ops and receive mail at the Oberlin College mail room. These Oberlin student IDs do not have their home addresses because students frequently move from one year to the next.

Fortunately, Ohio's college students actively work to address these voter ID issues and to register to vote. Our students, assisted by local board of elections, as well as the secretary of state and Congresswoman Kaptur, have, we think, taken an important first step by creating the ability for colleges to issue utility bills.

I hope that colleges and universities and State government officials adopt this policy. The first experience young people have with democracy should not be frustrating. As has been discussed, studies show that education is the most important socioeconomic factor in voter turnout, meaning the more education a person has, it is more likely for him or her to vote. And men and women who begin voting as youth continue to vote throughout their lives.

I hope that Oberlin's example can help lead to greater cooperation between colleges and communities and States that will further our national goal of a vibrant democracy. These efforts advance our American values and deserve support from colleges and universities as well as all levels of government. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Krislov follows:]

TESTIMONY OF MARVIN KRISLOV, PRESIDENT OF OBERLIN COLLEGE
U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on House Administration
Hearing on: "Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote."
1310 Longworth House Office Building
Thursday, September 25, 2008

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. My name is Marvin Krislov. I am the
president of Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. I assumed that position in the summer of
2007. Prior to Oberlin, I had served the University of Michigan as vice president and
general counsel since 1998. I also teach in the politics department at Oberlin and have
taught courses dealing with election law and policy.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer my perspective on student voting issues and to speak
about the efforts led by students at Oberlin College and other Ohio institutions of higher
education that have helped enfranchise students throughout our state.

The most significant, recent development came on February 22 of this year when,
at the urging of students from Oberlin and other Ohio colleges, the office of Ohio
Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner issued a memorandum ruling that colleges and
universities can issue utility bills to their students thus enabling them to fulfill the state's
proof of voter residency requirements. These bills require no payment since they reflect
services such as telephone, Internet access, and electricity already provided to students
through their tuition and fee payments. Oberlin now issues such bills to our students.

That ruling was the result of a two-year struggle by student and statewide organizations
to make it easier for Ohio's college students to exercise their right to vote. The progress
we are making on student voting issues is due to the hard work, intelligence and
persistence of student leaders at Oberlin and other schools. I am proud of their
determination to be engaged citizens and to defend their voting rights.

While we have made progress, much work remains. As you know, Ohio has been a
"battleground state" in many presidential elections. In recent elections, such as 2000,
2004, and 2006, there were significant complaints that many Ohioans, primarily poor
people, African-Americans, and college students, encountered obstacles when they tried
to vote. Countless news articles have reported that Ohio precincts with a high percentage
of students or people of color were often provided with an insufficient number of voting
machines. Prior to the 2004 election, some election officials let it be known they would
vigorously challenge out-of-state students who chose to vote in Ohio by requiring a photo
identification card bearing a current voting address. In 2004, such identification was not
legally required in Ohio.

The problems caused by these actions are well-documented. In the 2004 elections there
were lengthy lines and delays at polling places in precincts with a high percentage of
students and/or African American residents. Some students, faculty and staff at Kenyon
College in Gambier, Ohio, waited in line for up to 12 hours to vote. In Oberlin, some

students, faculty and staff and Oberlin citizens not affiliated with the college waited up to five hours to cast their ballot.

In 2006, Ohio voting law was changed. All Ohioans are now required to produce at their polling place a current and valid photo ID, such as an Ohio driver's license, which does not need to show a current address; or a state ID or a government ID; or a military identification that shows the voter's name and current address. If they do not have a photo ID, a citizen can still vote by producing a copy of a current utility bill, bank statement, government check or paycheck, or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address, including from a public college or university.

While it is established law that students have the right to vote in communities where they live and attend college, practical obstacles to student voting still exist. While the majority of Oberlin students have a driver's license, these are often issued by the state where their parents reside. Most of our students live in residence halls or co-ops and receive mail at the Oberlin College Mail Room. Their Oberlin-issued student IDs do not have home addresses because the students frequently move each year from one residence hall to another, or to an off-campus address. Those factors apply to most students at Ohio's colleges and universities.

Fortunately, Ohio's college students actively worked to address voter ID issues, and to register to vote. Oberlin students, assisted by our Office of Communications, have worked and continue to work with our local authority, the Lorain County Board of Elections, as well as with the Office of Secretary of State, to overcome obstacles to voting. The utility bills we issue students are accompanied by a letter explaining how to vote in Ohio if the student so chooses.

I hope that colleges and universities and state government officials across the country adopt this policy. The first experience young people have with democracy should not be frustrating. Studies show education is the most important socioeconomic factor in voter turnout, meaning the more educated a person is the more likely he or she is to vote, and that men and women who begin voting as youths continue to vote throughout their lives.

I also hope Oberlin's example can help lead to greater cooperation between colleges and communities and states that will further our national goal of a vibrant democracy.

Ensuring student voting not only upholds their constitutional rights, but strengthens our democracy by promoting broader participation from the next generation. Those efforts further our American values and deserve support from college and universities, as well as all levels of government.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon. My name is Marvin Krislov. I am the president of Oberlin College in Oberlin, Ohio. I assumed that position in the summer of 2007. Prior to Oberlin, I had served the University of Michigan as vice president and general counsel since 1998. I also teach in the politics department at Oberlin and have taught courses dealing with election law and policy.

I appreciate the opportunity to offer my perspective on student voting issues and to speak about the efforts led by students at Oberlin College and other Ohio institutions of higher education that have helped enfranchise students throughout the state.

At the urging of students from Oberlin and other Ohio colleges, the office of Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner issued a memorandum on February 22, 2008, ruling that colleges and universities can issue utility bills to their students that enable them to fulfill the state's proof of voter residency requirements. These bills require no payment since they reflect services such as telephone, Internet access, and electricity already provided through students through their tuition and fee payments. Oberlin now issues such utility bills to its students.

That decision was the result of a two-year struggle by student and statewide organizations to make it easier for Ohio's college students to exercise their right to vote. The progress on student voting issues in Ohio would not have happened without the hard work, intelligence and persistence of student leaders at Oberlin and other colleges and universities. At Oberlin, our efforts have been spearheaded since 2004, by an informal student voter coalition comprised of the Oberlin College Democrats, the Oberlin College Republicans, the Oberlin College chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, the Ohio Public Interest Research Group, the Roosevelt Institution at Oberlin College, and representatives from the Student Union and the college administration.

This group has driven this process which has made registering to vote and voting easier for all Ohioans. I am proud of their determination to be engaged, active citizens. Regardless of which party they support, their participation in the voting process strengthens our democracy.

My interest in voting rights is long standing. For many years, I have taught a course in the law of elections, first at the University of Michigan, and now at Oberlin College. In that class, I stress that holding free and fair elections is an issue that transcends party affiliations. Free and fair elections are the basis of our democracy, and registering to vote and voting are fundamental rights of American citizens. The health of our democracy depends on active, informed voters. Given the many difficult issues facing our country and our planet, such as climate change, health care, education, security and economic dislocations, we need as much participation from the electorate in order to find solutions.

Since becoming the 14th president in Oberlin's storied, 175-year history, I have strongly urged our students, faculty and fellow Ohioans to vote. To help inform my students, I

have invited speakers including the Ohio State Democratic and Republican Party chairs, and Brad Smith, former chair of the Federal Election Commission. In keeping with Oberlin's tradition of promoting debate and discussion, the college invites speakers representing a variety of political viewpoints to campus. For example, Newt Gingrich, the former Speaker of the House and an ardent Republican, addressed our campus and community last night. Adrian Fenty, the mayor of Washington D.C., a Democrat, and a 1992 Oberlin graduate will address our community Saturday evening.

PROBLEMS WITH COLLEGE STUDENT VOTING IN RECENT OHIO ELECTIONS

Even before I became Oberlin's president in 2007, I was aware of Ohio's significance as a "battleground state" in presidential elections. I was also aware that there had been significant complaints that in the 2000, 2004, and 2006 elections, many Ohioans, primarily poor people, African-Americans, and college students, had encountered many obstacles when they tried to exercise their right to vote. As has been reported by many news organizations and individuals, including Eve Sandberg, an Oberlin professor of politics who testified on March 7, 2007, before the House Judiciary committee on "Protecting the Right to Vote: Election Deception and Irregularities in Recent Federal Elections," Ohio precincts with a high percentage of students or people of color were often provided with an insufficient number of voting machines. Voters were also misinformed about the identification requirements. Election officials let it be known that they would vigorously challenge out-of-state students who chose to vote in Ohio by requiring a photo identification card bearing a current voting address. In 2004, such identification was not legally required in Ohio.

The confusion over Ohio's voting requirements, its use of voting machines, and its problems with voting machine technology and performance are well-documented. In the 2004 election there were lengthy lines and delays at polling places in precincts with a high percentage of students and/or African American residents. Some students, faculty and staff at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, waited in line for up to 12 hours to vote. In Oberlin, some students, faculty, staff and Oberlin citizens not affiliated with the college waited up to five hours to cast their ballot. Across the state, some citizens grew frustrated waiting and left without voting. Those that eventually reached the polling booths were often forced to cast provisional ballots because of residency issues.

In 2006, Ohio voting law was changed to require a photo ID. Currently, in order to vote, all Ohioans are required to produce at their polling place a current and valid photo ID, such as an Ohio driver's license (which does not need to show a current address), a state ID or a government ID; or a military identification that shows the voter's name and current address; or a copy of a current utility bill (including a cell phone bill), bank statement, government check or paycheck or other government document that shows the voter's name and current address, including from a public college or university. If a voter cannot show any identification, they can still vote by provisional ballot if they can provide the last four digits of their Social Security number when they vote. If they don't have a Social Security number and they swear to that fact, they can still vote by provisional ballot.

The state enacted these requirements shortly before the 2006 elections. That timing caused considerable confusion among voters. According to Professor Sandberg, even the non-partisan League of Women Voters of Ohio had difficulty getting the rules from the Secretary of State's office as they tried to write and publish the voting guides they traditionally produce before Federal and state elections.

The 2006 law remains in force. While the statute states that students have the right to vote in communities where they live and attend college, practical obstacles to student voting still exist. According to data from the non-partisan Student Association for Voter Empowerment, 19 percent of the 44 million voters aged 18-29 report that they do not currently possess a government-issued ID. While the majority of Oberlin students have a driver's license, these are often issued by the state where their parents reside. The great majority of our students live in residence halls or co-ops and receive mail at the Oberlin College Mail Room. Their Oberlin-issued student IDs do not have home addresses because the students frequently move each year from one residence hall to another, or from a residence hall to an off-campus address, and vice-versa. Those factors apply to most students at Ohio's private and public colleges and universities.

STUDENT LEADERS PUSH FOR UTILITY BILL RULING

Fortunately, Ohio's college students have actively worked to address voter ID issues, and to register to vote in Ohio. Oberlin students, assisted by the Office of Communications at Oberlin College, have worked and continue to work with our local authority, the Lorain County Board of Elections, as well as with the office of Ohio Secretary of State Brunner.

At the urging of students from Oberlin, Kenyon and other Ohio schools, Brian Shinn, assistant general counsel and elections counsel to Secretary of State Brunner issued a memorandum on February 22, 2008, ruling that colleges and universities can issue utility bills to their students that enable them to fulfill the state's voter residency requirements. The bills require no payment since they reflect services such as telephone, Internet access, and electricity that the students have already covered through their tuition and fee payments.

Oberlin College now issues utility bills to our students, accompanied by a letter explaining how to vote in Ohio if the student so chooses. I believe it is an important step forward in allowing college students to participate fully in the democratic process. I hope that colleges and universities and state government officials across the country would adopt this policy.

Some critics have assailed that decision, claiming it allows transient "outsiders" who did not grow up in a given community, do not pay local taxes, and may leave upon graduation, to affect the outcome of elections.

Those views contradict the Constitution and the facts. Voting in America is not restricted to taxpayers or property owners. Federal law guarantees college students the right to vote

where they go to school. Many students have jobs and pay state and local taxes on their earnings. All students pay taxes applied to goods and services, such as sales tax. And in our highly mobile society, millions of voters no longer reside where they grew up. Yet denying such people the right to vote, which is guaranteed even to the homeless, would be unthinkable.

More needs to be done. Beyond issuing utility bills or pursuing other initiative that make it easier for students to vote, state and local governments should make an effort to inform young people all about how to vote and why voting is important. Colleges and universities should do so as well. This can be done in non-partisan fashion.

WHY COLLEGE STUDENT VOTING MATTERS

I hope that colleges and universities and state government officials across the country adopt this policy of issuing utility bills to enable college students to register to vote. The first experience young people have with democracy should not be frustrating. Studies show education is the most important socioeconomic factor in voter turnout, meaning the more educated a person is the more likely he or she is to vote, and that men and women who begin voting as youths continue to vote throughout their lives. (Fowler, James H. "Habitual Voting and Behavioral Turnout," *Journal of Politics* 68 (2): 335–344 (May 2006).

"Convince a young citizen to vote, and he or she will read the newspaper differently, recognize the names of people on the ballot when they're mentioned on television or by a neighbor, and eventually become highly informed. Get them to the polls once, and they will likely vote again and again," says Eric Plutzer, a professor of political science and sociology at Penn State University, and author of the article, "Becoming a Habitual Voter: Inertia, Resources and Growth in Young Adulthood," which was published in 2002 in the *American Political Science Review*.

Alienating college voters could have long-lasting, negative consequences for our democracy by creating a mass of educated, informed people who do not vote, care, or believe in the process. That would be particularly devastating since studies show the more educated a person is, the more likely he or she is to vote. Until the 2004 presidential election, youth voter turnout, meaning those voters under the age of 30, had been in decline since 1972, the first election in which 18-year-olds could vote. That decline accounted in large measure for the broader decline in turnout across the general population.

In 2004, however, youth turnout rose significantly. That trend appears to be continuing. Compared to the 2000 presidential primary elections, the number of 18-to-29 year olds who voted in this year's primaries soared, doubling or tripling in some states. A report released on March 5, 2008, by The Center for Information & Research on Civic Learning & Engagement (CIRCLE) showed that 25 percent of people in Ohio between the ages of 18 and 29 voted in the recent primary elections, compared to 15 percent who voted in the state's 2000 primary. In the 2008 youth voting group, about 80 percent were college students or college graduates, according to CIRCLE.

OBERLIN'S ADDITIONAL MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE STUDENT VOTING

Colleges, communities and government need to do all they can to encourage and enable students to vote. In Oberlin, students have formed the non-partisan Oberlin Voter Coalition in which they are working with college and community officials to register voters. Oberlin College is also working with our local chapter of the League of Women Voters of Ohio on voter education for students, as well as newcomers to our community who are not affiliated with the college. The coalition is also arranging transportation for students and other voters to the Lorain County Board of Elections offices in East Lorain, Ohio, to take advantage of Ohio's option for voting early. To address problems that arose in previous elections, Oberlin College is also encouraging the Lorain County Board of Elections to have a sufficient supply of provisional ballots on hand in case they are needed and to have sufficient numbers of poll workers to expedite the voting process on Election Day.

We also encourage our students to take part in electoral politics. Through the Oberlin Initiatives in Electoral Politics' Cole Scholars Program, 10 to 15 students are placed as interns in political campaigns or an elections-related setting, where they work for eight weeks during the summer. This program is funded by Oberlin alums Richard and Dorothy Cole. Many students also work as volunteers during the academic year for candidates they support.

BRIEF HISTORY OF RIGHTS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS TO VOTE

Debates over voter residency requirements in general and student voting in particular are not unique to Oberlin or Ohio. Nor are they new. Professor Alexander Keyssar, the Matthew W. Stirling Professor of History and Social Policy at Harvard University wrote in his book, "The Right to Vote—The Contested History of Democracy in the United States," that as residency rules were codified in the late 18th and early 20th century, a time when women were barred from voting, establishing residency rules for students at colleges, seminaries and other institutions of higher education, proved difficult.

"In many states, there was substantial sentiment in favor of prohibiting students from gaining residence in the communities where they attended college: claiming that students were not truly members of the community, political leaders cited anecdotes of students being paraded to the polls to vote en masse, of unscrupulous politicians enlisting students to cast their ballots, and of students (who did not pay taxes) voting to impose tax increases on permanent residents. There was, however, a notable degree of resistance to such laws, grounded perhaps in a reluctance to keep respectable, middle-class, native born men from voting. 'I cannot see the propriety of.....discriminating against intelligent young men attending college," insisted a Pennsylvanian in 1873. Many states did end up specifying that students could not gain legal residence by attending educational institutions, although the courts---and occasionally the legislatures as well---made exceptions for those who did not have other domiciles and could establish their intention to remain in the community where they were studying." (pp. 149, Keyssar, The Right to Vote—The Contested History of Democracy in the United States, Basic Books, New York, 2000).

Over the years, decisions in Federal and state courts have settled the issue of whether students have the right to vote where they go to school. Federal and state court rulings pertaining to students expanded the definition of residency to having the intention of remaining in a locale "for the time at least" from having the intention of remaining in a locale permanently or indefinitely. By the 1980s, the courts ruled that even the homeless could establish residency for voting purposes.

The arguments Professor Keyssar cites against allowing college students to vote in the 19th century sound remarkably similar to the arguments put forth today against allowing college students to vote where they go to school. The challenges confronting American society and the world, however, such as climate change, health care and poverty have changed dramatically. Finding solutions to those issues is beyond the capacity of any one state or nation. It will require the broadest possible consensus which must include our youth.

MORE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES SUPPORT STUDENT VOTING

That is not just my view. Oberlin College is a member of Campus Compact, a rapidly growing organization with a membership of more than 1,100 colleges and universities, representing more than a quarter of all higher education institutions. Membership has grown by an average of 70 campuses per year over the past five years, a trend that reflects both an increased commitment to the civic purposes of higher education and greater awareness of the value of our work.

Campus Compact has launched an initiative to register more students, to get them to be more informed and involved, and to get them to the polls to vote. A statement by Campus Compact summarizes what I believe is the position of many leaders of institutions of higher education: "As the next generation of leaders and citizens, young people are a powerful force in today's political scene. Democracy is a two way street: today's youth has the responsibility to educate themselves and participate in our democracy; and also has the right to be heard and respected by elected officials and candidates."

I hope the example of Oberlin College can help lead to greater cooperation between colleges and communities and states that will further our national goal of a vibrant democracy and inspire the next generation to engage in civic life.

As President Lyndon Baines Johnson said in his address on March 15, 1965, urging a joint session of Congress to pass new voting rights legislation. "Every American citizen must have an equal right to vote. There is no reason which can excuse the denial of that right. There is no duty which weighs more heavily on us than the duty we have to ensure that right."

Ensuring student voting not only upholds their constitutional rights, but strengthens our democracy by promoting broader participation from the next generation. Those efforts further our American values and deserve support from college and universities, as well as all levels of government.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Catherine McLaughlin. Catherine McLaughlin serves as the executive director of Harvard University's Institute of Politics since 1994. She also served as the director of alumni affairs and the coordinator of the press and public liaison office at the Kennedy School of Government from 1986 to 1989. She left the Kennedy School in 1989 to serve as a tour manager for the band New Kids on the Block. I think that is for our audience. She also worked on several Presidential campaigns during the 1980s.

Thank you, and look forward to your testimony.

STATEMENT OF CATHERINE McLAUGHLIN

Ms. McLAUGHLIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Ehlers and members of the committee. Thank you for this opportunity to come to talk to you about such an important subject.

I am the executive director of the Institute of Politics, and the institute was established in 1966 as a memorial to President Kennedy. Its mission is to inspire young people to get engaged in politics and public service. The mission is born out of President Kennedy's call to all of us, but particularly to young people, to serve our country and our communities through political engagement. That is what we are here talking about today: to make sure young people have this opportunity to participate in the process.

We are currently witnessing a political reengagement by young people. The 2004 elections represented a reversal of more than a decade of declining youth voter turnout. For context, prior to 2004, election turnout by 18- to 24-year-olds declined by 16 percent between 1972 and 2000. This downward trend was reversed in 2004; 47 percent of 18- to 24-year-olds voted, an increase of 11 percentage points from the 2000 election.

Since 2000, the IOP has been conducting a unique national poll of political views of 18- to 24-year-olds. Over the years we have seen that young people with at least some college experience are twice as likely to vote as those who have never attended college. Turnout among college-educated young people in 2004 was 59 percent, while people with a high school diploma was 34 percent. More importantly, 67 percent of college students said that as a result of the 2004 Presidential election, they were more likely to get involved in politics in the future.

We have seen this new, younger voter momentum be sustained so far through the 2008 primary election cycle. According to research from CIRCLE at the University of Maryland, youth voter turnout doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled in numerous States during the primaries and caucuses. We have every reason to believe and expect solid turnout in November.

So how do we make sure that young people, including those on college campuses, receive every opportunity to participate in elections? It is first important to recognize how many college students vote. College students are more likely than any other segment of the population, except the military, to vote by absentee ballot. In 2003, we found that 39 percent of college students preferred to vote in their home State.

Just before the 2004 elections, our data showed well over half of the college students who plan to vote in 2004 would not be voting in person. CIRCLE confirmed this data following the election. And

an important fact for local elected officials to know, 78 percent of
the college students said they preferred to vote in their home State
and would like to be registered there.

In light of that fact, the absentee voting has special importance
to college students. In 2003, the institute developed a guide to ab-
sentee voting; a Web-based document that is an interactive State-
by-State information center about how to vote by absentee ballot.

In addition to that, we are using new technologies to help first-
time voters. For example, the IOP launched a new Web-based ini-
tiative specifically targeted for the 2008 Presidential primaries
called No Vote, No Voice, aiming at increasing youth turnout at the
polls. The project featured a Facebook application young people
could download onto their own profiles. Using the application,
youth who pledged to vote were sent information on State-specific
voting deadlines to their Facebook page, including those registering
to vote and sending in ballots.

Beginning in 2003, the IOP gathered 18 other colleges and uni-
versities to create the national campaign for political and civic en-
gagement. It is a nationwide consortium of colleges and univer-
sities dedicated to youth engagement. Representatives from each of
the colleges gather annually to share information on how to best
register and educate and mobilize people. Young leaders from each
of the colleges come together for training sessions and information
sharing.

One of the most important things that we have learned over the
years at colleges, it is critical for students to work with university
officials. Having a presence at mandatory academic registration for
freshman allows us to get hundreds of students who are registering
for classes to also register to vote.

Since 2004, the institute has conducted HVOTE, Harvard Voter
Outreach and Turnout Effort, a campuswide voter registration and
mobilization project whose goal is to provide Harvard students with
the information they need.

Both of these efforts have helped us in just the past week reg-
ister 500 Harvard college students and helped 400 others complete
their absentee request forms.

In addition, this summer Eric Hysen, a sophomore at the college,
created a new Web site called Campus Voices. This site allows stu-
dents across the country to voice their opinion, but it also provides
links to a variety of nonpartisan sites that provide State-by-State
registration, confirmation of registration, information on absentee
ballots and locations at polling places.

All that said, it is important to note that most universities do not
have an organization with a professional staff like the Institute of
Politics who can help the students. The absentee ballot process for
the students across the country can still be difficult to navigate.
State laws are diverse and especially difficult for first-time voters
and cause great confusion. Creating a more simplified registration
and absentee ballot voting system would help sustain increased
electoral participation.

Finally, we need to make sure students have the information
they need to vote, targeting voter education sections of State elec-
tion Web sites toward students to help make voting by absentee
easier. Although some States already provide some of this informa-

tion, it would be beneficial if all States could do so; detailed information on absentee ballot, including identification and residence requirements, application deadlines, downloadable absentee ballots, et cetera.

In conclusion, we have all seen in the primaries this season alone how much an impact the youth vote can have. They are excited about voting, and we need to do all we can to ensure doing so is easy and streamlined as possible.

Thank you for your opportunity to speak today.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. McLaughlin follows:]

Remarks as Prepared for Delivery
Comments of Catherine McLaughlin, Executive Director, Harvard's Institute of Politics
on Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote
Before the Committee on House Administration
Washington, D.C.
September 25, 2008

I would like to thank Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Ehlers and members of this
Committee for the opportunity to speak to you today about such an important subject.

My name is Catherine McLaughlin and I am the Executive Director of Harvard
University's Institute of Politics (IOP) at the John F. Kennedy School of Government.

The Institute was established in 1966 as a memorial to President John F. Kennedy, and its
mission is to inspire young people to a life of politics, public service and leadership. This
mission, of course, is born out of President Kennedy's call to all of us – but particularly
to young people – to serve our country and our communities through political
engagement.

President Kennedy in 1963 described the responsibility we have as educated citizens to
participate in our democracy. Speaking to students at Vanderbilt University, President
Kennedy said, "The educated citizen has an obligation to serve the public. He may be a
precinct worker or President. He may give his talents at the courthouse, the State house,
or the White House. He may be a civil servant or a Senator, a candidate or a campaign
worker, a winner or a loser. But he must be a participant and not a spectator."

That's what we are here talking about today – to make sure that young people have this
critical opportunity to participate in the political process.

We are currently witnessing a political re-engagement by young people, who now must
be considered a key voting bloc that can help play a strong role in the outcome of
national elections.

The 2004 elections represented a reversal of more than a decade of declining youth voter
turnout. For context, prior to the 2004 elections voter turnout by 18-24 year-olds
declined by 16 percentage points between 1972 (when youth were given the right to vote)
and 2000.

The downward trend was reversed in 2004. Forty-seven percent of 18 to 24 year-olds
voted in 2004, an increase of eleven percentage points from the 2000 presidential
election.

Since 2000, the IOP has conducted a unique national poll of the political views of 18-24 year-olds. Initially it focused solely on college students, in the fall of 2006, we expanded our polling to include all 18-24 year olds. Widely praised by the media, scholars, and the political community, the IOP survey is unique in that it was and still is largely produced by undergraduate students at the Institute of Politics under the direction of IOP Polling Director John Della Volpe.

Over the years, we have seen that young people with at least some college experience are almost twice as likely to vote as those who have never attended college. Turnout among college educated young people in 2004 was 59 percent while turnout among those with no more than a high school diploma was 34 percent. More importantly, 67 percent of college students said that as a result of the 2004 presidential election they are more likely to get involved in politics in the future. Our mission to engage young people is more important than ever before.

We have seen this new younger voter momentum be sustained so far through the 2008 primary election cycle. According to research from CIRCLE at the University of Maryland, youth voter turnout doubled, tripled, and even quadrupled in numerous states during this year's primaries and caucuses. We have every reason to expect solid turnout in the general election in November.

According to our most recent poll conducted this past summer, 62 percent of young voters report that they are excited about the upcoming election, including 69 percent of 18 to 24 year olds currently in college.

So how do we make sure that young people – including those on college campuses – receive every opportunity to participate in this and future elections?

It's important to first recognize how college students vote. College students are much more likely than any other segment of the population (except the military) to vote by absentee ballot.

Our 2003 IOP poll found that 39 percent of college students prefer to vote in their home state. However, to vote in their home state while at college usually requires a vote by absentee ballot, and one-third of those students said at the time that they did not know or were unsure how to do so.

Just weeks before the 2004 elections, our polling data showed well over half of college students who planned to vote in the '04 elections would not be voting in person at a polling place. Forty-two percent of students reported they would be voting by absentee ballot, and another 14 percent reported they planned on "early voting." Post-election survey data from CIRCLE at the University of Maryland showed 37 percent of college students did indeed vote by absentee ballot, and 78 percent of college students registered to vote in their home state said they "preferred" to be registered there.

In light of the fact that absentee voting is of special importance to college voters, in 2003 the Institute of Politics developed the "Guide to Absentee Voting," a web-based document that is constantly updated and available online at www.iop.harvard.edu. This guide is an interactive state-by-state information center about how to vote by absentee ballot.

We are also using new technologies to help first-time voters. For example, the IOP launched a new web-based initiative, specifically for the 2008 presidential primaries called "No Vote, No Voice" (http://www.novotenovoice.com), aimed at increasing youth turnout at the polls.

The project featured a Facebook.com application young people could download to their online profiles. Using the application, youth who "pledged" to vote in an upcoming presidential primary or caucus were sent important state-specific voting deadline reminders to their Facebook.com page, including those for registering to vote and sending in an absentee ballot.

In 2003, the IOP gathered 18 other colleges and universities to create the National Campaign for Political and Civic Engagement, a nation-wide consortium of colleges and universities dedicated to youth civic engagement. Representatives from each of the colleges gather annually to share information on how to best register, educate and mobilize young voters. Young leaders from each of the colleges come together for training sessions and information sharing regarding best practices on getting their campus registered and mobilized.

One of the most important things that all of the colleges have learned over the years is that it is critical to work with University officials and integrate your efforts with the school's freshmen academic registration efforts in the fall of an election year. Having a presence at a mandatory academic registration for freshmen allows us to get hundreds of students registering for classes to also register to vote and fill-out mobilization "contact" cards so we can follow-up.

Since 2004, Harvard's Institute of Politics has conducted HVOTE - the "Harvard Voter Outreach and Turnout Effort," a campus-wide voter registration and mobilization project whose goal is to provide Harvard students with the information and tools they need to cast their ballots. Harvard students go door-to-door in Harvard dorms and houses to register their fellow students and provide information on absentee voting.

Both of these efforts helped us register over 500 Harvard students as well as assisting another 400 in completing absentee ballot request forms in the past week alone.

In addition, this summer Eric Hysen, a sophomore at Harvard College created a new website for the IOP called "Campus Voices" which can be found at www.campusvoices.org. This site allows students across the country to voice their opinions on the political process but also provides links to all the information that young people need to register including links to a variety of nonpartisan sites that will provide

state by state registration information, confirmation of registration, information on absentee ballots and location of polling places.

All this said, it is important to note that most universities do not have an organization like the Institute of Politics with professional staff on campus that can work with student leadership to ensure college students get the information they need. Toward this end, the Institute recently hosted students representing 49 colleges from 42 states at the "National College Conference for Political Engagement" to help students learn what they need to do to get-out-the-vote on campus. This important 2-day event was an opportunity for campus leaders from around the country to convene, share and learn strategies, ideas and techniques for mobilizing their campuses for the November elections.

The absentee ballot process for students across the country can still be difficult to navigate. State laws for absentee voters are diverse and can be especially difficult for first time voters – a lack of uniformity and clarity in deadlines, voter identification requirements, and other information make voting confusing and difficult for our nation's students.

Creating a more simplified registration and absentee ballot voting system would help sustain increased electoral participation – particularly among younger Americans. For example, many absentee ballot voters mistakenly believe that by submitting a voter registration form, they are also officially requesting an absentee ballot – unaware that a separate form is required to do so. Making the absentee ballot application and submission process clearer would help students understand what they need to do to participate.

Finally, we need to make sure students have the information they need to vote, and targeting voter education sections of state election websites toward students would help make voting by absentee easier. Although some states already provide some of the following, voter confusion could be curtailed if elections websites from all 50 states each included: detailed information on the absentee ballot voting process (including identification and residence requirements), application and submission deadlines, downloadable absentee ballot application forms that can be completed online, frequently asked questions, and a ballot application tracking system.

In conclusion, we all have seen – in just the 2008 presidential primary season alone – how much impact the youth vote can have on the outcome of major national elections. We know they are excited about voting, we just need to do all we can to ensure doing so is as easy and streamlined as possible. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today.

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to open up our questions with one that I have for Mr. Krislov. You said in the 2004 election where there was an 8- to 10–hour wait. Was that just a voter ID problem?

Mr. KRISLOV. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wasn't in Ohio at the time, but my understanding is that there were numerous problems with lack of machinery, issues with provisional ballots, as well as voter challenges and voter identification. And in addition to the voter identification, there have been issues including, even at the primaries this year, about provisional ballots and enough machinery. And that is something that we have been trying to anticipate because we do think there will be extraordinary turnout this fall, and we have been trying to talk to the board of elections and working with them on things such as the early voting that the Secretary of State has authorized.

The CHAIRMAN. Have you allocated more equipment and resources to those areas where the heavy voter turnout will be on the college campuses?

Mr. KRISLOV. It is not the college's resources, so we are doing everything we can to educate our students about the opportunities. And we have encouraged the board of elections and officials to try to create greater resources, but, of course, it is the State and local government.

The CHAIRMAN. I will also let Congresslady Marcy Kaptur know that you did mention her twice in your statement.

Mr. KRISLOV. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. We will get some help from her to push the election board to get more resources in the college campuses there that do need them.

The next question is for Mr. Krislov and Ms. McLaughlin. One of my next panelists from the Student PIRG New Voters Project set up a MySpace page to solicit questions from college students across the country, and they asked me to be the facilitator to ask this question.

Nelson, from the University of Southern California, wants to know, shouldn't colleges and universities have more than a good-faith effort to further civic engagement on their campuses, and does the Higher Education Act amendment of 1998 demand enough from our schools, and has this been effective since the 10 years have passed? Anyone want to try to answer that question?

Ms. McLAUGHLIN. I think that some universities, universities that have the—the universities that participate in our consortium, there is actually various institutes, like the Dole Institute, the Baker Institute, the Institute of Politics, the John Glenn. When there is a staff that you can connect to, it really does make a difference. We have Laura Simolaris, who is here with us today, actually is a staff person who spends all of her time on this.

I think it is important, it makes a big difference, to have some historical knowledge, because every 4 years the students are replicating and trying to rebuild something that has already been built. So having some point of contact would be a big thing for the universities.

The CHAIRMAN. I think a point of contact would be a great—lets them know that they are needed and that you are paying attention to them. I think it is a very good idea. Yes, sir.

Mr. KRISLOV. I would say that this has been a high priority of mine in the colleges because we have such a strong tradition of civic engagement. I will mention that we have an initiative, a co-initiative for electoral politics, which supports students in internships and work opportunities to work on campaigns. We also provide a variety of speakers. Last night Newt Gingrich spoke on our campus and immediately afterward appeared on Hannity and Colmes. And this weekend Adrian Fenty will be coming to town. And so we believe in a diversity of views and informing our students and very much trying to encourage their engagement.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. I am sure that Nelson would give me latitude there to anybody else, Iachetta or Albrecht, if they have anything that they would add. No? Okay. Thank you.

Mr. Ehlers.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As I indicated earlier, when I was in the academic world, I was involved in student registration activities. I think it is a great thing. And I personally started voting when I was college age. I think I have something like a 99.5 percent voting record since then, except for the years I was in Europe doing research. So I think it is a great thing.

Let me, though, in the name of balance indicate some of the problems. I think it is very, very important for students to vote. That doesn't necessarily mean they have to register and vote where they are attending classes. And there are a couple of problems that I have observed.

I have served in local government as well. I have to tell you, there is a lot of anger on the part of some of the citizens when students who don't pay any taxes change the outcome of an election which involves assessing taxes on citizens in that community. If, for example, there is a provision to build a new county building or a new jail or what have you, and it passes overwhelmingly because students voted for it, this does not help the town-and-gown relationships at all. So that is not something I blame the students about, but you have to recognize there is a problem there.

A greater problem, I think, and one that does affect students, is to recognize that every State has different laws about various things involving residency. And now, Mr. Krislov, you are at Oberlin College, a very prestigious school. A lot of students, I assume, come from out of State there, and these students may spend 2 years there and then realize they can't afford the rest, so decide they should go back home to their State university where they should be able to get a preferred rate of tuition because they are residents. If, however, they register to vote in Ohio and then move back to Michigan or wherever it might be, are they still residents of the State according to the State's definition or the State university's definition of residency?

That is something to worry about, because I have seen students caught in that, not because of the registering to vote, but moving to another State, acting like residents there, voting and everything else, and going back home and discovering lo and behold they cannot get the resident rate anymore even though they are an age where they thought they would.

So maybe it is just my good old cautious nature as a professor who has advised a lot of students, be careful, check out your own State laws before you suddenly decide, hey, I am going to vote to register in Ohio or wherever it may be so, and so what, it won't make any difference. It can make a difference. And I just simply wanted to put that on the record. I don't know if anyone wants to contest that or elaborate on it, but it is a concern I have because of my involvement with students and the advising that I have done.

Ms. McLaughlin.

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. The one thing that I would add to that, the CIRCLE polling at the University of Maryland said most students do want to vote at home and in their home State. And since this past week we spent the whole week doing registrations, we found that several students came to us, for instance, students from Illinois, who really wanted to vote at home, and because of the—we call them maroon voters, they are not allowed to vote because they had to either register in person, or they had to show up and vote for the first time in person. So unfortunately they now had to register in Massachusetts, which is not what they preferred to do. So I think knowing that there are some States that don't allow the opportunity to vote, that you have to vote in person the first time, these students said they couldn't afford to go home to vote, so they were going to fill out applications and vote in Massachusetts.

Mr. EHLERS. So, in fact, if we would pass the Schakowsky bill, and I don't know if we will or not, then perhaps we should say that institutions could be designated as voting registry agencies for students who are away from home as well?

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. I think that would be very helpful, because we meet that all the time. There is about six States that have that problem, so I think that would be very helpful.

Mr. EHLERS. I know I myself, when I was a student, registered to vote back home because I knew the people there, I knew the candidates, and I was in a city that I knew nothing about.

Mr. KRISLOV. Could I just say that certainly if students want to vote in the States they came from, we would do what we could to help them. But I think that what many students find at a 4-year or greater institution like ours is that they actually grow increasingly committed to the local community, and that voting is part of that. And many of our students end up living and working there and staying for many, many years and participating in the economic and civic life. And frankly, I think that that is one of the additional benefits; by empowering them to vote, that you allow them to feel that they are fully engaged in the community.

Mr. EHLERS. I agree. And I think there is just that natural transition. The first few years they ally themselves with their home community. After a few years they have been co-opted by the institution, and they decide they want to ally with them.

No further questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Davis.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. McLaughlin, when I was a junior at Harvard school that you are connected to, I made the decision to register to vote back in Alabama because, frankly, Alabama Democrats needed me more

than Massachusetts Democrats did. But it was a choice. And I
don't know if there is any—I would probably disagree with Mr.
Ehlers a little bit. I am not sure there are any broad, overarching
public policy values that undercut young people choosing where
they want to vote. They shouldn't be able to vote twice. I don't
think anybody would argue for that. But I am not sure I see any
broad public policy reasons that ought to constrain them making
the choice.

Ms. Iachetta, if I am pronouncing your name right, I fully under-
stand that your county is UVA and not Virginia Tech. And if you
are like most registrars, I know you are loathe to be asked about
what another registrar did, but you knew you were going to be here
today and you would be. So I don't want to miss the opportunity.
I was really struck by the story I read in The Times back on Sep-
tember 8th about one of your counterparts did, and I take it it is
Montgomery County, the county that houses Virginia Tech.

Ms. IACHETTA. Yes, sir.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. And there were two things I suppose that
concerned me. And I was bothered by a trained registrar relying
on research from an intern to issue an opinion, but I won't even
get into that.

Ms. IACHETTA. Thank you, sir.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. I was troubled, though, by one observa-
tion Mr. Wertz made. I want to just read this to you and see if this
is your experience. The registrar Mr. Wertz was asked about the
interpretation his office advanced, and I think most people here are
familiar with it, that you can lose your dependent status on your
tax returns if you register to vote in Virginia and not back home;
that your health or automobile insurance or your scholarship sta-
tus or tuition rates could be affected by that. And he was quoted
as saying in The Times, and if this your primary residence, you
have to register your vehicle here, change your driver's license to
here and so on. It has been the interpretation in State training ses-
sions. Is that the interpretation you have received in State training
sessions?

Ms. IACHETTA. No, sir, it is not the interpretation. And I would
like to go on record to say that the reason that—we have 134 reg-
istrars in the State of Virginia, and all of us interpret it differently
because it is not very clearcut in our specific law. And that is not
how I interpret it. I interpret it as if a person comes before me, and
they are 18 years of age, and they qualify under Virginia law to
register to vote, I don't have——

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. It is their choice.

Ms. IACHETTA. It is their choice. I can't second-guess that, I can't
question that, I can't question any voter. And if I start questioning
voters, and if I start putting people in different groups, then I am
going get myself in trouble under Virginia being under the Voting
Rights Act of 1965 because you can't create a special class of vot-
ers.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. And I am just trying to look at some re-
cent history here. Do you know—you have been to training ses-
sions, you study your field. Do you know of any student anywhere
in the United States of America who has ever been prosecuted for
trying to vote in the place in which they attended college?

Ms. IACHETTA. No, sir, I haven't come across any information like that.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. Do you know of any voter fraud case every brought against a student saying, oh, you say you live in Alabama, you really live in Kentucky, so we are going to put you in jail because of that? Have you heard of any single case like that anywhere in America?

Ms. IACHETTA. No, sir, I haven't heard anything.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. I have not either. I would find it very curious.

There was a district attorney in Waller County, Texas, in 2003. Waller County is the home of Prairie View A&M and HBCU, primarily a black college, and the DA wrote a column in the newspaper, irrespective of a few canons of ethics, but what are ethics? The DA wrote a column in a newspaper threatening to prosecute students who were attending Prairie View, but who were—I suppose the parents lived out of State, so they could prosecute them. And that just struck me as something that was very bizarre 5 years ago.

I have a basic rule for how I assess events. If something reminds me of an event that would happen if I stepped in a time machine and went back to 1963, I tend to be dubious of it because I like now much better than I think I would have liked 1963.

But do any of you have any reaction, and, Ms. McLaughlin, I guess I will turn to you in deference to the IOP. I think the overarching public policy question here is kids ought to have the right to choose where they vote. Obviously they can't vote twice, but have a right to choose where they vote. I see no countervailing public policy interest that ought to constrain their choice. I think the Supreme Court has broadly agreed with me. I mean, am I right or wrong?

Ms. McLAUGHLIN. I believe you are right on that issue. I don't believe students are trying to vote in two places. I think they just want to vote, and the easiest way they can get there is what they want to do.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. And I would just close, Mr. Chairman. It may very well be that sometimes students cause elections to produce results members in communities don't like. If I were to sample people who lived in my district, they ain't crazy about everything we do in Washington, and they don't always feel the outcomes adequately represent their interests. That is life in the big city sometimes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. EHLERS. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. I am out of time, but I would be happy to yield to the Ranking Member.

Mr. EHLERS. I just wanted to comment. I was not raising an issue of broad public policy with my comments. It is simply that students should be aware that there may be ramifications back home. And counseling a student who has lost their instate tuition advantage is a pretty heartbreaking situation.

I also want to mention just, as you well know, Virginia State Board of Elections, Virginia law clearly states that it is up to the registrar to make the decision and no one else.

The last comment and a very quick one, you commented you voted in Alabama because you thought they needed your help more. I can assure you that if you had just voted Republican, the Massachusetts Republicans needed help a lot more than anyone in Alabama did. It is a real endangered species.

I yield back.

Mr. DAVIS of Alabama. You may have explained how Clarence Thomas became a Republican, Mr. Ehlers. I think now I understand it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I just have one real quick question. Ms. McLaughlin, you said that there are six States where people have to vote, when they vote the first time, in person. Do you know what they are?

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. They either have to register in person, or they have to vote for the first time in person.

The CHAIRMAN. In other words, if I registered in person and not by mail, they make a notation that I registered in person, and then I can vote absentee.

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. But if I registered by mail, then I have to vote in person.

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you know what States they are?

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. I can get you those. I believe New Hampshire, Wyoming—Michigan, Illinois, Tennessee and Louisiana. I am sorry, it is four States that we know.

The CHAIRMAN. Michigan, Illinois——

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. Tennessee and Louisiana.

The CHAIRMAN. All four of them, either/or. Somebody would have to be in person either one of them. And they make a notation, I guess.

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. I don't know. I just know that they have made it clear to us that we can't send in something. They either have to register—we actually this year sent out e-mails to students who said they were interested in the Institute of Politics prior to them coming to the freshman dean's office and sent a note to students saying in the States, if you need to register, you might want to do that before you come to college. So technology has really been a huge benefit for us.

The CHAIRMAN. You need to register in person.

Ms. MCLAUGHLIN. Register in person before you come here so that you can do an absentee ballot.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, and thank all of you for your interest and participation. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. I would now like to call up our third panel, please. Thank you. Please understand we may be—our understanding is there may be votes coming up soon. It is no way, any shape or form a disrespect, but we do have to leave and vote and come back. We will try to get through as quickly as possible. That does not mean we are trying to cut you off in any away either. Speak as long as you like, or 5 minutes is all entitled to you. Thank you all for being here.

Our first person on our panel is Sujatha Jahagirdar. Not bad, huh?

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. Perfect.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay. Ms. J is the program director for Stu-
dent—I am not trying it twice—for Student PIRG, a nonpartisan
effort to mobilize young voters. She has worked to study contem-
porary young voting turnout trends, as well as worked to train stu-
dent leaders across the country in the skills of mobilizing young
voters. I commend Ms. J on her efforts and thank her for coming
here today. And you may start your testimony.

STATEMENTS OF SUJATHA JAHAGIRDAR, PROGRAM DIREC-
TOR, STUDENT PIRGs NEW VOTERS PROJECT; MATTHEW
SEGAL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, STUDENT ASSOCIATION FOR
VOTER EMPOWERMENT; LAUREN BURDETTE, STUDENT, UNI-
VERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA; AND JACQUELINE VI, STU-
DENT, AMERICAN UNIVERSITY

STATEMENT OF SUJATHA JAHAGIRDAR

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. Thank you, Chairman Brady and the com-
mittee, for——

The CHAIRMAN. It is appropriate, if you like, you can pronounce
my name to the people. We will be even.

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR [continuing]. For providing the opportunity to
address you today. I am a program director with the Student
PIRGs New Voters Project. The Student PIRGs are the largest stu-
dent civic engagement program in the country. Our New Voters
Project is the oldest and largest effort, nonpartisan on-the-ground
effort, to mobilize young voters in the Nation. As we speak right
now 85 organizers are working on 150 college campuses in 24
States running massive voter registration and mobilization drives
that combine on-the-ground and on-line organizing to ensure that
young people turn out on November 4th.

Young voter participation is essential to our democracy. And rec-
ognizing that, in 1972 Americans granted young Americans be-
tween the ages of 18 and 21 the ability to vote. Immediately subse-
quent to that decision, young voter rates actually went on the de-
cline for several decades. But the great news is that in recent elec-
tions young voter turnout is on the rise. And, in fact, in 2004,
young voter turnout increased by 11 percent, which was triple the
increase rate of the general population. And in 2008, in States
where comparison data is available, young voter turnout rates ac-
tually doubled.

So we are at a very exciting time right now in our Nation's his-
tory, and as policymakers and local officials and education officials
look at these trends, we should be asking ourselves one funda-
mental question: How can we keep the momentum going? How can
we ensure that young people continue to show up in bigger and big-
ger numbers?

And despite the importance of resolving this question, several
barriers continue—persist that make it more difficult for young
people to show up and cast their ballot at the polls. And what I
am going to spend the next few minutes on in my testimony is
identifying where those problem areas are and proposing solutions
to those problems.

The first are restrictive photo identification laws. Every State in the country requires its citizens to present proof of or swear to residency in order to cast a ballot. Unfortunately, in specific instances, these requirements end up creating unintentional barriers to student voters.

The State that has most illustrated this problem is Indiana. During the primaries, a new Indiana law came in effect that actually required students to present either a State-issued or a Federal-issued photo ID when they arrived at the polls. The problem with this law is that many students don't actually possess this required identification. And, in fact, in just a few hours, a small team of our staff in Indiana documented a dozen cases of students who showed up at the polls to vote on primary day and weren't able to cast a ballot because they lacked the required identification. And these were not surreptitious attempts at voter fraud; these were bright-eyed, bushy-tailed students who showed up very excited to exercise their rights as citizens for the first time.

And, in fact, at Saint Mary's College, which is a sister school to Notre Dame University, two students I talked to really struck a chord. They both volunteer at the local elementary school, they are members of the campus ministry, and they just happened to be born in Illinois and were at Saint Mary's for college. And they arrived at the polls armed with identification, with their school ID, with their birth certificate, with a card issued by the local registrar, with their driver's license from Illinois, and they were refused the ability to vote that day. And when I talked to them, really it was hard to miss the tone of dejection and really disillusionment at the message that they had been sent that day, which was they are not welcome in our democracy. So that is voter identification laws.

Other issues that have arisen have already been mentioned by the committee, which are restrictive interpretations of State law. In Virginia there have been recent instances where local registrars have issued warnings to students predicting potential dire consequences for registering to vote where you go to school. And unfortunately, Virginia is not the only place where this has arisen. In fact, in South Carolina local registrars have provided similar advice to students. In fact, this was reported just today in the press. A local registrar in South Carolina around Furman University tells students that if they are registered as—if they are included on their parents' tax returns as dependents, that they are not able to vote where they go to school as a blanket policy, which is incorrect information.

To prevent a repeat of the Virginia Tech incident and similar incidents across the country, States should withdraw confusing and restrictive guidance for student photos that are subject to gross misinterpretation at the local level and lead to enormous barriers to students voting.

And the final challenge to voters that I would like to talk about today is inadequate voting infrastructure. As has already been mentioned today, we anticipate very large increases in youth turnout on November 4th. It is very exciting for democracy. And if you just look at the turnout in 2008 in the primaries, you get a sense of how big this might be. In Ohio, for example, all 88 counties in

the State had turnouts in the 2008 primaries that were greater than 70 percent of the turnout in the 2004 general elections. That means that the turnout in the primaries was approaching the turnout in the general election from the previous cycle. And the national average is usually—the historical average is usually only 30 percent. So if registrars are looking at their numbers and just trying to figure out what resources they should have, if they are trying to figure out how many pollworkers they should have, how many ballots they should order, how many voting machines they have, if they just look at the 2004 numbers and increase it by 10 or 20 or 30 percent, we are worried that we are going to see massive shortages across the country, especially in student-dominated precincts where I think we will see even greater increases. So it is absolutely essential for local officials to anticipate these increases.

And finally, under the infrastructure category, really we should see an increase in the number of on-campus polling places that are placed at institutes of higher education across the country. On-campus polling places make it easier for students to vote. They ease the burden on off-campus polling places. And most importantly, they help the university themselves fulfill the educational mission of the campus by providing students with the ability to have their first lesson in civic education.

So in conclusion, again I would like to thank the committee for holding this hearing, for looking into this important issue. I would like to thank Congressman Ehlers for standing on campus and registering voters when he was in Michigan. And the great news is we are here because young people are voting in bigger and bigger numbers. It is really great for democracy. And the thing that we should do is take a few simple steps to make it even easier for young people to show up at the polls, and by doing so we will send a strong message to students who are across the country and here in this room that their vote is not only encouraged, but aggressively advocated for.

Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Ms. Jahagirdar follows:]

Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote
Statement before the Committee on House Administration
Sujatha Jahagirdar, Program Director Student PIRGs New Voters Project
September 25, 2008

Thank you members of the Committee and Chairman Brady for the opportunity to address you today. My name is Sujatha Jahagirdar and I am the Program Director for the Student Public Interest Research Group (PIRG) New Voters Project.

The Student PIRGs are the nation's largest student civic engagement organization. Our New Voters Project is the oldest and largest grassroots non partisan effort to mobilize young voters in the country. Since our inception 25 years ago, we have registered millions of young voters, 500,000 in 2004 alone. This election year, as we speak, 85 PIRG organizers are working in 24 states on 150 campuses across the country running massive voter registration drives that pair on the ground and on line voter registration drives in an effort to ensure the voice of students is heard in election booths across the country.

Background on Student Voting

Young voter participation is essential to our democracy. Making up more than a fifth of the electorate in 2004, millennials born between 1980 and 2000 will make up a third of the electorate by 2015.[1] Because voting habits are established early, the participation of this generation in the political process will lead to a healthier democracy for decades to come. Recognizing the importance of their participation in the political process, in 1972, Americans granted 18-21 year olds the right to vote. For two decades subsequently, youth vote rates decreased, fueled by a 'cycle of mutual neglect' in which political campaigns failed to focus resources on turning out a demographic saddled with low turn out rates. Young people in turn, feeling this neglect, reciprocated with even bigger declines in turnout.

Over the past several election cycles, however, the tide has finally turned. The youth vote is on the rise. Between 2000 and 2004, young voter turnout rates increased by 11 percent, three times the increase among the general population.[2] Between 2002 and 2006, the youth vote increased again by two million votes, while general turnout increased only slightly.[3] Turnout results in 2008 escalated this trend – in states where we possess sufficient comparison data, youth turnout rates doubled this primary season.[4] Visiting campuses and talking with student leaders across the country over the past several months, the excitement among the nation's college and university students is palpable.

The reasons for this reversal range from the increased use of technology to an increased allocation of campaign resources across the board toward reaching out to and talking to young voters. While pundits and pollsters will likely debate the sources of this trend for years to come, one factor behind this trend is indisputable: For nearly a decade, experts have documented a rise in the civic engagement culture of

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1 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, Youth Voting in the 2004 Battleground States, August 2004, downloaded from http://www.civicyouth.org/research/areas/pol_partic.htm, 23 September 2008

2 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, The Youth Vote 2004, July 2005, downloaded from http://www.civicyouth.org/quick/youth_voting.htm, 23 September 2008

3 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, Youth Voter Turnout Increases in 2006, June 2007, downloaded from www.civicyouth.org/PopUps/FactSheets/FS07_2006MidtermCPS.pdf, 23 September 2008

4 Student PIRGs New Voters Project, "Youth Vote Turnout Comparisons 2000-2008," compiled from Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement calculations available at www.civicyouth.org

young people. Students are volunteering in greater and greater numbers, and over the past several election cycles, this increasing culture of civic engagement has spilled over into the political arena.

As policy-makers, local leaders and higher education institutions look at this trend, we should ask ourselves one question: How do we keep this momentum going? How do we ensure that student voters turn out in bigger numbers this year and for years to come?

Despite the importance of resolving this question and continuing this trend, numerous barriers to student voting persist. Over the next few minutes I will outline these barriers to the committee, suggest ways to remove them and thereby send a message to student voters that their civic engagement and participation in the political process is not only welcomed, but vigorously encouraged.

Restrictive Voter Identification Laws

Every state in the country requires its citizens to present proof of or swear to residency in order to cast a ballot. Unfortunately, identification laws that impact students are inconsistent across the country and many states and local registrars enforce identification requirements that create unnecessary barriers to student voting.

For example, Indiana guidance, newly implemented this year, explicitly states that student ID from a private institution may not be used for voting purposes.[5] Drawn from a new state law that requires voters to present Indiana or federal ID at the polls, the law had serious consequences for student voter in the state during the primaries.

In just a few hours a small team of Student PIRG New Voters Project staff, for instance, documented a dozen cases of student voters turned away from the polls for a failure to meet these unnecessarily restrictive ID requirements. At St. Mary's College, a sister school to the University of Notre Dame, for example, two young freshmen arrived at the polls excited to vote for the first time. Both students considered themselves Indiana residents, volunteer their time as tutors at local elementary schools and are members of the campus ministry. Arriving at the polls with an armful of ID on the day of the Indiana primary – birth certificates, county registration cards, school IDs and Illinois driver's licenses – both young women were turned away and were not able to cast a ballot that day.

Indiana's restrictive voter ID law sent a message to those two freshmen that day – your vote is not welcome. The law turned what should have been the first lesson of civic education in a lifetime of citizenship into an exercise of frustration and disenfranchisement. And without reconsideration of these restrictive laws and those across the country, student voters will continue to receive this message over and over again.

In direct contrast, guidance issued by the Elections Division of the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board, for example, specifically states that an acceptable form of proof of residence includes a university, college or technical institute identification card that includes a photo. The state does not ask students to overcome any additional hurdles.[6]

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5 Indiana Secretary of State, "PhotoID.IN.gov," downloaded from http://www.in.gov/sos/photoid/, 23 September 2008

6 Wisconsin Government Accountability Board, Elections Division, "How to Register and Vote on Election Day," downloaded from http://elections.state.wi.us/faq_detail.asp?faqid=121&fid=27&locid=47, 23 September 2008

Restrictive Interpretation of State Law

Hurdles to student voting persist in other forms as well. In Montgomery County, Virginia, last month, a local registrar issued a memo that warned students of dire potential consequences – the loss of healthcare, scholarships and tax status – for registering to vote where they go to school. The warnings, since discredited by the IRS and voting experts alike, created a chilling atmosphere among student voters at Virginia Tech, resulted in worried calls from parents and caused several students to withdraw their registrations in the area.[7]

The Virginia Tech incident was spawned by a confusing state guidance that led to inconsistent rules for student voters across the state. In contrast to the experience of students in Montgomery County, students at the University of Virginia face no warnings of dire consequences for registering to vote. While the Virginia State Board of Elections has since withdrawn much of its confusing guidance, it retains troubling information that has the potential for student voter suppression at the local level arising from the guidance remains.[8]

The Board of Election guidance still allows local registrars to issue questionnaires to students who register to vote. The questionnaires, which could probe a student's tax status, healthcare provider and scholarship sources, could severely intimidate students who seek to register to vote where they go to school.[9]

While local officials in Virginia have received considerable attention, unnecessary restrictions on student voters at the local level extend to other states as well. In Greenville County, South Carolina, the registrar's office incorrectly tells students at Furman University that if they are listed as dependents on their parent's tax returns, they must vote where their parents live.

To prevent a repeat of the Virginia Tech incident and other similar cases around the country, states should withdraw confusing and restrictive guidance for student voters that are subject to gross misinterpretation at the local level and lead to enormous barriers to student voting.

Restrictive Voter Registration Laws

The ability to vote is a basic right and should be easy and accessible. Over the past several decades, this country has made enormous strides toward achieving this goal. Registration deadlines set weeks before Election Day, however, remain as barriers to student voting. In fact, according to Demos, a non-partisan public policy organization, Election Day registration could increase youth turnout in presidential elections by as much as 14 percent.[10]

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7 Elizabeth Reddel, "Warning for College Student voters," Inside Higher Ed, downloaded from http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2008/09/03/voting, 23 September 2008

8 Virginia State Board of Elections, "Registration and Voting Information for College Students," downloaded from http://www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Voter_Information/Registering_to_Vote/College_Student.html, 23 September 2008

9 *Ibid.*

10 DEMOS, "Voters Win with Election Day Registration," November 19, 2007 downloaded from http://demos.org/pub1280.cfm, 23 September 2008

In 2004, for instance, four of the five states with the highest youth turnout in the nation allow voters to register and vote on the same day.[11] Based on these results, we believe that same day voter registration policies across the country would significantly boost the youth vote and remove a significant barrier to young voter turnout across the country.

Inadequate Voting Infrastructure

With the youth vote on the rise, it is more important than ever to ensure adequate resources to handle the influx of new voters eager to exercise their civic responsibility for the first time. Often times, however, our voting infrastructure is insufficient to meet the needs of student voters across the country. Among these problems are ballot shortages and a lack of on campus polling places.

In the 2008 primaries, people arrived at the polls in numbers larger than any previous primary -- the old record of 35 million votes, set in 1988, was shattered by over 20 million votes.[12,13] In fact, every state other than Nebraska showed higher turnout than in the 2004 primary.

Even more striking, in many states turnout in the 2008 primary election rivaled or even surpassed turnout in the 2004 general election.

In Ohio, for example, all 88 counties in the state had turnouts in the 2008 primaries greater than 70 percent of the turnout in the 2004 general elections. 17 of these counties had higher turnout in the 2008 primaries than in the 2004 general elections. This turnout level far surpassed an historical average of 50 percent.[14] This heavy turnout resulted in ballot shortages in at least two counties in the state.[15] As my colleague Matt Segal with SAVE will highlight, these ballot shortages in Ohio have created serious obstacles to student voting in previous election cycles.

With record turnout predicted in college precincts this November, it is critical that local elections officials anticipate and plan for a surge in student voters at the polls. A failure to order sufficient ballots, employ sufficient poll workers and ensure sufficient voting machines will have a serious impact on the ability of students to cast their ballots.

Another barrier to student voting across the country is a lack of sufficient on campus polling places. On campus polling places are a simple way to ensure easy and ready access to the polls for students. Despite this, students across the country -- many of whom don't own their own cars -- must travel off campus to vote, thus creating yet another unnecessary step in the voting process. In addition, polling places situated on college campuses can ease pressure of heavy turnout on poll workers and the local voting infrastructure in student-heavy precincts. Often times, however, local registrars fail to install on campus polling places despite widespread support for it among students, faculty and administrators.   Not only does this refusal decrease youth turnout it also misses an opportunity to fulfill an important mandate.

11 Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement, The Youth Vote 2004, July 2005, downloaded from http://www.civicyouth.org/quick/youth_voting.htm, 23 September 2008; DEMOS, "Voters Win with Election Day Registration," November 19, 2007 downloaded from http://demos.org/pub1280.cfm, 23 September 2008

12 http://blogs.wsj.com/washwire/2008/05/19/primary-turnout-in-2008-nears-but-doesnt-heat-record/
13 http://www.cnn.com/ELECTION/2008/primaries/
14 This calculation used the 1988, 1992, and 2000 elections, as they were the only years in which both the Democrats and Republicans had contested primary elections since 1980; Data used in calculations taken from
http://www.dispatchpolitics.com/live/content/insight/stories/2008/02/10/delegatelist.html?sid=101, accessed on 08/01/08

15 Ian Urbina, "Ballot Shortages plague Ohio Primary: Heavy turnout compounds voting problems," New York Times, March 4, 2008, downloaded from http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/23475436/, 23 September 2008

What better way to fulfill the university mandate to provide a civic education than to provide on campus polling places where students can learn their first lesson of citizenship?

Conclusion

In conclusion, I'd like to once again thank the committee for the opportunity to testify before you. The good news today is that the youth vote is on the rise and enthusiasm among students for engaging in the political process is bubbling on college campuses across the country. As policy makers and as a society we can take several concrete steps toward removing barriers that prevent students from turning this enthusiasm into true citizenship. To encourage this exciting trend in youth participation, election officials should install campus polling places, enact same day voter registration, eliminate restrictive ID laws and ensure fair interpretation of law. With these changes we can ensure that the voice of students is heard loud and clear at the ballot box this year and for years to come.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Matthew Segal is the executive director of Student Association for Voter Empowerment, a Washington, D.C.-based nonpartisan organization founded and run by students with a mission to increase youth voter turnout by removing access barriers and promoting stronger civic education. Mr. Segal has truly been an effective advocate for students' rights, and we are honored to have him here today and listen to his testimony.

STATEMENT OF MATTHEW SEGAL

Mr. SEGAL. Thank you.

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Ehlers and the committee members. I thank you for inviting me here today, and particularly grateful for the opportunity to testify on such an essential and pressing topic.

I also want to thank my friend Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky for her leadership in joining Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Steven LaTourette to introduce the bipartisan Student VOTER Act of 2008.

My name is Matthew Segal, and I am the executive director of the Student Association for Voter Empowerment, otherwise known as SAVE. A national nonprofit association founded and run by students, SAVE's mission is to increase youth voter turnout by removing access barriers and promoting stronger civic education. I speak here today representing a constituency of over 10,000 members on 30 college campuses across the country.

Almost 4 years ago as a 19-year-old college student, I entered the Rayburn Building to testify before the House Judiciary Committee panel about the 10-hour-long voting lines at Kenyon College in Gambier, Ohio, where I recently graduated. I told the panel then that voter disenfranchisement had occurred, and that we should never make voting this arduous a task ever again, and that was a quote.

Unfortunately, today I have little good news to report about the legislative steps we have taken since then in order to guarantee an accessible and participatory voting system for our Nation's college students.

Many of the student voting problems I will address today were compiled in a hearing SAVE held last summer where we invited kids around the country to come talk about the problems they face, and I ask the Chairman for permission to submit our 50-page report into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay.

Mr. SEGAL. Thank you.

As we all know, in order to vote, we have to register, and in some cases students face overt legislative attempts to prevent them from registering at their college or university. For example, SAVE heard testimony that every year a bill is introduced in the Maine State Legislature prohibiting students living in college-owned housing from claiming residency. While the bill has not yet passed, its purpose is unclear other than to encumber the rights of thousands of college students who wish to vote in their new communities. According to the former vice president of the Maine College Democrats who testified before our SAVE committee, the State legislator who introduced this bill claimed it could cut the potential for voter

fraud, despite being unable to present any previous evidence of voter fraud in college districts. And he also went on to say that college students do not have a vested interest in the State of Maine, and that they would dilute the voting power of long-term residents in their counties.

College students live 9 months of a year in their new homes, however, and provide substantial economic support to their college communities. But most importantly, college students have a legal right to vote where they attend school if they live in that State for 30 days. Just because students live on a campus does not mean Federal law can be ignored.

Fortunately, this particular bill did not pass, but many local boards of elections across the country effectively practice the same discriminatory statements that the Maine Legislature preaches. Since State statutes expressly prohibit the use of a P.O. Box for registration purposes, officials frequently turn student voters away by failing to recognize dormitory addresses as legitimate residences.

Finally, several instances of election officials presenting residency questionnaires to students have been reported, another student testified in our hearing last summer. In 2004, the board of elections in Williamsburg, Virginia, asked students to complete a questionnaire relating to the location of their parents' home, possession of property outside the town, and their place of worship. Such detailed information was not required, however, of other residents and was collected most likely to establish a reason to reject a student's registration form, by all means a discriminatory practice.

Misinformation campaigns, as was previously alluded to today, are another example of what hinders youth participation. My colleague spoke on Virginia Tech, and I learned this very morning about another case at Colorado College where the El Paso County clerk also told students that their parents would lose their ability to file them as a dependent on their tax forms if they were to vote in Colorado and be from out of State. In 2004, at the University of Pennsylvania, fliers were also posted around talking about the possibility for students losing their driver's licenses or scholarships or grant money were they to vote in Pennsylvania. The key difference between Penn and Virginia Tech, however, was that the posters at Penn did not appear until after the registration deadline, and, therefore, several students were intimidated from voting completely because it was too late for them to register for an absentee ballot.

While long lines or deceptive fliers can create a clear graphic image of college student voting barriers, perhaps the most insidious obstacle are voter ID loss. Now, my friend Jan Schakowsky spoke to this earlier, so to avoid redundancy I will move on and finally say that I would be remiss if I did not address the long lines.

I find it curious that many of the long lines reported in 2004 and 2006 took place in heavily populated student communities. Kenyon students waited 10 hours. Oberlin students waited 5 hours; Dennison, 4 hours; and Bowling Green College, 3 hours. The list continues. In some instances the intent here might have been egregious, but in most instances boards of elections allocate voting ma-

chines or resources on the basis of past voter turnout and were not prepared for an increase in youth participation which we have now steadily seen in the last 8 years of midterm and Presidential elections. At my alma mater, Kenyon College, there were two voting machines allocated for 1,300 registered voters, one of which broke down.

So let me ask this question: What standards or safeguards are in place to ensure that Kenyon College 2004 can never happen again? Most States still do not have a quota or ratio of how many machines or ballots they allocate per number of registered voters. Simply put, we need these safeguards.

In closing, I want to say that SAVE is fully committed to protecting student voting rights and removing the unique and challenging barriers that many young Americans face when attempting to vote. SAVE is now partnered with EVOCA Voice Services so that any young person can use their mobile phones to call a 1–866 number on our Web site and upload audio accounts of their voting experience on line. We also have partnered with Campus Advantage, a premier residential life organization, to launch studentvotingrights.org, which we also encourage elected officials and the media to visit so they can continue to monitor young voter access stories and track disenfranchisement among our particular group of young Americans.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for inviting me here today. I look forward to updating this committee on student voting accounts throughout the coming weeks and months, and more importantly, I also look forward to achieving bipartisan election reform legislation to ensure that all Americans, including young Americans attending colleges, can exercise their rights of citizenship and vote where they live.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

[The statement of Mr. Segal follows:]

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Student Association for Voter Empowerment

Testimony of Matthew Segal
Executive Director
Student Association for Voter Empowerment
On "Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote."
Before the House Administration Committee in the United States Congress

Good afternoon Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Ehlers and the Committee members; I thank you for inviting me here today and am particularly grateful for the opportunity to testify on such an essential and pressing topic. I want to thank your committee staff, Chairman Brady, with whom I have had the pleasure of working with to put together this hearing. And I want to thank my friend, Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky, for her leadership in joining Senator Dick Durbin and Congressman Steven LaTourette to introduce the bipartisan "Student VOTER Act of 2008."

My name is Matthew Segal and I am the executive director of the Student Association for Voter Empowerment, otherwise known as SAVE. A national non-profit organization founded and run by students, SAVE's mission is to increase youth voter turnout by removing access barriers and promoting stronger civic education. I speak here today representing a constituency of roughly 10,000 members on over 30 college campuses across the country.

Almost four years ago as a 19 year old college student, I entered the Rayburn Building to testify before a House Judiciary Committee panel about the 10-hour long voting lines at Kenyon College, in Gambier, OH, where I recently graduated. I told the panel then that "voter disenfranchisement had occurred," and that we should never make voting this "arduous a task" ever again. Unfortunately, today, I have little good news to report about the legislative steps we have taken since then in order to guarantee an accessible and participatory voting system for our nation's college students.

Many of the student voting problems I will address today were compiled in a hearing SAVE held last summer as well as through various reports we have received since then. I ask the Chairman for unanimous consent to submit our 58-page hearing transcript in the record.

As we all know, the first step we must take in order to vote is to register; and in some cases, students face overt legislative attempts to prevent them from registering at their college or university. For example, SAVE heard testimony that every year a bill is introduced in the Maine state legislature prohibiting students living in college owned

housing from claiming residency.[1] While the bill has not yet passed, its purpose is unclear other than to encumber the rights of thousands of college students who wish to vote in their new communities. According to the former vice-president of the Maine College Democrats who testified before our SAVE committee, the state legislator who introduced this bill claimed it would cut the potential for voter fraud—despite being unable to present any previous evidence of voter fraud in college districts throughout Maine. He also went so far as to say that college students do not have "a vested interest in the state of Maine" and that they would dilute the voting power of long-term residents in their counties. Now I know several college students who attend school in Maine and they all swear to me that they care about their state, but more importantly, college students have a legal right to vote where they attend school should they live in that state for 30 days—regardless of whether or not their authenticity is questioned.

Fortunately, this particular bill did not pass, but many local Boards of Elections across the country effectively practice the discrimination that members of the Maine state legislature preach. Since state statutes expressly prohibit the use of a post office box for registration purposes, officials frequently turn student voters away by failing to recognize dormitory addresses as legitimate residences. Finally, several instances of election officials presenting residency questionnaires to students have been reported.[2] In 2004, the board of elections in Williamsburg, Virginia asked students to complete a questionnaire relating to the location of their parents' home, possession of property outside the town, and their place of worship.[3] Such detailed information was not required of other residents and was collected most likely to establish a reason to reject a student's registration form.

Misinformation campaigns are another example of what hinders youth voter participation. Whereas my colleagues can speak to the recent instance of this at Virginia Tech, flyers were also printed and posted around the University of Pennsylvania in 2004 containing deceptive information about voting laws. The posters, which claimed to quote a *Chicago Sun-Times* article, warned of serious consequences for out-of-state students who voted in Pennsylvania such as loss of scholarships, grant money, financial aid and their driver's licenses.[4] The key difference between Penn and Virginia Tech, however, was that the posters at Penn did not appear until after the registration deadline. Several students were therefore intimidated out of voting completely because it was too late for them to register for an absentee ballot.

Whereas long lines or deceptive flyers create a clear graphic image of voting barriers, perhaps the most insidious obstacle for young voters are stringent Voter ID laws. SAVE signed onto the Supreme Court Amicus brief against the voter ID legislation in Indiana. In addition, we have unfortunately had hundreds of our members in Ohio negatively

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[1] Testimony of Chris Appel, *Student Association for Voter Empowerment Hearing on Voter Irregularities*, July 25, 2007.
[2] Rosenfeld, *Count My Vote*, 36.
[3] Testimony of Zach Pilchen, *Student Association for Voter Empowerment Hearing on Voter Irregularities*, July 25, 2007.
[4] Testimony of Cynthia Padera, *Student Association for Voter Empowerment Hearing on Voter Irregularities*, July 25, 2007.

affected by voter ID provisions. According to a Rock the Vote survey, 19 percent of young adults (18-29) report they do not possess a government issued photo ID with their current address.[5] As a result, young voters are forced to rely upon alternative forms of identification. The substitutions for a photo ID however, such as utility bills, are not easily obtainable for students because colleges and universities generally pay all the bills for students that live in dormitories or on-campus apartments. We thereby estimate that literally thousands—if not hundreds of thousands—of college students will be forced to vote provisionally this November, for which they might not even receive verification as to whether or not their ballots count. This, of course, lowers voter efficacy or confidence, which is devastating for any young voters. If we are going to maintain voter ID laws in general, then SAVE firmly encourages all states to recognize college and university IDs as an acceptable alternative. Ohio, among many other states, does not.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not briefly address long voting lines we have encountered. I find it curious that many of the long lines reported in 2004 and 2006 took place in heavily populated student communities. Kenyon students waited 10 hours; Oberlin students waited 5 hours; Denison- 4 hours; Bowling Green- 3 hours... the list continues. In some instances, the intent here might have been egregious; but in most instances, Boards of Elections allocate voting machines or resources on the basis of past voter turnout and are not prepared for an increase in youth participation, which we have now steadily seen in the last 8 years of midterm and presidential elections. At my alma mater, Kenyon College, there were 2 voting machines allocated for 1300 registered voters, one of which broke down for a while. Other precincts throughout Ohio had 6 machines for 600 registered voters. Let me ask this question: what standards or safeguards are in place to ensure that Kenyon College 2004 can never happen again? Most states still do not have a quota or ratio of how many machines or ballots they allocate per number of registered voters. Simply put, we need these safeguards.

In closing, I want to say that SAVE is fully committed to protecting student-voting rights and removing the unique and challenging barriers that our young Americans face when attempting to vote. SAVE has now partnered with EVOCA voice services, so that any young person can use their mobile phones to call our 1-866 number and upload audio accounts of their voting experience online. We have also partnered with Campus Advantage, a premiere residential life organization, to launch studentvotingrights.org, which we also encourage elected officials and the media to visit so they can continue to monitor young voter access stories.

Yet again, I thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for inviting me here today and I look forward to updating this committee on student voting accounts throughout the coming weeks and months. More importantly, I also look forward to achieving meaningful bipartisan election reform legislation with you as the coming months and next Congress unfolds.

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[5] Ben Adler, "Activists: Ruling Hurts Youth Voters," *Politico*, April 28, 2008.

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STUDENT ASSOCIATION FOR VOTER EMPOWERMENT HOLDS A HEARING ON VOTER SUPPRESSION

JULY 25, 2007

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SEGAL: All right. Good morning, everyone. My name is Matthew Segal, and I'm the executive director of the Student Association for Voter Empowerment, better known as SAVE.

I'm privileged today to be joined by distinguished politicians, who will be here in and out today, non-profit leaders and election experts, in order to discuss a fundamental aspect of our democracy -- our vote.

Our vote is our instrument for change, our means of protection and our mode for expression. Few others have put it better than President Lyndon B. Johnson, upon signing the 1965 Voting Rights Act, when he stated, "The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men."

In essence, voting allows us to ensure freedom, equal justice under law and integrity within our government.

With that said, I'm proud to be part of a team of young people who have committed their time and energy to promoting such values, a group that worked to increase accessibility to the political process and enhance youth civic participation.

Before I go on to describe our mission and intention here today, however, it's imperative I thank several people. Joining me on our committee is, on our far left, Deborah Vagins, who is the policy counsel for civil rights and civil liberties at the ACLU. Then, to her right -- my left -- would be Stuart Comstock-Gay, who is the director of the democracy program at DEMOS.

On my immediate left here is Commissioner Rosemary Rodriguez of the Election Assistance Commission; on my right, Jonah Goldman, of the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights; and on my far right -- not so far right, actually -- Curtis Gans of the Study of the American Electorate.

GANS: Neither politically or geographically.

SEGAL: Exactly.

I also want to thank our staff, who have worked tirelessly to put this together, and our board members, who have also been extremely supportive, and many of whom showed up for our congressional reception on the Hill yesterday; and our partners here today, who -- momentarily, quite a few Common Cause interns will be arriving -- they're a partner of ours -- Mobilize.org and Fair Vote, who will also be sending all their people. And I apologize that they're running late.

Finally, I want to recognize Corporate Voices for Working Families, our fiscal agent sponsor, Deborah Salzberg of Forest City Enterprise, who has been kind to help us with our office space this summer, and the office of Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin, who helped secure us this beautiful hearing room.

About a quarter of my generation votes or, in other words, approximately 25 percent of us are making decisions when it comes to such critical issues as our job market, our college affordability, our environmental safety, our foreign policy, our economic investments and our education.

Now, is this simply because we don't care, or is this because the society we live in structurally de-values our opinions, making political policy and the political system inaccessible?

Don't get me wrong: Low voter participation is also a cultural issue. The wrong priorities are being emphasized; entertainment and instant gratification over civic engagements is an example.

But what we are here to talk about today is the inaccessible structure -- policy barriers that detract a significant amount of the youth voting populous each election.

Today, we will hear from eight bright, accomplished and articulate students who share their compelling stories of voting irregularities and suppression. Some of these stories will reflect outright egregious attempts by election administrators to filter out student voters, whereas others will shed light on the administrative negligence or insidious forms of voter discouragement and deception that occur frequently among our demographic.

I'm encouraged to say that today is not only about pointing out flaws, however. It's about forming solutions. I encourage our committee and our panelists to help lead our organization and all of us, for that matter, in the direction of policy reform and the steps necessary to ensure an approachable, accountable and transparent system of democracy.

They've worked to lead a youth movement in sight of these goals, and I encourage those attending today to check out our organization and join us in our effort to make civic participation something as fundamental as education itself.

Finally, I want to urge us all to draw attention to this issue. Why are the stories that pervade our media never ones as basic as ubiquitous violations of student voting rights? We all share a collective obligation here today to bring these problems to a forefront. And this hearing is just one step of many that need to be taken.

To inform everyone briefly of our format here today: Structurally, we will have a few committee members walking in and out after the first panel. We

also might have visits from quite a few members of Congress who might want to make a few remarks. But since the recess is coming up and they're cramming to get things done, they won't be able to stay the whole time.

I'm now going to turn it over to our committee members to make two to four minutes of opening remarks each. And then, I'm going to turn it over to our panelists. And from there, we'll follow up with questions for the first panel. And also, if there's a member or someone who walks in and has a short amount of time, please don't be offended if I interrupt you briefly.

Thank you.

And with that, I will go to Ms. Vagins.

VAGINS: Matthew, thank you so much for inviting me here today. I'd like to also commend SAVE and all of the student witnesses today for their commitment to civic participation and for working to preserve our fundamental rights.

Like many of the other organizations that you'll hear from, the ACLU has been on the forefront of fighting for voting rights in this country.

We were integral members of the Voting Rights Coalition, working on reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act last year, testifying before Congress and submitting reports on the continuing needs of the act, including one report that was over 800 pages long that documented our voting-rights docket since the Voting Rights Act was last reauthorized in 1982.

The ACLU has strongly advocated, either through our litigation or through our lobbying efforts, for the rights of often-disenfranchised voters, including minority voters, limited-English-proficient voters, disabled voters and, sadly, student voters.

With regard to students, the ACLU has campus chapters and national campaigns dedicated to empowering youth to take action on a variety of issues from free speech to LGBT issues, to habeas and racial justice.

And specifically, with regard to student voting rights, for at least the last 35 years, our voting-rights project has represented college students who are trying to vote in the towns where they go to school.

We've seen that in close elections, one side will go to the registrar to try to get students purged from the voter rolls or engage in behavior to discourage or stop students from registering in the first place.

We've been successful in showing that college residency is enough for voter-registration purposes and that residency rules and indicia of residency must apply to student like everyone else, even if students intend to leave after graduation.

Within just the last few years, the voting-rights project has taken cases on behalf of students in Arkansas, Virginia and Texas. And if I may, for just a second, I would like to take a moment to discuss a case in Texas that we just handled.

It was brought on behalf of students of Prairie View A&M University, a historically black college in Waller County, Texas. And in that case the Waller County district attorney published a letter to the editor of the local newspaper

saying that he would prosecute anyone who voted in county elections who did not meet his definition of a resident, subjecting them to 10 years in jail and a fine of $10,000.

The only group in the county he identified as potential illegal voters were students. "Students," he wrote, "do not, on any campus, have lawful rights to special definition of domicile for voting purposes."

State officials expressed their disagreement with the district attorney and the secretary of state issued an advisory opinion that said, "No more or less can be required of college students during the voter-registration process than any other Texas voter." And the state attorney general also issued an opinion that said, "Students in Texas may no longer be subjected, whether by statute or practice, to any presumption with respect to residence not also applied to all voters in Texas."

So lawsuits were filed by the local chapter of the NAA, and the students the university represented, by the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights and the ACLU. And the lawsuit was quickly settled. And the Waller County election officials were required to apply the same presumption of residency to students as non-students.

So I just want to quickly close to say that the ACLU shares SAVE's mission that, by arming young people with the knowledge to navigate the political process and instilling an ethic for civic participation, we hope to create a foundation for a lifelong engagement in the democratic system.

So thank you very much.

SEGAL: Thank you.

Mr. Gay?

COMSTOCK-GAY: Thank you.

Thank you all. Thank you, Matthew, SAVE and all of you all attending here.

My name is Stuart Comstock-Gay. I'm with an organization called DEMOS, which is the Greek word for "The People." And our goal is to try to expand the vision of democracy in America.

We do that primarily in three areas: Through looking at economic opportunity, expanding the middle class, looking at debt problems, particularly for young people; we do that through changing the way people think about the role and importance of government; and we do that by trying to lower barriers to participation in political systems. And my program is that.

This is an issue I care about deeply. I have two daughters in college right now. This is something that matters to them and to me.

There's a deep cynicism in America right now about our elected leaders, about our government and about whether or not it's valuable to participate at all. And, unfortunately, many people decide not to participate and not to vote.

But if America is to thrive in the 21st century, we have to get people re-engaged. People under 30, particularly, understand because of their familiarity

with Internet and with technology that participation can be made simple. Unfortunately, right now in America, our election systems are not simple enough, and they could be more simple.

We have too many barriers to participation. One of the things we particularly care about at DEMOS is election-day registration. It's a reform that we've been working on in a number of states. There are now nine election-day registration states; most recently passed in North Carolina; it was signed by the governor on Friday; passed in Iowa in April. And there are campaigns in a number of states.

That is a way, particularly, for young people, to get more involved. The people who are most affected, in fact, by EDR are young people.

One of the worst things we can do for somebody who walks in and tries to vote on Election Day is close the door -- or someone who tries to register -- is to close the door -- because we don't always get those people back.

And it's one thing for people of privilege, people from upper-middle class and professional backgrounds. It's an even more complicated thing for people who don't have a family history of participation. And those are issues we particularly care about and are interested in hearing more about.

We need to look at all means of lowering barriers, whether it's election-day registration -- there are a number of states that are looking at vote by mail. There are some states that are considering automatic registration when you get public assistance or you get your boater's license. Those are things we ought to be considering as well.

So I'm eager to hear from you all about your experiences, your thoughts, about how people could get involved in the political system, and look forward to some new solutions and some new energy.

Thank you.

SEGAL: Commissioner?

RODRIGUEZ: Morning. My name is Rosemary Rodriguez. I'm a member of the United States Election Assistance Commission. And the commission was formed by Congress after the 2000 election to attempt to restore voter confidence in elections.

We are an organization in our infancy -- good morning, David -- an organization in our infancy, but we have a serious charge. And one of the issues that the commission has responsibility for that persuaded me that I wanted to be kind of a part of it is the management of the National Voter Registration responsibility.

I, by way of background, have worked on voter registration personally for about the last 30 years. And I started a group in Colorado called The Latina Initiative, which looked to women as thought leaders within their families, and asked them to form circles of influence within their families and friends and try to get people to vote that way.

One of my most favorite activities, which was unfortunate when it started, was in 2004, a young friend of mine didn't get a ballot. She was on a study-

abroad program. She was a student at Duke and she didn't get her absentee ballot.

And so I started this quest that became a really large quest to get Denver students their ballots -- who were abroad -- because a number of them hadn't gotten them. When the newspaper reported that I was helping one, I started getting emails and phone calls from parents and students all over the world.

And we ended up sending, by Federal Express, ballots that hadn't arrived through the regular mail process. And a number of students were able to vote. But it was so hard for them to get their ballots that I mention it every time I make a presentation.

If you're a student and you're abroad, start working on your ballot early, even though you shouldn't have to. It shouldn't be that difficult. I'm going to make that one of my personal projects in 2008. Thanks.

SEGAL: Thank you very much. Mr. Goldman.

GOLDMAN: Thank you, Matthew. And I want to thank Matthew for all of your organizing. The first time we talked was about a year ago. And we were discussing, just generally, the problems with student voting. And then, all of a sudden, SAVE comes up. I think it's incredibly impressive and it's terrific to see.

I want to thank, also, all of my fellow panelists and good friends across the board to -- it's terrific to be sitting here with all of you.

My name is Jonah Goldman. I'm the director of the National Campaign for Fair Elections at the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights under Law, which actually puts me, I think, within the top three of longest titles in Washington.

But, basically, what we do at the National Campaign is -- in 2004, the Lawyers' Committee was the lead legal partner in Election Protection, which is a national voter-protection campaign that, in 2004, became the largest non-partisan voter-protection program in the history of the country.

Because of that and because of our expertise in just, generally, looking at election administration and trying to diagnose the problems and figure out the solutions, we formed a part of the Lawyers' Committee called the National Campaign.

The Lawyers' Committee has been around since 1963. It was started at the direction of President Kennedy, who, basically, when there were the beginnings of the movement towards legislating in the area of civil rights, wanted to know how he could involve the private bar, largely through consultations with his brother, who was then attorney general, to try to get private lawyers involved in litigating civil-rights cases. And then he formed the Lawyers' Committee.

And it's out of the proud tradition that came out of voting-rights cases in the '60s and '70s that I'm sitting where I am, and that's really sort of led me to doing what we are doing.

I have two quick stories. The first is, when I was a college -- it's very, very quick. The first is, when I was a college student, I didn't get my absentee ballot and I wasn't able to vote in my first presidential election. And that might have been, actually, what started all of this. So it's actually

the Monroe County, in Rochester, New York -- the Monroe County Board of Elections that's responsible for me sitting up here today, I guess, in some small respect.

The second is actually the story of Prairie View. And I was down -- the first case that I did when I was at the Lawyers' Committee -- and I remember very distinctly. It was January 18 of 2004 when I was first on a plane to Houston. I remember that because it was Martin Luther King Day and I was sitting there and I had just gotten to the Lawyers' Committee a few months before.

I was sitting there with my boss on the plane saying, "Isn't it kind of strange that two civil-rights attorneys are flying down and working as hard as we were working on Martin Luther King Day?" And then we realized that, of course, it was incredibly appropriate. And that's exactly what we were supposed to be doing.

But that date's also important for another reason, which I'll get back to quickly. We got down to Prairie View right after -- and that column was actually written in November of 2003. And we had gotten there, like I said, in January of 2004.

And the experience was remarkable for a couple of reasons; number one, because this was still going on. And the dynamics in Prairie View are even more complicated in the sense that it's a historically black college that sits in a very, very predominantly white county in rural Texas that's struggling with becoming a bedroom community for Houston. There's a lot of dynamics going on.

Oliver Kitzman, who is the district attorney and gained fame during a few decades before defending what was to live in infamy as "The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas," which is a movie with Dolly Parton and Burt Reynolds, if all of you are familiar with it -- some of you may be too young to know about the movie.

But Oliver Kitzman was defending this county from the state, even back then, trying to come in and shut down a prostitution ring. He now was trying to make sure that Waller County students didn't have the opportunity to vote, because what they were doing was organizing.

For 20 years earlier, those same students at Prairie View -- they were organizing. And 20 years earlier, the Board of Elections and the county tried to stop them from organizing and tried to impose restrictions on their vote, basically, on registration. Twenty years later, in 2003, that same thing was happening.

They were organizing. They were going to run for county commission. They were going to run for sheriff. They were going to run for county supervisor. There were people on the ballot who were going to be on the ballot, but for this threat from the district attorney.

The most heartfelt thing that I felt when I went down there -- and it was really remarkable -- was the real palpable excitement on the campus; that not only was this wrong, but that they were going to fight it and that they were going to win.

And, in fact, in the primary that actually was the subject of what our cases were, two of the students actually won their primaries. And it was

because of their advocacy and their organization. But it was also because of the coalition that was put together between the NAACP, the Lawyers' Committee and the ACLU to recognize this problem to be able to get over it.

There are problems that affect students more than they affect other voters across the board. Problems with photo identification -- discriminatory photo-identification laws -- which have attempted to go through Congress over the past couple of sessions, which have gone through state legislatures across the country -- the single largest group that's affected by photo-identification laws are students.

And I don't need to tell you this because many of you know that you don't have an I.D. from the place where you go to school even though you spend your money in that place, you spend most of the year in that place and you spend four, five, six years in one place where you certainly have an interest in what goes on in that community.

There have been people who have been trying for years to keep students off the voting rolls. It's because of organizations like SAVE that that's going to change. And I can certainly speak for me, and I think I can speak for all of my colleagues out here, that we're really excited to see this organization come up. We're here to support you. We're doing everything that we can.

And, certainly, from a legal perspective, I'd close with one thing. And that's something that the Supreme Court has said on repeated occasions about education; and says, "One of the most important pieces of education" -- and this is established throughout the court system, from the Supreme Court down in discussing education cases -- "One of the most important functions of education is to create good and well-meaning civic participants."

And there's nothing more fundamental to that process of becoming an effective civic participant than understanding voting and being able to vote and being part of the electorate in the place where you have the largest interest. And that, usually, is where you go to school.

So, again, I thank SAVE. And I thank you all for being here. And I look forward to your testimony.

SEGAL: Thank you, Johan.

Mr. Gans -- Dr. Gans?

GANS: No, mister.

SEGAL: Or, Mr. Gans -- excuse me.

GANS: I don't think your organizations title is any smaller than the Center for the Study of the American Electorate.

I want to thank everybody for inviting me here and for participating and for the organization.

I, too, was disenfranchised from my first election. But that was in the era when you had three months before you -- you had to register three months before. And I was moving from Philadelphia to Berkeley, and I couldn't vote in the 1960 election. On the other hand, you know, that makes me a certifiable antique.

I, you know, organized young people in 1960 for the Civil Rights Movement who were my peers and I organized people later in that decade against the war in Vietnam. And I continue to believe that it is the idealism of the young that will help save the integrity of our country and our place in the world.

And I am strongly in favor of removing barriers to participation, looking also at the downside risk of which approach you want to take. But I think you have to go here, into this battle -- and I'm going to join you in the battle -- with the understanding that the central problem of participation is not procedure, but motivation; that you can have the most open set of, you know -- open political system -- and we have made major strides since the 1960s to make our system more open -- and that if people do not feel the election is important, they won't come out.

We had an election in which people felt it was important in 2004, and you had the highest youth turnout since 1972. We had an election where people felt it was unimportant in 1998, and youth turnout was 13 percent; and 8 percent for people under the age of 20.

So while you're concerned about procedure, also be concerned about the things that will motivate people to vote, not simply the things that will block people from voting.

SEGAL: Thank you.

Mr. Moon?

MOON: Well, thank you for having me here today. I'm actually extremely excited to be here and proud to represent FairVote. We are now going into our 15th year of operation.

And incidentally, I think the timing is fortuitous because one of our own newest programs is a universal voter-registration initiative for young people. And I think we're beginning to see a paradigm shift where people are realizing that we had this historic youth turnout in 2004. But, you know, with the good, also, I think we have to analyze the bad.

And part of it is this turnout that's uneven -- the turnout increase, that is -- that's perused (ph) -- is uneven between states. And a lot of this gets to what Curtis was talking about about motivation.

And there are various factors that can play into this. But just to give an example, in battleground states vs. non-battleground states, youth turnout can shift based on whether there's a contested presidential race in your state.

And so this is a motivational factor, but it also gets at whether the parties and the candidates are going to go and try to engage youths in that particular state. So, as they might give up on a Massachusetts or a Texas, for obvious reasons, I think youth get left behind there.

So it's very encouraging to me that SAVE is going to engage in a more systemic approach to try and get at this problem at its head. And I think the one thing we can do, regardless of, you know, the Electoral College and, you know, candidate motivations, is states can set policies to proactively engage and register students.

And I've noted that this is one of SAVE's core policy proposals and it's something that we are deeply interested in and I look forward to working with SAVE on.

And, again, I think, you know, part of the paradigm shift here that we're noticing is that, especially in a time of war when, you know, this is constantly bandied about as an argument for youth to get involved -- you know, the disparities between how we treat people actually get deeper than that.

I mean, just with Selective Service registration, as an example: Our government requires males to register with Selective Service when they turn 18. And it really says something that our government is saying it's so important that we get people registered for the draft, essentially, but we don't place the same priority on registering for civic engagement or, you know, participating in the discussion in the buildup to a war.

So I think this is a real problem of the priorities of our government. Regardless of how you feel about this particular war, regardless of how you feel about war in general, at least, I think, most of us up here could agree that, you know, civic participation is equally important to draft registration.

So I think part of this paradigm shift is beginning to play out. We've seen bills in Rhode Island and Minnesota and Maryland being introduced and, in some cases, passed by various chambers of state legislatures that would do exactly what SAVE is trying to do, and get youth systematically registered to vote.

So I'm pleased to be here and hope that this initiative can move forward.

SEGAL: Thank you so much.

I appreciate all your remarks. And, remarkably, we are right on time, which seldom happens. So I'm glad to see that.

With it being 9:41, I'm going to shift to our first panel.

And I welcome you all here and thank you for coming.

Chris Appel, of Colby College, you're up.

APPEL: Thanks. Good morning.

I'd first like to thank SAVE and all the members of the committee, who had very interesting opening statements.

I'm a graduating senior at Colby. And last semester, I was the vice president of the Maine College Democrats. And in early January, a bill was introduced in the Maine State Legislature, L.D. 203, which, essentially, would bar students who live in dormitories or college (OFF-MIKE) housing from voting in their college town, with the caveat that if you lived originally in the town, you could vote in it.

So, for instance if you were from Waterville, where Colby is, you could vote in Waterville. But if you were from Farmington, (OFF-MIKE) across the river, you couldn't vote, (OFF-MIKE) Farmington (OFF-MIKE).

Now, clearly, this bill would have had a major implications for college voting in Maine and would have had a huge effect in many local elections and, possibly, statewide elections in Maine. And currently, Maine state law gives college students the right to vote in their college town. I'm from Maryland, and I've voted in Maine for the past two elections.

Gary Knight, who, unfortunately, is an alumnus of Colby College, introduced the bill in the state legislature. And he had two main arguments for the bill. First was this: College students did not have a vested interest in the state of Maine. And, secondly, that they had too much influence, which, of course, is a subjective (OFF-MIKE). But we'll take it as that.

Second, he claimed that there was voter fraud among college students (OFF-MIKE). With most of the arguments of voter fraud, he had very little or no evidence. The secretary of state of Maine actually came out and debunked his claim; that he was simply lying and he had no evidence of (OFF-MIKE), when he testified in front of the committee.

Clearly, there were huge problems with the bill. It would be, technically, unconstitutional, under the 14th Amendment, to deny one college student the right to vote when, for instance, if you lived off campus -- and I was living in Waterville in a house owned by a landlord -- I could have voted. But my friend from Maryland, who lived in a dorm -- he couldn't. That's one example of how it would be unconstitutional. Secondly, discriminatory -- we were legal citizens of the state of Maine. And taking away that right would be unconstitutional under the state constitution.

And, thirdly, it's a slippery slope. When does a group have too much interest -- or too little interest and have too much power? (OFF-MIKE) political affiliation takes over your philosophical (OFF-MIKE).

So what happened? And this is what I really want and came to talk about. We took action. Young people in Maine, especially on the democratic side, saw this as a threat to the right to vote and a threat to our (OFF-MIKE) in our democracy.

And we did it in two ways: We used old media and we used new media.

Henry Beck, who is the president of the Maine College Democrats -- he's also a student councilman from Waterville who is very active in Maine politics -- he was appearing on local radio talk shows. He was discussing this with editorial boards of state newspapers, galvanizing the press to make the difference in this bill.

This bill was actually introduced ever year by Republicans in the state legislature. But it has gotten nowhere and it hasn't gotten (OFF-MIKE). It's one of those bills that always happens in U.S. Congress. It just dies every year. But this year, it was different.

As you can imagine, the bill was voted down.

But, unfortunately, the reality that we saw is that this is a partisan issue. The Republicans in the state of Maine used their posts and the leadership of minorities in the House and the Senate to lobby their members. Not a single Democrat voted for the bill -- to give you an indication of the partisan nature of it.

And I would point out the apparent hypocrisy of the Maine College Republicans. Their whole executive board would have been disenfranchised by the bill, had it passed, but yet they were eerily silent when it came to supporting the bill or not.

So what lessons could we take away from our experience in Maine? One is that student voting rights, especially in (OFF-MIKE) elections that we're going to have next year, will be in peril. There are going to be situations like we had that all students will, at some point, face.

And then, secondly, the power of youth to take on these (inaudible). I think they, oftentimes view -- they're cynical about their role in politics, the way that they can effect change.

But what we found is that voters in Maine, when they saw a young person who had an articulate and a reasonable issue that they took seriously and made an issue in the state, that youth were taken extremely seriously and then, sometimes, were more effective than if the establishment of the Democratic party had taken on this issue.

And lastly, the reality, I think, of voting in the United States and the history of voting among minority groups is that political parties and ideologies will use the right to vote for their own benefit.

And we only have to look at the situation of African Americans and the history of political parties in the South, whether it be during reconstruction, when the Republican Party used their right to franchise (ph) to win elections; and after reconstruction, when the Democratic Party (OFF-MIKE) took away that right; and lastly, in 1955, when a Democratic president and the overwhelming majority of Democratic members gave African Americans the legal right -- the federal, guaranteed right -- to vote with the Voting Rights Act, which the Democratic party took on African Americans and allowed them the right to vote.

And I'm not too cynical to say this: The Maine Republican Party knew that in local elections -- had this bill passed in the last election, the state senators in Farmington wouldn't have switched and the state senate would have become a majority Republican body.

And, fundamentally, that's why this bill is so important. And that's why it's so important that we stay vigilant on this issue.

Thank you. And I'd be happy to take any questions later.

SEGAL: Thank you very much.

Ellery Biddle, from Kenyon College?

BIDDLE: Good morning. I want to thank Matthew and everybody here who made this possible today.

I graduated from Kenyon in 2005. And approaching my senior year, I started a voter-registration initiative on campus, which was really fun. The college was extremely supportive of my efforts. And I was able to, sort of, gather groups of students and classmates. And we worked together really hard. And sort of one event led to another and we (OFF-MIKE). We registered a whole lot of people to vote.

And as things sort of picked up, I decided to call the Knox County Board of Elections. Kenyon is located in the village of Gambier in rural Ohio in Knox County.

I called the Board of Elections and asked them to consider establishing a polling place on our campus. And if they couldn't do that, could they add another machine for our precinct, because I knew that registrations were going to go way up. But my request was denied.

I decided to talk with a political science professor who I had (OFF-MIKE) past, who also was and still is the mayor of Gambier. I dropped by his office one afternoon and asked him to help me convince the board to reconsider my request. He said, "No." "As mayor," he told me, he "had nothing to do with elections."

OK. So this didn't really worry me, though. I was sure that once the board could see that we had, you know, 400 or 500 new students registered, that we wouldn't have any trouble getting the machines.

So (OFF-MIKE). In mid-September, we start to realize that there are people who are actually upset about what we're doing. Not everyone was (OFF-MIKE). There was a panel discussion organized by the political science department at Kenyon on voting legislation and irregularities in (OFF-MIKE) elections.

Sharon (ph) (OFF-MIKE), who had been working with the College Democrats raised her hand in a q-and-a session afterwards and turned to a panelist who was a Kenyon alum, Judy Hoffman, who was also the chief elections counsel for Ohio and (OFF-MIKE) former secretary of state (OFF-MIKE).

(OFF-MIKE) asked Hoffman what she thought about our on-campus registration initiative. And Hoffman asked her if any of these students were from out of state. And Sharon (ph) exclaimed, "Yes, actually; 80 percent of the student body comes from outside of Ohio."

Hoffman responded sharply, calling our voter-registration activities "criminal," and setting off an explosion of fiery remarks between the panelists and everyone in the room. She was wrong, as full-time students residing (OFF-MIKE) knew this. We all live on campus there in the state of Ohio. So, (OFF-MIKE) eligible to vote there. But her comments got people concerned.

People began to worry. Were they going to be accused of voter fraud? Were they going to be (OFF-MIKE)? You know that story. So we continue.

In October -- actually, on October 21st -- so just two weeks before the election -- a letter appeared in the college newspaper, the Kenyon Collegian, from the now former associate provost, Richard Switzer.

I'm going to read you an excerpt from the letter. "Dear voters: OK. So you registered to vote in Ohio. You declared yourself an Ohio citizen so that you can vote for the candidates with your informed choice. Great; but please don't think that your responsibilities as an Ohio citizen ends at the voting booth. No. There's more to it than that. Do you have a driver's license issued by another state?

"If so, you should know that Ohio law requires voters who establish residency in Ohio -- what you did in order to vote here -- to exchange their

Illinois, New Jersey, et cetera, license for an Ohio driver's license. "If you vote while carrying a non-Ohio driver's license, will you be guilty of voter fraud? You might want to find out (OFF-MIKE)."

And the letter continued with stuff about getting new license plates and income taxes. And this made people even more nervous and also upset a lot college faculty and administrators because it looked and was very much a sort of last-minute partisan scare tactic.

But registration had ended weeks ago. So now there were hundreds of students from out of states who had registered to vote in Gambier. And it was way too late for them to get an absentee ballot or to, you know, (OFF-MIKE).

Fortunately, the college sort of took matters into its own hands. And under the guidance of Kenyon's lawyers, our college president (OFF-MIKE) drafted and sent a letter to the entire student body, assuring us that we were all well within our rights to vote in Gambier.

So this sort of brings us right up against Election Day. And I think, you know, the questions that arose surrounding Judy Hoffman's statements and Provost Switzer's letter identified some serious forms of controversy over the interpretation of the election law.

We all here, obviously, you know, know that they are wrong. But it became clear that college faculty and administrators were really engaged in a serious debate over these issues and that their personal politics were interfering with their responsibilities to us as their students.

So, for me, this raised two important questions: What are the voting rights and responsibilities of students and what role does the college or university play in (OFF-MIKE) and (OFF-MIKE) these rights.

In the future, election officials and college administrators alike must find a way to answer these questions and educate students about their rights while working under laws that are (OFF-MIKE).

So (OFF-MIKE) is Election Day. (OFF-MIKE). People were nervous, but ...

SEGAL: Ellery, I just want to briefly interrupt.

We also have Sarah Cohen testifying on the second panel, who is going to go in-depth to the election-day issues. And you also have a minute left on your time, so I'm just giving you a heads up. Thank you.

BIDDLE: (OFF-MIKE).

So there were students who were expecting challenges. And there were faculty who were very nervous. There were a lot of people worried about what was going to happen at the polls that day. But, instead, we were challenged in a different way.

On November 2, the (OFF-MIKE) was issued two voting machines like every other precinct in the county. This had adequately served us in 2000, but since then, registration had increased by 80 percent. So this left us with two machines for 1,300 voters.

The line was already long by early morning. At 8 a.m., the average wait was two hours. You can sort of imagine (OFF-MIKE) the day got longer and longer. One machine broke down. It took several hours to get it fixed. And it was raining. People were sharing umbrellas and standing in the parking lot of this little community center where we vote.

And at 7:30, when the polling was scheduled to close, over 500 voters had yet (OFF-MIKE). So, without a doubt, ours had become the longest line in the country.

I'm not going to go into the details on this, but we had a sort of complicated skirmish with Ken Blackwell (ph) over whether we could use paper ballots and whether those would be counted as real ballots or just as provisional (ph). And ...

(CROSSTALK)

SEGAL: You can actually go into that.

BIDDLE: Yes. It doesn't work out very well.

SEGAL: OK.

BIDDLE: Anyway, we kept waiting and the ballots came and went. And the national media came and the police came and the last voter cast his ballot at 3:56 in the morning on November 3. He was the last person to vote in the country.

So the question remained: Why did it take nearly 22 hours (OFF-MIKE) citizens (OFF-MIKE) to cast a vote?

After Election Day -- and a professor in the English department (OFF-MIKE) creative writing students out to conduct a series of interviews with folks who were involved in the elections process. And they compiled these interviews into (OFF-MIKE) book called "The Longest Line."
(OFF-MIKE).

The first is from an interview with Kirk Emmert, who remains mayor of Gambier and also is (OFF-MIKE) at Kenyon. And you may recall him telling me earlier that he had nothing to do with elections. "10 days before November 2, Emmert says he contacted the Board of Elections in an attempt to obtain more machines. His request was denied. There were no machines."

The second comes from Pam Hinkin (ph), who was the chairwoman of the Board of Elections in Knox (ph) County. "Hinkin (ph) told students that she was surprised by the surge in registration and by the unusually high turnout. After the board made a practice of (OFF-MIKE) the vote, she said 'No.' 'Our office is small. There is just (OFF-MIKE) and myself. When you're limited with resources, what you have is what you have and you can't get blood out of a turnip.'

"When Hinkin (ph) was asked about the mayor's request for more voting machines, her reply was firm: 'I personally talked to Mr. Emmert and he never asked me for more machines. His issue was a security issue. He wanted to make sure that there were sufficient deputy sheriffs on duty during the day.' And, in fact, the police did arrive at the community center sometime after midnight on

November 2, demanding that anyone who was not waiting to vote leave the premises immediately."

So I guess that coming up with an additional voting machine is a lot more difficult than sending a few deputy sheriffs out (OFF-MIKE) a crowd of angry voters who had been standing around all day. Certainly, miscalculations and mistakes were made by county and state officials, but you still have to ask, "Why, in a country like ours, no one was able to produce the money needed or the technological resources or the common sense to provide enough voting machines for ours and every other precinct in the country?"

In the end of this, as we were saying, I mean, it came down to (OFF-MIKE) that we were punished for our politics -- for little blue (OFF-MIKE). So that's unfortunate.

The last thing I want to say is that the unusual length of our line had very much to do with our status as students. Unlike most voters in other precincts who, undoubtedly, encountered similar situations, but had to step out of line -- you know, you have to go to work, (OFF-MIKE) take care of your kids -- those are important obligations -- well, we didn't have those. We had the time and, really, the privilege to wait.

(OFF-MIKE) show up (OFF-MIKE) classes and we weren't -- I mean, we felt an extreme amount of pressure and yet we were able to stay. I think if all registered voters were excused from their normal work obligations on Election Day, much as they are when called for jury duty, we would not have been alone. There would have been other lines as long as ours in the country or, at least, in Ohio.

So to a certain extent, (OFF-MIKE) sort of tradition (OFF-MIKE). So taking all that into consideration, I think that the bottom line is that no matter what you do for a living, where you go to school or who you plan to vote for, you shouldn't have to wait 12 hours to do it.

SEGAL: Thank you very much, Ellery. I appreciate your testimony.

And, now, to Noah Waxman from Harvard University.

WAXMAN: Thanks very much, Matthew. Good morning. I want to thank the members of the committee and my fellow panelists. I think that the story that I have to tell is significantly less remarkable than either Chris or Ellery.

The story that I have to tell is actually, I think, pretty common, but is equally frustrating in an outcome for me. I graduated from Harvard in 2005. So in 2000, I was a freshman at Harvard. It was my first election that I was going to be eligible to vote in.

And even though I'm a proud member of the District of Columbia, after moving to Massachusetts, it would have been an easy choice to want to register as a voter in Massachusetts. But I was (OFF-MIKE) and get involved in congressional elections and not just presidential elections. So it was one of those hot things to do when I got to school in 2000, to register as a Massachusetts voter.

There was a large and well-publicized drive on campus that the College Dems and the College Republicans and the Institute of Politics sponsored (OFF-MIKE) undergrads registered.

The state was extremely receptive of college-student voters in Boston. We had polling stations in several dorms. And so several months out, I had the chance to register with a group of students who traveled around in the dorms registering voters. I filled out the forms. I was really happy at how easy it was. I was surprised at how easy it was.

And then when it came time to actually go cast my vote on Election Day, I went to the dorm where I eat lunch. The polling station was right there. It was no problem. I went up to the booth to go vote and my name wasn't there.

So I was really surprised. I know that I filled out the forms. I know that I did everything that the College Dems had told me to do. And it turned out I was one of several hundred students at Harvard University that year that had registered to vote (OFF-MIKE) and (OFF-MIKE) had failed to get the registration in on time.

So I was extremely frustrated, given how easy all of this has been. (OFF-MIKE) I was that I didn't get a chance to cast my vote. I think that it speaks pretty clearly to the need to have a (OFF-MIKE) registration and a solution to a lot of the sort of common administrative problems it sounds like two of the committee members -- Mr. Goldman and Mr. Gans -- had similar issues when they were freshmen in college also.

So that's my story.

SEGAL: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

And now to Zach, who is the student body president of the College of William and Mary. Thank you.

I also want to briefly welcome Commissioner Gracia Hillman of the Election Assistance Commission, here as well. Thank you for coming.

Go ahead.

PILCHEN: Good morning. Thank you, Matt. I actually met Matt two days ago in a coffee shop in D.C. So I'm glad to have this opportunity.

My name is Zach Pilchen. And as Matt said, I am the current student body president of the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia.

William and Mary was established by a royal charter in 1693. Eighty-three years before Thomas Jefferson, a William and Mary alum would pen the Declaration of Independence and 15 other William and Mary graduates would, in signing it, pledge their lives, fortunes and (OFF-MIKE) in the hope of establishing a government that gains its just powers in the consensus (ph) of government.

But fast-forward a couple of centuries form then to today. Now, to register to vote in Virginia, you no longer have to be a white land-owning male. But you must have what's called domicile in the locality you seek to vote in.

This wouldn't seem to pose too much of a problem with youth-voter registration, except for the fact that "domicile" isn't defined anywhere in the Virginia code. Instead, the determination of whether or not you have domicile where you register is left up to individual voter registrars, of which there are 134 in the state of Virginia.

This presents two problems for college students who wish to take part in the local democratic process. First, of the 134 different registrars serving 14 different localities, each registrar can and does define "domicile" as he or she pleases.

In Charlottesville, Fairfax and Richmond, for example, the local registrar has interpreted domicile to mean that students at colleges within those localities may all register to vote in their college town. In Blacksburg, Fredericksburg and Radford, Virginia, on the other hand, the local registrar's interpret "domicile" differently.

Students at Virginia Tech, for instance, can only establish domicile if they live off-campus. And students who vote at the University of Mary Washington at Radford cannot establish domicile and, thus, cannot vote in their college town no matter what the circumstances are.

This has varied from locality to locality, and the way students are treated presents a myriad of questions on constitutionality and equal protection that may, ultimately, have to be decided by the court (OFF-MIKE).

But while registration policies in the commonwealth of Virginia may be different from town to town, registration policies in Williamsburg, Virginia have often changed from day to day; almost always to discourage or disenfranchise the maximum number of students and prevent them from participating in their local political process.

The problems of Williamsburg all started in 2004, when an anti-student housing measure caused several students to be evicted from their homes. This local ordinance prevents more than three unrelated people from living in any Williamsburg house, even a house with five, six or seven bedrooms.

In addition, at the time, a rental-property inspection program allowed the local government employees to enter students' homes in search of violators. One friend of mine, evicted from his house last summer because of this rule, had to live in a classroom for a week until he could find housing elsewhere.

So in 2004, in the wake of those evictions, more students announced their intentions to run for city council and to change this local ordinance. As part of their campaign, they promised to register 2,000 students to vote in Williamsburg.

Now, Williamsburg is a small town. It's about 1,200 people, split almost exactly 50-50 college students and non-student residents. The non-student residents tend to come out in very, very low numbers for their municipal elections. Typically, the highest anyone has ever gotten is about 1,200 votes. So (OFF-MIKE) register 2,000 students -- that's a big deal.

Now, there were more than 2,000 non-students already registered. They just don't care enough to come out and vote for their local officials.

Anyway, election records obtained (OFF-MIKE) shows that prior to their 2004 announcement, all students at the College of William and Mary were able to vote in voting (OFF-MIKE). And it made sense. As Mr. Goldman said, you know, you live in Williamsburg, you work in Williamsburg, you pay taxes, volunteer, patronize businesses in Williamsburg. We were even counted in the U.S. census as part of the Williamsburg population.

But shortly after those students announced that they would step up and engage in the local political process, the local voter registrar made an announcement himself. Now, the student voting had become a matter of interest. Students no longer had domicile and were no longer able to vote in Williamsburg.

And that was just the beginning of it. Vote records show us that since 2004, the qualifications to register to vote in Williamsburg have changed at least 10 times, independent of any change in Virginia law. We see trends where registering becomes easier for students in the wake of high media scrutiny, but then becomes complicated or even impossible in the periods preceding elections or in the midst of voter-registration efforts.

Students who wish to vote in Williamsburg have been subject to questionnaires about where their parents live, if they have possessions in a location outside of Williamsburg and even where they attend a place of worship. Students have been rejected as voters for such trivialities as addresses on old checks and cell phones without Williamsburg area codes.

Students have been made to change their DMV records, present a lease agreement along with the registration and jump through all sorts of other hoops to vote that non-student residents are not made to go through. One student was even asked in court to name the members of Williamsburg city council, (OFF-MIKE) a prerequisite to vote (OFF-MIKE); which, I can say, if a non-student in Williamsburg can name them, I think that you can (OFF-MIKE) of disappointment, as, I think, the mayor would, at least.

Even more alarmingly, some students simply never hear a reply from the registrar's office. One of my friends had attempted to register on four separate occasions, twice through the Virginia DMV, and has never received a reply from the registrar. And his story is, by no means, unique.

In my own situation, I was born just across the river in Arlington County. Since leaving for college in the fall of 2005, I have only rarely gone back to my parents' house. I spent all of last summer living and working in Maryland and am splitting my time this summer between Williamsburg and a friend's home in Washington, D.C.

I no longer consider Arlington my home. I do not intend to return there after college, don't have a bedroom there anymore and could, honestly, care less who is elected to serve on the Arlington County school board. Williamsburg is my home now and I wanted to vote there.

When I first tried to register, it was several months before the May 2006 city council election. (OFF-MIKE) in a voter-registration forum (ph), I received a rejection letter telling me that my P.O. box mailing address meant I was not eligible to vote in Williamsburg. If I wanted to appeal the decision, I was told I could do so if I paid a $10 processing fee.

Now, I scoured my pocket Constitution for the part about (OFF-MIKE) $10 to vote in the United States, but, needless to say, I had some trouble finding the section. On principle, I did not pay the $10 to appeal the registrar's decision.

Meanwhile, the registrar changed the "domicile" interpretation of two years prior and begun allowing all off-campus students to register. Although this left a large portion of the student body disenfranchised, the student

government at William and Mary decided (OFF-MIKE) voter-registration drives targeting off-campus students.

Mailings were sent out to all students living off of campus, encouraging them to vote (OFF-MIKE). But no less than 48 hours after these mailings were sent out and registrations began coming in larger numbers (OFF-MIKE) the registrar's desk, policies altered once more so that off-campus students could no longer freely register.

Now, students had to go to the Virginia DMV and change their address to one in Williamsburg. Because the process of changing one's DMV address is complicated and time-consuming, few students were able to complete the process before the deadline for registration had passed.

One student and one student (OFF-MIKE) incumbent running for city council lost the race (OFF-MIKE) couple hundred votes.

That summer of 2006, with the local elections over with, the policy was reverted back once again. A student now, from upstate New York, with a New York state driver's license and no Virginia DMV address successfully registered to vote. And it wasn't without difficulty.

He personally walked the registration form in his registrar's office. And after being told by the registrar that this form would not even be processed, much less accepted, forcefully demanded that the registrar process his form.

The student had been rejected six months earlier due to the 716 area code on his cell phone. And now, with the city-council election over, was shocked to receive a Williamsburg voter card in the mail.

I attempted to register to vote in Williamsburg my second time earlier this year. This time, I took a form down to the registrar's office personally, rather than mailing it, but also made sure to go through the process of changing my DMV address to my P.O. Box before hand.

I walked into the office and turned in the form. Upon discovering that I was a student, the registrar immediately began peppering me with questions, trying to catch me on some technicality that would allow him to reject my application.

I had heard most of his questions before and (OFF-MIKE) best I could. And after nearly an hour of arguing my case to him, he begrudgingly accepted my form. Nearly a month later, I finally received my voter registration card in the mail.

The worst thing about the entire situation in Williamsburg is that the blatant voter suppression was and still is legal in Virginia. If a Virginia registrar wants to, he or she can make up whatever qualifications they want to determine domicile. They can say that you have to live in a locality for 10 years before you can have domicile and vote there or that you have to be a property owner and not a renter or that you have to have a local job.

Gaping loopholes in the law leave room for individual registrars to abuse their authority by cherry-picking voters as they please; hardly democracy as Thomas Jefferson dreamed it so many years ago.

Two months ago, one of the registrars who had given us so many problems was actually fired by the state board of elections. It is still unclear why, but police officers escorted to his office and retrieve his personal affects. And to -- a friend of the Virginia Gazette -- "ensure the integrity of election records."

He was replaced by an interim registrar who reverted back to the pre-2004 policy of accepting all student registrations without questions. But, she, in turn, has, in the past month, been replaced by a new registrar who has begun asking students -- and only students -- for additional documentation, proving their place of address.

At the end of the school year, I had the honor of attending the graduation ceremony for the William and Mary Class of 2007. Secretary of Defense Robert Gates gave a stirring commencement address on civic engagement, bemoaning the fact that so few young people are involved in the American political process; and that, in 2004, with our nation embroiled in two difficult and controversial wars, voter turnout among 18-to-24-year-olds was a measly 42 percent. He warned us that if we failed to vote, the decisions that affect our lives would be made for us and without us.

(OFF-MIKE) in the front row, I could hardly refrain myself from bursting out that we were trying. But, anyway, the process still goes on in Williamsburg. And thank you all for (OFF-MIKE).

SEGAL: Well, I thank all four of you. Those are great testimonies.

And, in your case, Zach, I can't believe I -- basically could have put an obstacle course, it seems, and you'll still try and get through it.

All four panelists have discussed registration barriers with a particular focus on either state legislators or, in the case of Ellery, high-up state election officials, calling the act of trying to register from out of state "criminal," as well as Zach, describing the registrar's effort to, basically, instate a literacy test in one instance, of having to name all the city councilmen in order to register to vote there.

I want to turn it over to our committee members to ask some questions of you. I have quite a few questions, and I'm sure they do. And more importantly, we get to their questions first, though.

If you have any -- we can just start from left to right or right to left.

VAGINS: My question is for Zach.

And I guess my first question is, "Do you need a lawyer?"

(UNKNOWN): Or two? (Inaudible).

(CROSSTALK)

VAGINS: And I don't mean to make light of it. In fact, I'm particularly distressed to hear about this at William and Mary, because in 2004, the ACLU brought a case based on the Williamsburg voter-residency questionnaire.

In your story, I think I counted at least 22 violations of the constitution and section five of the Voting Rights Act, because all election

changes have to be pre-cleared in Virginia; so these sorts of changes are violations or potential violations of the act, at the very least.

So we had brought a case -- and it's very, very similar -- where it was, in 2004 -- and you may know the student -- Seth Saunders (ph)?

PILCHEN: Yes.

VAGINS: Yes -- who wanted to run for city council and then -- but he needed to register to vote. And he didn't pass his test. They said he had to vote where his parents lived. And we filed suit, but it took long enough that he missed his opportunity to run for city council. Ultimately, the registrar acquiesced and he was able to vote in the elections, but not be able to run for council. And I believe the lower court ruled against us, which is not a good thing.

Anyway, so I just was curious to -- I guess you may have already answered this -- if you feel that -- is the voter-residency questionnaire -- do you think that that is an official or unofficial policy? Do you know if it's done by registrars, if it's continuing and all that?

PILCHEN: The questionnaire was (OFF-MIKE) in 2004 and for a couple months, I believe, after that, after a lot of scrutiny on that by the state board. That has since stopped with the actual physical questionnaire in your mailbox. That being said, you still get those questions asked of you.

So, (OFF-MIKE).

VAGINS: Yes.

And I mean, have you heard of it from more than one registrar or just the registrar in Williamsburg?

PILCHEN: You know, I'm not familiar with the policies of the registrars outside of Williamsburg as much.

VAGINS: OK. No; not that you need to be. The story is egregious enough. Thank you.

COMSTOCK-GAY: Well, gosh. There's so much to say about all of these stories. Let me just ask a couple of questions of you, Ellery.

So, first of all, I would just point out, of course, you do have a new secretary of state in Ohio. And Jonah's organization and my organization are still involved trying to resolve -- through some litigation -- trying to resolve some of the problems that existed with the prior secretary.

But a couple questions -- it's interesting in all the details here. One is, "Have there been any changes in the '06 elections?" And I think you graduated before the '06 elections. But I wonder if you know if there have been changes in the number of machines in Gambier and in how the elections are run there.

Second, you ended up getting help from the school administration, from the council at Kenyon, which I think is really a fabulous resource. And I wonder if you have thoughts about how other schools could try to replicate that. And I'll just give you those two questions.

BIDDLE: Sure.

Machines? -- I don't think so.

COMSTOCK-GAY: You still have two?

BIDDLE: We still have two. I mean, the situation -- the machines that the county has were all manufactured in 1996 -- Micro-Gold 4684 (ph) or something like that. And they, shortly thereafter, stopped making that machine and stopped making replacement parts.

So, the county -- I think that for 2008 -- at least, what we were told in '04 was that their plan was to get rid of those machines and buy, I think, 160 new ones. So, in theory, by '08, we will be in better shape. We'll see.

Help from the school -- I mean, Kenyon is a very small school, so I think that that made things easier, but, in some ways, harder because it's easier for people to sort of come to these fiery disagreements that really have to do with personal politics more than anything.

But the school did a couple of great things. They made voter registration a part of freshman orientation. So there was a group of about 20 of us upperclassmen who got to campus early, you know, (inaudible), like a training workshop. And (inaudible) went to each hall meeting -- residents, you know -- all the students live on campus, so we just went and sort of talked for, you know, five minutes; helped kids fill out their forms and then delivered them. I delivered them personally to the board of elections.

And that was really sort of all it took to get things rolling. And I think -- I mean, that worked, right? I think that it was a really great way to get kids -- you just got to college. And it shows you immediately: "This is really important for you and it's important for us as, you know, your educator for the next four years."

COMSTOCK-GAY: And so when you got the threatening letter from the secretary of state's office saying you guys might be violating the law, you might go to jail, you might be sent to Guantanamo -- I don't know exactly what it said. But when you got that letter, then the school council just stepped in.

BIDDLE: Well, that was actually -- the letter was from our associate provost. It wasn't from Ken Blackwell (ph).

COMSTOCK-GAY: Oh. It cuts both ways.

BIDDLE: But it's funny that you said that.

No, I mean, that was really -- what was strange was that there were these -- and there were other professors and administrators who had been sort of casually threatening us with these ideas that we might be guilty of voter fraud.

And, I mean, it was really critical that the college came together and put out an official statement telling us what our rights were and telling us that what we had been told by these other administrators was wrong, but that needed to happen earlier.

It's seems so imperative that the laws are totally clear about residency, about what a student's responsibility is once he or she registers. And the college needs to -- you know, all colleges and universities need to know what those laws are. They need to make them clear and they need to -- I mean, I'm sure that there are other ways that will become active in educating their students about those things.

COMSTOCK-GAY: Just one quick followup: Does the school still do freshman voter registration?

BIDDLE: Well, that's up to the kids who are still there. I sort of started to work on, you know, installing that in the orientation program, but . . .

SEGAL: I'd also like to say that one of the things that SAVE really works on is trying to institutionalize that process of having college administrators register incoming freshmen on orientation day and when they register for classes.

In an institution like Kenyon, actually, it was partisan groups or the concerns in excellent citizens like Ellery who made sure that people were registered; but still, not our administrators. And our administrators ought to be doing a better job of that.

COMSTOCK-GAY: I'll save questions for later.

SEGAL: Go ahead.

RODRIGUEZ: A couple of things Mr. Appel talked about -- Senate control being at stake in the attempt to disenfranchise students -- and it seems to me that -- and next year -- it sounds like it still comes up every year -- I would wonder -- and I wouldn't make any argument related to this point unless I knew the answer to my question. But I wonder if students are included in the count when it comes to creating districts for re-districting.

And you can't have it both ways. You can't count students when you need them to create a district and then disenfranchise them when it comes time to elect a representative. So that might be an argument that you would want to use.

The other thing I want to advocate: You have a couple of iron fists at this table. And I would go with the velvet-glove approach whenever possible.

And Ms. Biddle, your secretary of state just did a big presentation at a national meeting and talked about poll workers and how desperate they are in the state of Ohio for poll workers. And who better to introduce poll workers than college students, who have a high comfort level with technology.

The average age of poll workers in the country is about 72 years old. And so they're looking for new poll workers. And so, perhaps, a meeting well in advance of the election with your local election official and a promise to recruit poll workers might be a mutually beneficial.

In some states, you can't be poll worker unless you are registered to vote in that state. So, again, it's a softer approach. I do think you should speak to lawyers whenever you need to, but there might be other options, too. Thank you.

SEGAL: To actually respond to that comment: A few members of our organization a couple of weeks ago were on the phone with Commissioner Hillman about getting an EAC grant for trying to launch as many poll-worker programs at our chapters as possible.

And I think that making our generation accountable as election administrators will go a long way, as you suggested, in the day and age of technology, instead of having our older citizens, who did not grow up in the technological area monitor these very often confusing systems.

So I encourage all of us to sign up for poll workers. And, also, our organization will be doing a lot to help make that a possibility.

RODRIGUEZ: Matt, can I just say one last thing?

SEGAL: Sure.

RODRIGUEZ: I think, Mr. Pilchen, you need a lawyer. Sorry.

PILCHEN: And the issue with that is that, you know, we definitely -- many students have, individually, gone to court for their own voting rights, but all of the cases have been decided on individual bases.

So either (inaudible) one where someone will make a decision for all college students or all off-campus students. And, of course, there is the time issue inherent in litigation and legislation, both of which we have been pursuing.

And, you know, the next city council election is this coming May. We've already organized a large-scale voter-registration drive for the first month and a half of school, and, you know, invested money. But we don't know if the policy is going to change the day it starts.

GOLDMAN: And I think that I'd like to actually take up that challenge in the Lawyer's Committee, and I'm sure the ACLU will join us. And I'm serious about this. We've been trying to identify with students.

There are a number of different obstacles, one of which is the fact of the schedules that you all are on. It's sometimes not the most conducive schedule to prolong litigation. And it's also sometimes difficult right before an election, because you come back so quickly in front of an election.

And while there are ways to do emergency litigation, it's better to do something thought out and longer. And what we'd like to do is we'd actually like to talk to you a little bit more after this, about trying to put something together, because Virginia -- it's happening all over Virginia. It's not just in Williamsburg. And it really is just tremendously -- I mean, it's unbelievable to hear.

First of all, Noah, I want you to know that despite the fact that it might sound like there are fewer bells and whistles to your story, your story is an incredibly important story. Running election protection as we do and running the national 866-OUR-VOTE voter-protection hotline -- in 2004, we got 200,000 calls. By far, the single largest contributor to disenfranchisement was registration problems like the ones that you heard.

Did you ever get on the registration rolls in Massachusetts?

WAXMAN: I did.

GOLDMAN: You did?

WAXMAN: In later elections.

GOLDMAN: Do you have any idea why you weren't put on the registration rolls? In other words, there are often a lot of different reasons, one of which could be who you registered with vs. ...

WAXMAN: I think that it was a result of this particular drive.

GOLDMAN: OK.

WAXMAN: (OFF-MIKE). Student groups had organized, you know, amassed hundreds of (inaudible) registration forms and then they never got turned in on time. I'm not sure if that (OFF-MIKE) at the student-group level or it was the (OFF-MIKE) politics level, but it was the whole drive. No one in the drive got registered. It was big news that year.

GOLDMAN: And it's interesting and something that's often difficult for a number of organizations who are trying to do voter-registration drives -- is that often, one of the other ways that legislatures try to disenfranchise targeted groups of people is by making it very difficult to successfully register people through third-party voter-registration drives.

So, for instance, in Ohio, they tried to do it. They've tried to do it in Florida. They've tried to do it in a number of states across the country. And, basically, they make it very, very difficult for somebody who is well-meaning and well-intentioned to be able to go out -- sometimes impossible.

And, in fact, in a case in Florida in 2006, they actually made it impossible for people to go out and register through third-party drives.

Ellery, I have a question sort of as a follow up on what Stuart was asking. Did you try beforehand, or was it just too chaotic -- and trust me. We were on the ground at Kenyon also in 2004, both before and after the election. In fact, the lawsuit that Stuart spoke of that our organizations are working together to challenge the process of elections -- we have a student from Kenyon as one of our plaintiffs.

Did you try to organize the faculty at all, other than your conversation with the mayor?

BIDDLE: Not a lot. I was an English major, so I did have informal conversations with a few professors that actually amounted to a really clever presentation that the department chair made at a -- I guess it was a meeting only of seniors -- about the importance of voting.

But, in general, I think that it was a really -- it was tough with the faculty because there were some who were sitting outside a little table, you know, outside the post office for weeks in September, getting as many students to, you know, register, as they could. And then there were these other professors who were adamantly opposed to that.

And it sort of really got into complicated politics within the system, and actually led to one administrator being -- eventually, led to him being fired. So ...

GOLDMAN: Was this the assistant provost, by any chance?

BIDDLE: Yes.

SEGAL: Well, we have about five minutes left, so I'd like to turn it over to Mr. Gans.

GANS: Actually, I'm going to probably be more difficult than anybody else here.

On your set of questions, I've got two things to say before. You know, one is that I was an expert witness in two cases in New York and Philadelphia. And I was testifying on behalf of the homeless folk. They would not be disenfranchised.

You know, the judge in Philadelphia, you know, who was very supportive of our position -- we won both cases -- you know, turned around and asked me, "Do you think that the homeless are more likely to commit fraud that, perhaps, a jurist who has a house in Bucks County and in Philadelphia?"

The second, you know, pre-thing is, you know, I have a son at Brown. I encouraged him to keep his voting residence in Virginia because of the Webb (ph) race.

The question I have for you is, "Should people be able to vote in either place?" You know, and "What is to prevent people from voting in both places?"

APPEL (?): Well, I mean, I would have that (OFF-MIKE) in the White House, in a sense.

But I think that this is a major issue -- your second point regarding whether someone can vote in both states. The way the voting works in the United States is that the state system is often based in counties and local towns. And it's just very difficult to cross-reference.

There would have to be a federal bill regarding college students and other -- I guess anyone who re-registers in the town -- to contact where they were previously registered, and they have to sign that. And then the registrar in that county or town would have to back that up with the place that the person ...

(CROSSTALK)

GANS: But you would be in favor of people being able to vote in either place, right?

APPEL (?): Yes.

GANS: By their choice?

APPEL (?): Because that is -- well, yes; especially in the college students' case.

GANS: I'm going to get to you.

(UNKNOWN): OK. I just wanted to ...

GANS: Ellery, one of the questions you raised goes to, you know -- Gambier, where I actually have been, because I took my son to 31 colleges before he (inaudible) -- the general problem of the long lines -- you know, Gambier is extreme.

But by and large, we are not prepared in this country, you know, for a heavy-turnout election. There were lines all over the place. And at some point, we need to establish a criterion for both poll workers and voting machines so that they can handle a 60 percent turnout of eligibles.

I mean, I think we need to figure out how to do that, you know, provide the matching funds, you know, so that we're not simply recruiting volunteers and we're not simply, you know, (inaudible).

On the other point, though, while it should not be an issue of denial of right to vote, do you not agree that the state, if you're going to establish residence, should, you know, demand a license and you're paying your taxes there?

BIDDLE: I agree. I don't think he was -- I think you're right. I framed it in, you know, sort of a more incriminating context than I should have, because he wasn't wrong. But to imply that we were all out to commit voter fraud was ...

GANS: No, I agree.

BIDDLE: Right. You know?

So what I think -- I mean, what I sort of hope came across is that we just need to know that stuff. Because you go to the secretary of state's Web site, and now she's added specific items about students, you know, which is great. But it doesn't tell you what your responsibilities are.

And I'm sure, you know, students and non-students alike, wherever you are voting, you need to know the full deal. And it shouldn't require that you go to the DMV and to go to the, you know, whoever else and -- I mean, maybe it should. You know, maybe we need to be more responsible.

But especially, when you're young, you don't know -- you know, that stuff doesn't occur to you. So I think that it would be really wise to collect that information and have it available in one place so that people can fulfill all of those responsibilities when they choose to vote (OFF-MIKE).

GANS: (Inaudible) let me just ask you a question. How would you go about ensuring that voter-registration intake gets delivered?

WAXMAN (?): Well, I mean, if you were able to move for same-day voter registration, that wouldn't be such an issue. That aside ...

GANS: "That aside," because Massachusetts is going to be a hard sell for same-day registration.

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible).

WAXMAN (?): You know, I think that maybe there is an issue with having a third-party drive. There's no way to know the person -- you know, it was another student that I handed my registration to other than some sort of official in office. And that presents problems.

There could be some way, I think, to maybe check that your registration went through further in advance than in this case. By the time I found out that I couldn't vote, it was too late to try to get beyond the webs, you know, along those lines.

GANS: If we don't have a class-action case on your claim, I don't know where there's a class-action case to be taken.

WAXMAN (?): There will be.

SEGAL: And we're running short on time.

But, Mr. Moon, if you have a minute or two of questions, you can go ahead.

MOON: Great. I'll keep this very brief.

I guess, Chris -- I guess I'm really excited to see you guys playing defense in Maine. And I guess the one thing I'd say, though, is it's really unfortunate that -- it seems like it's turned into a partisan issue in your state, whether students are going to face obstacles to registering to vote.

I know from my work at FairVote that that has been tainting our efforts to remove some of these obstacles to youths registering. Because, you know, one party might see some perceived advantage or disadvantage in whether students are registered to vote. So I hope that, you know, we can find a way, I guess, to get over that and bridge the partisan gap.

For Ellery, this is just a very quick question: I know they said they wouldn't project in deciding where to put machines. They wouldn't project, you know, voter turnout and things like that. But did they have any machine-allocation formula or practice that they defaulted on when they were trying to figure out, you know, where they would put machines?

BIDDLE: It was pretty basic.

I mean, the county had 114 machines. There are 56 precincts. Each precinct gets two. And then there were two left over in case of emergencies.

MOON: So it was even, regardless of (inaudible)?

BIDDLE: It was even. And there was, actually -- there's another precinct that shared the same space as ours, College Township, and they finished voting, you know, on time. And these machines were sitting there. But, you know, I guess the technology is too complicated. But, you know, they couldn't re-program it so that we could use those machines.

And, you know, that's kind of (OFF-MIKE).

MOON: Great. (Inaudible).

And then, I guess ...

(UNKNOWN): (Inaudible).

MOON: And Noah, I guess one thing I'd encourage you to explore is -- EDR is a good, I guess back stop for when your registration doesn't get processed. But I guess part of what SAVE and FairVote is hoping to do is get people more systematically registered well in advance of the election.

We hope that it's a government-initiated process so that you're not relying on partisan groups or, you know, private groups to be engaging in that process. And so I hope that that can be, I guess, a part of the policy mix.

And I think you've got -- you know, registration problems, obviously, lead to longer lines on Election Day. And so all of these issues, I think, that the synergy (ph) make -- they can collapse onto each other and create more problems than -- to the extent that we can deal with all of them -- that I think we'll see some relief across the board.

Zach, obviously, your story, I think, is probably the wildest. And I remember Kojo Nnamdi, on NPR, covered this. And I called in once to complain to the registrar in Williamsburg. I thought this was astonishing behavior.

But similar situations happened in Georgetown University. I know the students there had sued for damages and were actually successful in getting, like, $10,000 or $12,000, you know, damages against people who were, essentially, trying to intimidate students out of voting.

I wonder -- both for Ellery and Zach -- whether this sort of route was taken. Because, you know, you hit them in the wallet and -- you know, if people feel personally accountable for that, that's certainly a different center (ph) if you try this in the future.

PILCHEN: No, we actually hadn't considered that.

Although, actually, the registrar who was removed from his job in the last month of his four-year term is now suing the state board of elections, and had applied for this job to replace himself. But I he's suing the state board of elections and is actually being represented by -- hopefully not, but we'll see -- is claiming, at least, that he's being represented by Jerry Kilgore, the failed Republican governor (inaudible).

SEGAL: Well, thank you.

With that said, we want to thank the first panel very much. Your testimony was excellent and can certainly be helpful in leading toward some clear policy solutions that we're going to work on collaboratively with all these organizations here.

And with that said, I want to introduce our next panel, give our committee a minute or two to transition and welcome Commission Hillman in place of Commissioner Rodriguez. Thank you.

(RECESS)

Well, thank you, everyone. And yet again, I want to thank the first panel. We're joined now by four more students -- one from Penn, another from Kenyon, one who is representing FairVote that is also speaking on behalf of

student voters throughout Maryland, and a nice lady, here, from Vanderbilt University, who I also recently met just a few days ago. And we're happy and thrilled she could join the panel.

Anyway, with that said, let's start with Cynthia Padera.

Go ahead, please.

PADERA: Good morning, everyone. I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to come and share this story about what happened on the University of Pennsylvania campus in 2004.

I'm now a graduating senior at Penn, located in Philadelphia, in the city. And in 2004, I was a freshman who had never been to the East Coast before. And I was shocked and wide-eyed. And I knew nothing about voting procedure. But I knew I wanted to vote. And I researched candidates. And, like many of the friends in my dorm, we were ready.

And as registration time was coming around, our campus was, you know, covered with registration drives. It was very well publicized. And many of us started to register. And then, as the time came closer, it continued.

Anyway, in 2004, as you all may remember, Pennsylvania was a battleground state. And we had a lot of electoral activity on Penn's campus during that time.

We're a very diverse student body. There are about 10,000 undergraduates present at Penn. And a huge proportion of those come from out of state, especially nearby states such -- excuse me -- such as southern New Jersey.

But, anyway, no matter the positions of all these different campaign advertisements that were inundating our campus at this point, they all encouraged Penn students to vote. And it was just a really great atmosphere, especially for a young voter. I had never voted before, and I was really excited.

But a couple of weeks before the election -- almost a month -- there was a poster that appeared on our campus just like all the others, except for one crucial detail. It did not encourage voting. It, in fact, told us that if we voted, then there would be many, many repercussions.

So I want to, as I did then, read the first paragraph of this poster that was all over our campus, to the committee.

I'm quoting from the Daily Pennsylvanian, our campus newspaper, which finally published an article debunking the poster on November 1st of 2004, the day before the elections. "College students in Pennsylvania who plan to vote on November 2nd will do so at their own financial peril. That is because students that go to school out of state and register to vote on campus lose their eligibility for Home State Grant money."

And, now, this poster basically claims to quote a Chicago Sun-Times article. It had the format correct. It had a real author on it. It had a photo. It looked like a Xeroxed copy. And there were, literally, thousands of these all over our campus from 30th to 40th street in Pennsylvania.

We saw these articles and the flyer was a clear warning. If out-of-state students, which most of us were, tried to vote in Philadelphia, where they were living, they would no longer qualify for scholarships, financial aid, grant money, et cetera, that they were receiving from sources in their home states. And as many of us are on grants and financial aid, this is a huge roadblock to wanting to register or vote.

Variations on the flyer existed as well that said that you might lose your out-of-state driver's license if you registered in Pennsylvania. And one particularly nefarious one said that you would be subject to many more state-of-Pennsylvania taxes if you registered in Philadelphia.

So all of this information, upon further research, was false; but as you can imagine, it scared me and it scared a lot of the people that I knew on campus at that time, especially because many of us were voting for the first time and very unfamiliar with voting procedures. And there was very little guidance.

So, kind of the opposite of Ellery's story, because in such a large situation, it was hard for the administration to manage this poster. As I said, the article in the campus newspaper that came out, finally debunking these ubiquitous posters was the day before Election Day.

And it's easy for me to say now, with the time and education behind me, that I should have registered and I should have voted, despite that warning on the fake poster. But I felt as though I had been backed into a corner at the time. And think I would -- I'm sure, and know anecdotally -- that I was not the only student potentially scared silent by this.

I personally know almost 100 people that had issues with this misinformation that was disseminated across our campus. And I'm sure that if you multiply that by how many students are at the University of Pennsylvania, you'll realize just how widespread this misinformation had had an effect on our voting process.

And, just the options I considered -- it was too late to register for an absentee ballot in my home state. I had already, as I said, gotten excited and research the Philadelphia candidates. And it was absurd to try to fly home for a few hours to vote on Election Day.

So, basically, the only campus response we had to these, literally, thousands of flyers that appeared overnight, was that small article in our campus newspaper. And I can report anecdotally that not everyone reads the campus newspaper regularly.

So, basically, an important segment of Penn's population and most of Philadelphia's population -- was affected by this flyer. And there was really no counter-information to keep us from believing it.

So we were deterred from voting and we were misled. And we were misled because we were easy to mislead because we didn't have access to the right kind of information because no one was providing guidance.

So it was easy for us to register, but once we did, the roadblocks to voting were so great that it, basically, negated the effort. So I wanted to thank the committee for letting me share that.

SEGAL: Great. I appreciate it, Cynthia.

Sarah Cohen?

COHEN: Thank you, everyone.

First off, I want to thank the distinguished committee and the Student Association for Voter Empowerment, and my good friend, Matthew Segal, for arranging these important hearings.

My name is Sarah Cohen, and I'm here representing the young voters of Ohio, specifically the students of Kenyon College. And I'll try not to repeat too much of what Ellery said.

In my testimony today, I'm going to briefly summarize my first voting experience at Kenyon in 2004. And I really hope that in telling this story, I can kind of give you a vivid and clear picture of the real-life implications of core (ph) planning or, even worse, partisan forces interfering with our basic democratic processes.

So on November 2, 2004, I, along with Matthew, was one of the first students to the polls at Kenyon. I had worked for months on the campaign for my candidate -- and I won't say who, because this is a non-partisan issue -- in Ohio. And I had attended countless events for his campaign across the state.

I was so excited that I got to the poll at around 6:30. And I guess it didn't really dawn on me that there was anything strange about the fact that there was already a half-hour line to vote. And 6:30 a.m., for most students, is kind of an ungodly hour, you know. But I didn't really think about that.

So, anyway, as the day progressed, I came to realize that there really was something unusual about the line that was forming out of the polling place. By 8 or 9 o'clock -- I think even by 7:30 -- my friend, Henry, also from Kenyon -- had to wait five-and-a-half hours to vote. By noon, it was ten, eleven, twelve hours. And, as Ellery said, the longest line was about 13 hours; so, some food for thought.

But this wasn't the only thing that worried me -- the length of the wait. There were a lot of other complications at the polls. You know, aside from having to stand in the rain for hours, and then hours more in a stuffy gymnasium and hours more in a crowded, narrow hallway, students had to miss classes, extracurricular obligations, work commitments and their time to study.

So student volunteers like myself, who had voted early in the morning, worked really hard to lift the morale. We were bribing (ph) people with boxes upon boxes of pizza, bottles of water and umbrellas. And that was, actually, really fun and exciting.

So, yes, I do have to acknowledge how fortunate we were at Kenyon to have such committed voters and volunteers with these resources. But I can only imagine what the conditions were like at some of the other polling places in the state and across the country that face these same problems.

Again, for me, the length of the line wasn't the most unsettling thing. It was exciting to see everyone there, braving through these tough conditions to perform their civic duty. But what bothered me was what happened later on in the afternoon and early evening, when the rumors about election results began to inundate the line.

This speculative news resulted in the implication that further votes at that point were unimportant and created reason for voters to give up or fill (ph) the seats. It filled me with anger to see my peers, most of them, my very close friends, still standing on line at 2 or 3 a.m., shortly before I was asked to leave by a police officer, while news stations were already beginning to broadcast the probable outcomes of the election, actually saying to us that our voices didn't matter.

So this invites me to ask, "Can anyone really be that surprised that young people seem overwhelmingly to not turn out to vote at the polls?"

In order to address the Kenyon dilemma, we must elucidate what caused these lines in the first place. In Gambier, Ohio, there were 1,300 voters. And Ellery kind of discussed the issues with the voting machines.

But I also would like to add that Mount Vernon Nazarene University, which is located less than 10 miles away from Kenyon, had virtually no lines at their polling location. They are known to be a much more conservative institution than Kenyon, which is kind of a liberal bubble in the county.

And though one might argue that the problems at Kenyon were hyperbolized, inequitable voting-machine distribution was ubiquitous throughout the state of Ohio. And after two years of research, I've seen that -- or I've heard -- that every long wait in Ohio in 2004 -- occurred either in a poor community, an African American or Latino-concentrated area, or on a college campus.

Clearly, the repercussions of these long lines in these types of areas are disastrous.

We live in a time-crunch society, where people have financial obligations, family commitments, scheduling necessities and a host of other conceivable responsibilities. And because of this, voting should not and cannot be such a taxing circumstance.

When the decision for some people is between voting or feeding their family, as is the case in many of the poorer areas, many are going to choose the latter, and understandably so.

People with special needs also carry considerable burdens with these long lines. Whether one is elderly, ill, hungry, fatigued, or has medical requirements of any sort, such arduous waiting is unreasonable and unnecessary.

Voting is a fundamental American right, and it is time that we treated it accordingly.

So thank you very much.

SEGAL: Thank you, Sarah. I appreciate it.

Adam Fogel, please?

FOGEL: Great. Thank you very much for inviting me here today. I appreciate SAVE putting this hearing together and bringing this important issue of student-voter disenfranchisement to the public's attention.

Again, my name is Adam Fogel. And I'm the right-to-vote director at FairVote.

FairVote is a national non-partisan, non-profit election-reform organization, based in Tacoma Park, Maryland, that seeks to provide an equally meaningful and secure vote for all Americans. My program focuses on the goal of establishing a universal right to vote in the U.S. Constitution, and national, state and local reforms that further that goal.

Last year, I served as the Pennsylvania field director for Young Voter Strategies' voter-registration project, that registered over 500,000 new young voters in the 2006 election cycle.

YVS funded a diverse group of organizations throughout the country, including Redeem the Vote; Women's Voices. Women Vote; National Council of La Raza; and the National Council on Black Civic Participation. It also funded Allegheny College's Center for Political Participation, for whom I worked over the summer to register students at community colleges throughout Ohio and Pennsylvania.

After the Pennsylvania voter-registration deadline, which is a month before Election Day, I traveled to Maryland to help another group sponsored by YVS, called Maryland Votes. Maryland's voter-registration deadline is two weeks before Election Day.

Maryland Votes registered over 8,500 young people across the state, and over 2,000 students at the University of Maryland in College Park.

The campus in College Park has two voting precincts. One is Ritchie Coliseum, where students living in fraternity and sorority houses and off-campus apartments vote. But the vast majority of voters are non-students and faculty, who are members of the College Park community.

The other polling place is the University's Stamp Student Union, where virtually all the voters are students. On Election Day, 2,171 people were registered to vote in Ritchie Coliseum, and 2,311 were registered to vote at the student union.

My role during the day was to monitor the polls, answer any questions students may have and track voter turnout at each of these locations. I also provided the phone number, 866-OUR-VOTE, to students who were not sure where they were registered.

In addition to providing students with basic information, I documented any difficulties students had when they tried to vote.

The way these two precincts functioned at the University of Maryland's campus was as if they were in two different states, or maybe in two different countries. The community precinct had nearly a dozen machines, with at least two or three of them always unoccupied. The student precinct had only four machines and students waited for over two hours to vote.

About 20 percent of voters, mostly students, voted provisionally at the community precinct. At the student union, nearly half voted by provisional ballot, with the most frequent reason being that the student's name did not appear on the rolls; although they registered to vote on time, by the deadline.

At the community precinct, the election judges were shutting down the machines and doing their final tallies by 8:30 p.m. At the student precinct, the line stretched down the hallway and the final votes were not even cast until well after 10 p.m.; after the networks had already projected both the governor's race and the U.S. Senate race.

You can explain away this disparity by blaming inadequate training of election judges, unexpectedly high voter turnout or, simply, a misappropriation of machines. But these easy answers do not fully address the scope of disfunction present in our patchwork election-and-voter-registration system.

In this country, the government does not share the responsibility of ensuring full and accurate voter rolls through universal voter registration. This opens the door to partisan organizations whose primary objective is targeting voters who are sympathetic to their candidate or cause, leaving many unaccounted for, and non-partisan groups whose canvassers' chief concern is meeting their quota for the day so they receive a paycheck.

Most private organizations start registering voters the summer before the general election, with an emphasis in the weeks leading up to the registration deadline. This places an additional burden on county boards of election who have to hire temporary, often inexperienced staff to input all of the new registrations before Election Day.

So why did such a high percentage of students cast provisional ballots in College Park, although they registered to vote on time? Well, it was because our system is broken. Too many registration forms too close to the election means some people are simply not going to get on the rolls in time.

We've read about what happens as a result of this casual approach to voter registration. Canvassers submit fraudulent forms. Registration applications disappear in people's trucks and get left on clipboards. And names that belong on the rolls on Election Day are missing.

Partisan groups pressure first-time voters to register with a certain party. And many neighborhoods that these private groups avoid are left behind.

The quick-fix, the Band-Aid approach, is instituting crimes on individuals and organizations that mishandle these forms. This may create a disincentive for canvassers who registered Joe Montana and Bugs Bunny, but this does not solve the underlying problem of over-worked county officials in a patchwork system that does not give everyone an opportunity to register to vote, regardless of where they live or their parents' voting behavior.

Congress has attempted to expand voter registration through the 1993 National Voter Registration Act and the 1998 amendments to the Higher Education Act, but weak enforcement of these laws have limited their effectiveness.

Stronger enforcement of registration laws that expand (inaudible), systematic voter registration in high schools and instituting a national and uniform advanced registration age are at the core of sensible voter-registration policy. Having full and accurate voter rolls is a common-sense goal for our nation.

All students should have an opportunity to register to vote before they leave high school, regardless of if they graduate or not. Registering to vote in a non-partisan atmosphere of a high school, where students receive

information about mechanics of voting should be required at every high school in America.

In many states, this is difficult because the advanced-registration age is 17 or 17-and-a-half years old, meaning most students are not even eligible to register until the second semester of their senior year.

Setting a national uniform advanced registration of 16 or even, perhaps, younger, would solve three problems at the same time. First, it would ease the burden of county election officials who are inundated with registration forms in the weeks leading up to the deadline, because with advanced registration, schools would register students year-round.

Second, advanced registration in high schools would decrease the need for private, partisan organizations who assert influence on young voters to register with a certain party, because most students would register with their classroom.

And finally, setting a uniform advanced-registration age would give students more time to learn about the candidates and issues and make a more informed decision when they reach voting age and are automatically added to the voting rolls when they turn 18.

In addition, Congress should expand the NVRA to allow advanced registration of 16 and 17-year-olds who are applying for their driver's license. Young people should be just as excited about registering to vote as they are about getting behind the wheel for the first time. It makes sense to combine these two events in a young person's life.

I want to conclude by thanking this distinguished committee for your work and for listening to my testimony this morning. I hope this process results not only in a shift in policy, but in a shift in priorities, where we can rely on the government to ensure that all young people have an equal chance to register to vote.

I hope we will be able to move beyond our outdated opt-in system and make the default position active citizenship and political participation, while giving those who don't want to vote an easy way to opt out of the process.

And I hope we all will continue to advance youth poll-worker programs, begin educating new voters through robust civics classes and combat voter-registration fraud through inclusively and accountability. Thank you very much.

SEGAL: Thank you, Adam. You have many good ideas. I appreciate your testimony.

Courtney, of Vanderbilt?

FRYXELL: Hi. My name is Courtney Fryxell. And I go the Vanderbilt University as an undergrad and grad student. And I also thank the panel for having me here today.

As last speaker of the day, I'd like to take a moment and put some facts and figures on the record. Voting is habitual. If we want to create an ideal representative democracy, where our elected officials are a reflection of the larger whole, then we need to create habitual voting.

We need to give people, as they matriculate to voting age, easy access to all aspects of voting: Registration, absentee ballots and voting in person. If we do this -- if we hold the universities accountable to the 1998 edition of the Higher Education Act of 1966, saying that they must put forth a good-faith effort to register their students to vote; if we standardize the rank of teachers (ph) throughout the country; if we make absentee balloting an actual guaranteed vote that isn't a fear of provisional voting; if we clear up all the misconceptions that student voters face, then there will be a giant boom in youth voting -- (inaudible) voting will be erased and an ideal representative democracy will be created through the additional (inaudible) of voting.

All studies of turnout have concluded that voting behavior is a gradually acquired habit. If someone votes in two consecutive elections, then they are more likely to vote for the rest of their lives. If someone votes for the same political party three times, they tend to vote for that party for the rest of their lives.

A 2000 paper analyzing the American National Election Panel surveys from 1972 to '76 and '92 to '96 found that a person who voted in the previous presidential election is 33 to 36.4 percentage points more likely to vote in the next presidential election. I could go on with the facts and figures about the vigilance (ph) of voting for the rest of the day.

If politicians want to secure a youth vote, the large millennial (ph) population that will comprise one-third of the electorate by 2012, then they need to eliminate the barriers to youth voting now. With that said, allow me to talk about my time at Vanderbilt.

As a student at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tennessee, I set out in January of 2004 to educate, register and get my fellow students to vote. In August, after many debate-watching parties and small voter-registration drives, I, along with other students who joined Vanderbilt LEAD, Leaders Engaged for an Active Democracy and Vanderbilt held a massive voter-registration drive on the main lawn of campus.

We strategically placed ourselves on the way back from the dining hall to the freshman dorms and filled our tent with voter-registration forms, absentee ballot requests and ice cream. We registered over 1,000 students to vote, most in our local precinct, and in their home state, if they so chose. And they more frequently did.

We helped students send away for more absentee ballots than I can remember and we mailed each of them to ensure that they would actually be sent and sent to the appropriate places. I double-checked them each myself.

On Election Day, we wrapped (ph) the polling place, St. Bernard's Academy (ph), with students. And every 15 minutes, from the opening of the polling location until the last vote was cast, we took a vanload of students to our poll from the student center.

Students waited in the rain and some had to leave to make class on time. And many were told that they weren't on the voter roll. They had to leave to make it to class. They left frustrated, and I worried that they might never return to the voting booth.

I read stories of people not getting their absentee ballot on time or their voter-registration cards never came, or that drove all the way home to the

outskirts of Tennessee to vote in their hometown because of first-time-voter-identification laws in the state of Tennessee and three other states in the union. I read more stories of frustration in the system than glee in the cast of their first (inaudible).

Vanderbilt has a student population from all 50 states, including the District of Columbia, and I urged students to vote at Vanderbilt. My argument to them was that, "This is where you will be staying the next four years of your life, if not more, and the policies that will affect your life directly will be those local policies that are put into place by local politicians. If you do not vote for them, you cannot complain."

The excuses for not registering at Vanderbilt were plentiful and based on misconceptions, misinformation and lies told to students, whose origins are still unknown. My fellow students told me that they would lose their scholarships if they voted in Tennessee. This is the only (inaudible) that has some truth, because some state-sponsored scholarships are affected by voter registration.

And we checked with those students and the financial-aid department and then followed up with them to make sure that they were registered to vote either in Tennessee or in their home state.

Other students told me that they would lose their driver's licenses in their state or driver's insurance coverage. And these excuses are unfounded and (inaudible) my urging to get the students to register in Tennessee. Then he went through out-of-state registration and the painful absentee-ballot-request process.

This misconception hinders students' ability to fully take part in the political process around our university and the stressful process of absentee balloting can (inaudible) people off of voting altogether.

There is also a misconception among freshman, which my counterparts talked about, who are still 17, that they were not able to register to vote, even though they would be 18 by the election. Many students we tried to register over the summer were not 18 yet, but would be 18 by the day of the election. And there is a misconception that those students are, therefore, not able to vote. This is incredibly false and needs to be ratified (ph).

In an attempt to increase the student turnout, I looked into establishing an early voting site on campus. Early voting would allow students to overcome their fears of long lines, (inaudible) and missing classes. Early voting would allow for those of us pushing for an increase in the youth vote to wipe out many of the excuses for not voting.

Early voting would give those students the ability to vote on their own time, to fit it into the college students' notoriously busy schedule and pretty much eradicate the excuse not to vote. Early voting on campus would have given those of us trying to get them to vote more time to get them out to vote and, therefore, more success in our (inaudible) voting effort.

The Vanderbilt library or the Vanderbilt Sarratt Student Center -- both were able to accommodate all but one of the required criteria for establishing early voting satellite locations. Although neither was currently used as an Election Day precinct, all other formal request criteria are met, according to the June 16, 2004 memo from the election commission, which I have on hand.

Both sites have computer capabilities, ease of location and accessibility, staffing, funding and were used to large volumes of people, while maintaining the security that is necessary for an election.

The June 16 adopted criteria for establishing early voting satellite locations in Tennessee urges organizations interested in sponsoring an early voting satellite location to review the checklist before submitting a formal request. I was not given a checklist or the option of submitting a formal request for an early vote location.

When I asked the election commission about establishing an early vote location on campus, I was not given a checklist. I was pretty much just told, "No," it was impossible.

Also, it should be noted that the majority of early voting sites in Tennessee are held at public libraries with the same, if not fewer, capabilities than the Vanderbilt student library or the law library, the business-school library or the university campus-run library.

I was completely denied anything more than asking whether or not it's possible, to which I was immediately told, "No," rather than given the checklist or given the ability to submit a formal request. Was it because I was a student? Was it because they were (inaudible) type of students do not vote?

I can't say for sure, but based on the flat-out "No" that they gave me the memo I found recently online, I can only assume that my student status definitely had something to do with it.

Absentee voting and the absentee-balloting process is incredibly difficult and frustrating. There are varying laws on how to obtain an absentee ballot. And at a major private university like Vanderbilt, most, if not all, states are represented and 51 different absentee-ballot laws need to be read, understood and put into practice. Laws vary from state to state and it's an incredibly complicated process.

Even at schools that primarily draw from in-state, students still have to obtain an absentee ballot from their home precinct. Requesting an absentee ballot is a nightmarish process. Some states require a signed affidavit just to request a ballot and some states need written excuses with the signature of a witness.

If you're registering to vote for the first time in Illinois, Michigan, Nevada and Tennessee, you must either register or vote in person the first time you vote, while in other states, you have to wait to receive your voter-registration card before you can request the ballot, therefore making doing both incredibly impossible and simultaneously (inaudible).

One part of the process that is difficult is requesting the ballot. The other difficult part is waiting around for the ballot in hopes that it will arrive in time for students to fill it out and return it to the election office in time.

Like with the requisition of the absentee ballot, actually voting with an absentee ballot is just as confusing. The deadline for submission of the ballot varies from state to state. And some states mandate that the ballot must be postmarked by Election Day. Some states want it in hand the day before elections. And with the increase in the number of students requesting absentee

ballots, the backlogs in the state cause the ballots to arrive with little or no time to fill them out and return them to cast the vote.

Many students remember to horrors of the 2000 election and do not want to go through the hassle of the absentee-balloting process for fears, albeit fears rooted in truth, that their ballot will not be counted, or lost or treated as a provisional ballot. And many students realize that their ballot will not be received in time for the secretary of state to certify the election.

And I had one student actually throw his ballot away, because he did not receive it in time, in front of me, for fear that it would be shredded when it actually was received.

The number of 18-to-24-year-olds voting in the 2004 election at St. Bernard's Academy (ph), the precinct that Vanderbilt students vote at doubled from 2000 to 2004. The increase from 6 percent to 12 percent of the total precinct's vote was a direct effect of the voter-registration work that I had done on campus.

Although not as great of an increase as I would have liked, this was the first time that there had ever been a Get out the Vote effort at Vanderbilt. The 18-to-24-year-old vote at St. Bernard's (ph) went from under 100 to over 260. And while this increase (inaudible) that I would like, it should be noted that the graduate-student population went from 18 percent to 30 percent. The 18-to-29-year-old percentage increased that much.

Of the students who registered to vote after May 1, 2004, almost 90 percent of them turned out to vote. This is only a record of students that were allowed to vote. The fact that only 174 18-to-24-year-olds are noted as new registrants between May 2004 and Election Day shocked me.

Of the 1,000 students that I registered to vote leading up to the election, at least a quarter of them were registered to vote at St. Bernard's Academy (ph), and it was my fault for not checking with them to make sure that all of them received their voter-registration cards.

But the fact that one, if not 10 or 20 or even 50, forms could be lost, misplaced or refused to be put in the roll from 2301 Vanderbilt place is disgusting. When students showed up to vote at St. Bernard's (ph), not only did they have to comply with the tedious voter -- the Tennessee I.D. laws -- or they needed either a voter-registration card, a Tennessee driver's license -- which very few had because they were registered as students at Vanderbilt -- or utility bills, which we don't have because we live in dorms -- we don't have to, luckily, handle utility bills yet -- a paycheck or other means of identification -- students were turned away or were forced to do a provisional ballot.

I watched student who were missing from the rolls return to their dorm to try to gather the appropriate identification, and they were turned away again. Was this because the poll workers weren't properly trained in the law or was this because poll workers did not want those students to vote or both?

Also frustrating was the demeaning attitude and tone of voice that poll workers gave toward the students, and most of whom were old enough to be our grandparents, took towards the (inaudible) who only wanted to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

We took anyone who needed a ride to the poll. Every 15 minutes a van left the student center. And students trickled in and out of the van to go wait in the rainy line and to be stuffed into a hot gym as we waited for one of the four booths to open.

This precinct was not ready for an influx of new voters, nor was it staffed enough to accommodate the number of voters that showed up in the rain. This election commission should have recognized the spike in voter registration at St. Bernard's (ph) and supplied the precinct with either more poll workers and/or more machines.

Many students who were turned away had to leave and come back due to class conflict and meetings. And we followed up with them and got them back to the polls. But if we hadn't, they probably wouldn't have voted.

How many more students have to wait to vote until the Davidson County -- how many students have to want to vote until the Davidson County Election Commission, until the state of Tennessee, until the country will realize that our rights as Americans (inaudible) the 26th amendment, are denied?

Youths 18 to 21 have not voted in the droves that were hoped for since the signing of the 26th Amendment, but there is still no telling how much of that is due to youth disenfranchisement like I saw in so many shapes at Vanderbilt in 2004.

There are many policy levers (ph) that would make voting easier for youths, including students and non-traditional youth: Same-day registration, as we talked about or mail-in voting, like in Oregon. But more importantly, I would like to quickly talk about the amendments to the 1966 Higher Education Act that were put forth in 1998.

The amendment states that, "Any university of college receiving federal money must make a good-faith effort to register the students to vote." And section 487A states, "Institutions will make a good-faith effort to distribute a mail-in voter registration form requested and received from the state to each student enrolled in a degree or certificate program and is physically in attendance at the institution, and to make these forms widely available at this institution."

If this had been the case at Vanderbilt University, then students would have had the forms in hand and could have just registered the 5,000 students that are in undergrad at Vanderbilt.

The '98 amendment for the Higher Education Act does not go far enough, though. It needs to be expanded by the federal government to mandate that all institutions of higher learning that receive any federal funding be required to not only give students forms, but ensure that those students who do choose to register to vote enjoy the same ease in voting as those who have done it for many years.

These changes included making sure that they receive their voter-registration card, know where to go to vote and aiding the student in sending an absentee ballot (inaudible) time to vote without fear of (inaudible).

The federal government needs to swiftly aid in the ratification of (inaudible) youth vote before the 2008 election. And youth want to vote, but our system is holding us back. The absentee-balloting process is confusing and

rigorous and voter-registration forms varying from state to state and the laws requiring in-present voting and multiple forms of identification hinder students' ability to vote.

Institutions of higher learning need to adhere to the Higher Education Act of 1966 and boards of elections need to be prepared for the influx of voter-registration forms and absentee-ballot requests and first-time voters at the polls.

We won't be denied or shunned from our right to vote through lies, misconceptions and being faulted by our age. The greatness of democracy is the ability to have voice of the plurality heard by those who cast the vote in their honor. Please do not deny us again our right to vote, to (inaudible) through our vote. Thank you so much.

SEGAL: Thank you very much for that thorough testimony. I really appreciate it.

Let's now turn over questions to Deb first, if you have any, and then we'll continue down the committee.

VAGINS: Sure. I have two quick questions I'm feeling -- Jonah may follow up on this one, too. The first one is for Courtney about -- and then one I wanted to throw open to all the panelists.

I want you to talk a little bit more about your experiences of voter-I.D. requirements that happened, what you saw, what the requirement was. Was it happening just to student voters? I'm certainly troubled by that, and I want to hear more about it.

And then I'll just ask the question now. You people can think about it. The other is, some of you had recommendations for federal legislative policy. If you haven't already spoken about it or if you'd like to emphasize something -- if you could give me each of your -- in your experience -- one or two recommendations that you'd like to see in federal legislation that you think could help enfranchise more students.

FRYXELL: Well, there's an identification for first-time voters in Tennessee; that the first time that you vote, you either need to register in person or vote in person. And we registered, like, a quarter of our students to vote right there at St. Bernard (ph). And I had the identification with me, and I have it with me here today.

It's sort of like when you fill out an I-9 form. There's a column A and a column B. And you need C and C or A and C and D. And that was the same sort of thing in Tennessee. You either needed a current voter-registration card or a current Tennessee driver's license, which we did not have; or a photo I.D., which includes the voter's name and signature.

We all had our student I.D.s, but the poll workers didn't seem to think that that was a true form of I.D., even though it is a photograph and a name, where you went to school and the signature on the back.

We use these for student voting all the time for student elections, and could have easily swipe through -- if they wanted to bring over one of our swipe machines to make sure that these students were actually registered in the right place.

It was frustrating because students would show up to vote, wait in this line, and then they'd go in -- they didn't have -- they were never (inaudible). They didn't have their voter-registration card, even though we registered them to vote in August. There was plenty of time for them to receive their voter-registration cards.

I'm anal-retentive about getting my I.D. card, and every time I don't get it within, like, three weeks, I call. I called the election commission weekly to make sure that these forms were coming in. And they seemed to have lost a good portion of our ballots. And these students all voted provisionally. And I don't think that their ballots were ever actually counted.

The election was certified. It's a very Democratic precinct, which is ironic since Vanderbilt is a very Conservative college in comparison to the rest of Nashville. And it still went for John Kerry in the 2004 election.

It was an incredibly tedious process. I stood outside there all day. I didn't think (inaudible) to call lawyers. And now, whenever I set up a voter-registration drive or GOTV program, we try to rope in the school's law students as well, because of these tedious laws.

Does that answer your question appropriately?

VAGINS: Yes.

And then, the question to the other panelists: If we were designing a piece of federal legislation that could help eliminate some of these barriers -- if you could give me some recommendations, I'd find that useful.

FOGEL: I could comment on that, just briefly. I mentioned the 1998 amendments to the Higher Education Act, which some other people that testified mentioned as well. The problem with the Higher Education Act is those young people who don't go off to college, who aren't affected by the Higher Education Act. They deserve the right to vote as well.

But just two sort of quick policy proposals: One is definitely, as the EAC and the Congress starts thinking about how to improve the National Voter Registration Act, I think one just easy solution would be to allow 16 and 17-year-olds to pre-register when they're at the Department of Motor Vehicles.

I think that's an easy solution because of how all states now have the capacity to add people who are not eligible yet to vote onto the rolls and just, by their birth date, are automatically added to the rolls. Ideally, once those people are added to the rolls, they'll be informed. They'll receive a voter-registration card and they'll receive information about the mechanics of voting. That should all be included.

I want to mention a very similar proposal was just recently signed by Governor Crist of Florida. And now Florida, I believe, is the second state to have advanced registration at 16 years old.

A second easy proposal -- this one was proposed in Minnesota by the secretary of state there -- was to link the change-of-address form at the U.S. Postal Service to a change of address in voter registration. There's no reason that it can't be done. In Minnesota, they've already seen that there isn't a significant fiscal impact. And that should be an across-the-board, federal

policy for the U.S. Postal Service to make sure it's transfer -- those change-of-address forms to the secretary of state's office.

And there have been a lot of innovative ideas, also. At the City College of San Francisco, they have an online voter-registration project, where community-college students who are registering for classes can just click a button and all their information is automatically transferred to the California secretary of state for them to automatically receive a filled-out registration form in the mail that all they have to do is sign and return.

So there are all these innovative ideas out there. It's just a matter of the political will to actually act on them.

COHEN: And I just want to add one more thing. Another possible amendment (inaudible) Help America Vote Act would be, you know, something that we definitely saw (inaudible) at Kenyon with the machines is to just set up a proper standard of machines per voter that's just uniform in every state so that we don't have partisan officials interfering with the redistricting and gerrymandering effect that that can have when you divide the precincts, like at Kenyon, where we were sitting all day, seeing these two machines that we couldn't use.

And it was just ridiculous because there was no one using them. So, I mean, I think that's a really simple thing and it's ridiculous it isn't in effect already.

FRYXELL (?): To add to that real quick -- I think a standardized form without the variances between states, as well as a national holiday, which is something that I think is not talked about enough. Twenty-six states give their employees time off to vote. Thirty-one states give their government officials time off to vote.

The students have the same time off to vote -- I think we've seen an increase, as well -- as well as standardization of the absentee-balloting process, which is varying throughout the country -- whether or not you need an affidavit -- a good number of (inaudible) that are so confusing because you have to go through each of them to get your ballot (inaudible).

PADERA (?): And I'd just like to really quickly jump in with the idea of encouraging states to educate their young voters.

I know the state of Illinois requires a constitutional test. When you're in high school, you have to take a course where you learn about the Constitution, about amendments. I can still remember the proper ways to fold the flag, and yet I didn't know how to vote in my own country when I turned 18. And I think that should be a part of the kind of basic education we all receive.

VAGINS: Thank you very much.

SEGAL: Well said.

Mr. Comstock-Gay?

COMSTOCK-GAY: Yes, good segueway (ph) into my first question -- is how many of you all had some kind of civics education, and do you think that's important? You had some folding the flag, anyway.

FRYXELL (?):   Yes, when I lived in Minnesota, I had a Minnesota state education.

COMSTOCK-GAY: Well, that's Minnesota, though.

FRYXELL (?):   Yes. I knew all about, you know, what -- grain and iron came from where -- but whether or not -- where to vote in Minnesota, I didn't.

COMSTOCK-GAY: That's the kind of civics -- how government works, how ... (CROSSTALK)

FRYXELL (?):   Nor did I have that when I lived in Ohio.

PADERA (?):   The Illinois background gives you nothing on voting procedure or any kind of preparation for what you do once you turn 18. But you learn all about the wonders of voting (inaudible).

FRYXELL (?):   Nor do they put a voter-registration form in front of you.

COMSTOCK-GAY: Sarah, now?

COHEN: I went to public school in New York. And so ...

FOGEL: I'm from Cleveland Heights, Ohio. And I had great history teachers there who decided -- and government teachers -- who would bring in registration forms and let us register and send them in.

But as I said in my testimony, it's a patchwork system. You can't rely on these great, inspirational government teachers that come to their classroom and take the initiative, then go above and beyond their set curriculum to register students.

So I was fortunate to have a government teacher who took that initiative. But many of my peers didn't. And that, ultimately, when we're developing legislation or we're developing policies, that's who we need to think about. We can't think about the exception to the rule like my history teacher, Mr. Rose (ph). We need to think about all the students who didn't have a Mr. Rose (ph).

COMSTOCK-GAY: Another question for you, Adam -- you talked about working with community colleges.

FOGEL: Yes.

COMSTOCK-GAY: What kind of programs are you seeing that are effective in getting community-college students to register to vote and participate?

FOGEL: Last summer, I worked at about 20 campuses across   Pennsylvania. And each one was unique. And I had to work with the student-government officials, people in the student-activities offices to set up these programs, because on many of the campuses, they really didn't do anything.

They met the 1988 amendment requirements by having voter-registration forms in a drawer somewhere or just sort of putting them out in their community-service office and saying, you know, "It's an option to register."

So what I had to do on many of the campuses was really start from square one and establish this culture of civic participation, recruiting students and

say, "Well, you have this activities fair on campus every year. Why not set up a voter-registration booth at the activities fair?" And that registered hundreds of people.

Or the Community College of Philadelphia, the biggest community college in the state -- we actually worked with their Honors Society there, and they set up booths and they also went into classrooms and actually registered people in a systematic way in the classrooms.

And then I also mentioned the City College of San Francisco. They have this pilot program in their community colleges, with the automatic online registration. And that's expanded to, I think, 40 or 50 different schools in that network. And it's just a matter or getting the IT people at these schools to insert that; because everyone has online registration -- or most have online class registration now, and it's not prohibitively expensive to have a voter-registration component in the class registration.

COMSTOCK-GAY: OK. Thank you.

SEGAL: Commissioner Hillman?

HILLMAN: Yes. Thank you. Thank you all very much for sharing your stories and your solutions. And I hope that SAVE is able to find a suitable partner to work with to try to advance some of this through federal legislation, because I think that would be the place it would need to be addressed.

A couple of quick questions -- Ms. Padera, about the flyers that you described -- were you ever able to ascertain who produced and distributed those flyers?

PADERA: No. And after the election, it actually -- after that article was published the day before the election, the Daily Pennsylvanian Web site -- the newspaper's Web site -- became abuzz with activity, where people were arguing back and forth in an uncontrolled way about what party might have done it or, et cetera, et cetera.

And it really wasn't a very controlled debate. But people really felt that there was foul play involved. The Campus Republicans were accused. The Campus Democrats were accused of trying for a sympathy vote, et cetera, et cetera. And it was just absolutely turmoil.

HILLMAN: Was it reported -- do you know -- to the authorities? Did anybody formally report it to any prosecuting authorities to pursue who would have done this?

PADERA: It really died down after the election, effectively. And I don't know if anyone ever took it to legal authorities. It was taken to the administration of the University of Pennsylvania, but they didn't address anything until after November 2nd and 3rd.

HILLMAN: Just as an aside, one of the things that I would encourage always, when there are those kind of deceitful-misinformation campaigns that affect somebody's ability to properly register or vote, is that they be reported to the authorities.

Because in the absence of that, A, there's no record and, B, there's no ability to force people to follow up on this. You know, when it dies down, it

does down. But then it does leave the door open for somebody to do the same thing.

Mr. Fogel, I'd just like for you to briefly tell me again what your recommendation is about the postal change-of-address form being shared with the state authorities (ph).

FOGEL: When someone changes their address with the U.S. Postal Service, we would be able -- or the postal service, I would imagine, working with that state's secretary of state -- would be able to transfer the information from the -- if the voter chooses to do so, and they would always have that choice -- to change their address from their current address to the address that they're moving to. And that should be changed not only in the U.S. Postal Service's database, but also in that secretary of state's database for the voter rolls.

That proposal was introduced by Secretary Ritchie in Minnesota. And I believe it received quite a bit of support in the legislature there.

HILLMAN: OK. So are you saying that the postal change-of-address form would have to be changed so that somebody could indicate whether or not they wanted this information shared?

FOGEL: It would. It would need to be changed to do that, yes.

HILLMAN: OK. OK, because I was going to say, that, certainly, for the people in New Orleans, that would have created havoc for the people who were displaced, did file change-of-address with the post office so they could receive their mail, but wanted to retain their right to vote in New Orleans and not be disenfranchised that way.

FOGEL: Certainly. And I think it's always very important that we leave it, ultimately, up to the voter where they want to be registered; if you have two addresses, that you have to choose one to consider your permanent address. And I believe that that decision should ultimately be left up to the voter.

The same goes for any sort of changes that are made to the NVRA to allow 16 and 17-year-olds to register to vote, or anyone registering to vote at the DMV, for that matter. It should always be the individual's choice whether or not they want to be registered to vote. But my position is that they should have to opt out of the process rather than opt into it.

HILLMAN: OK.

And then, just two quick points: Ms. Cohen, I am encouraged that the new secretary of state of Ohio and her team are sensitive to some of the issues that happened and will be addressed. So I would encourage you and your colleagues in Ohio to continue working that because not having enough voting systems at a polling place can be very disruptive to the process.

And Ms. Fryxell, did you do a post-mortem with the local or state election officials after the election, to sort of share with them the many obstacles and challenges that you all faced?

FRYXELL: I did not. Through our advisor at Vanderbilt, I worked with the Community Partnership house there. That was my advisor. He spoke to our legal team and Vanderbilt, and they were supposed to take it from there.

I should have followed up more. I worked in an election in 2006 on the Senate campaign and followed up with every complaint that was received to me. I learned from my mistakes. But I don't think they should have been there in the first place. So I did as much as I was advised to do, which was, unfortunately, (inaudible).

HILLMAN: Thank you.

SEGAL: If I could just ask one question -- it's remarkable to me that none of the four people on our panel right now have had civics programs taught in their high schools or in their junior high schools.

And you, Courtney, spoke of the Higher Education Act that was modified in 1998 that talked about the "good-faith" effort. If you, yourself, had to define "good faith" for our college institutions or -- feel free for all of you to answer this question -- how would you define it or what sort of stipulation would you put in to make sure they follow?

FRYXELL: Well, I think it's rather frustrating that a college can get away with throwing a bunch of voter-registration forms in a box in a corner and calling it a "good-faith effort."

At Vanderbilt, we had more trouble requesting the number of ballots that we need than should have been necessary. With the school's help, we should have been able to get all of the ballots -- the registration forms -- that we needed.

Also, it should be noted that one of the election commissioners was also on the board at Vanderbilt and was not as helpful as she should have been to register our students to vote.

I believe a good-faith effort would go along with the Harvard Institute of Politics' national campaign model, where they put voter-registration forms in all freshman orientation packets. They return all those ballots -- those voter-registration forms.

In 2004, (inaudible) when we set up our program as well, we should have perfected our programs together. And I think the fact that they register all their freshmen to vote -- would be a good start, as well as making sure that they get their forms, get their voter-I.D. cards and have a stack on hand and lawyers on hand in case there is a problem with the (inaudible).

SEGAL: Thank you.

Anyone else?

FOGEL: If I could just add on to that -- you mentioned the Harvard Institute of Politics -- actually, for a complete answer to that question, they put out a report in September, I think, of 2004 that surveys a number of colleges. It was a statistically significant sample of colleges and universities reporting on the compliance of the 1998 amendments.

And what they found, I believe, was 16 percent were in compliance with the law and something like half were in compliance with what they called, "The spirit of the law," which means that there could have been partisan groups on campus, conducting voter-registration drives, but doesn't necessarily mean that the administration was making an effort to register student.

COHEN (?): In, I believe, Delaware, one of the college presidents actually sends all freshmen, before they get to school, both their home-state voter-registration form and the Delaware voter-registration form in an effort to -- with a personalized letter encouraging ...

SEGAL: Great. Thank you.

Jonah?

GOLDMAN: Thanks, Matthew.

Ms. Padera, when did these flyers start showing up?

PADERA: It seemed like it was overnight, but I think it was more gradual, moving across campus.

I was, as I said, a freshman living towards the eastern edge of campus in a freshman dorm. And we were one of the first hit, but we were over a month before the election.

GOLDMAN: So it was before the registration deadline?

PADERA: Yes.

GOLDMAN: OK.

PADERA: And there were campus groups -- both partisan and non-partisan campus groups -- that were all over, doing registration. And they were actually pulling them down after a certain point. But they would reappear. So whoever was doing it wanted to really keep that misinformation out there. And very few people had the real information to combat it with.

GOLDMAN: You said that it dissuaded you. And it probably dissuaded -- you said it had an effect on at least 100 people that you know, and probably more.

PADERA: Me, personally. Yes.

GOLDMAN: You, personally, and many more.

Would it have been helpful to have information that was disseminated from an official source saying that, "We recognize that this happened and that this isn't the truth," and, you know, "The following is the truth"? Would that have made you feel more comfortable?

PADERA: I think very much so.

In preparation for even coming to speak about this, I called up a couple of people I remembered having the issue. And we discussed it and compared what we remembered happening. And everyone was asking, you know, "What ended up happening about that?" And I don't think anyone ever really addressed it post-election. People were just frightened out of voting and didn't vote. And that's how it ended.

GOLDMAN: Because, unfortunately, there's really not a good structure -- at least at a federal perspective -- in a couple states, there is -- for alerting people to this, and then anybody actually following up. It's actually

not illegal from a federal perspective, necessarily; at least, not clearly illegal.

And there is a bill now that's going through the Congress that actually passed the House that was sponsored by the chairman of the committee whose room we're using, Congressman Conyers, as well as Rahm Emanuel. Then, on the other side of the Capitol, was introduced by Senator Obama that would address this very issue and prevent deceptive practices.

But possibly more important is that other piece, which it would allow the Department of Justice and some other officials to be able to go into the University of Pennsylvania and say, "This isn't right," and "This is right." And I assume that would be something that would be helpful in your situation.

PADERA: Because I think that feeling so ignored, really, out of the cynicism on campus, especially after the election -- and I was abroad during the previous -- but I'm sure that the memory of that was sticking around. And for new freshmen, it probably -- for all I know, it could have happened again. And I'm sure that we were just as easy to bamboozle this time around as last time.

GOLDMAN: Mr. Fogel, you were talking about -- and I think it's -- we, obviously, need to do more to be able to have a little bit more transparency and accuracy in our voter rolls and try to make it easier for people to transfer registration addresses.

But one of the constant problems is that when there are these good proposals, the databases that these proposals rely on, including the voter-registration database or the U.S. Postal Service database -- they're terrible. I mean, I can't sugar-coat it at all. They're awful.

And the, you know, death records, prison records -- these records don't actually match with voter-registration rolls. And, in fact, in 2000, there's the infamous example in Florida where the matching criteria was either deliberately or grossly negligently put together to look at the prison rolls and then to look at the voter-registration rolls to remove people from the rolls.

Do you have a plan for how to prevent that, with what I, otherwise, think is a terrific idea

FOGEL: Sure.

I think the problem now is that citizens, in general, are opting into the process. So that creates confusion right off the bat, because what should -- in an ideal world, the government would have the ability to make sure that the voter rolls are complete and full and accurate.

And we're already doing that. Everyone has a Social Security card. Young men register for the draft with Selective Service. So there are means of keeping track, if you will, of citizens. So there's no reason that we couldn't tie voter registration to Selective Service or tie voter registration to Social Security Cards.

And then, if a citizen would want to opt out of voting, they could either simply not vote or, if they feel strongly enough about it and want their name removed from the rolls, they can opt out of the process.

GOLDMAN: But one of the least reliable databases is the Social Security database. And, in fact, the Social Security database, when HAVA was being passed -- then the Social Security Administration was asked whether or not they could be used as a reliable source for record-keeping with the new statewide databases that were coming up under HAVA.

They specifically said -- well, they essentially said, "You can do whatever you want, but you can't rely on us because, first of all, not every citizen has a Social Security card and we can't guarantee the matching criteria, even within our own database."

And when it comes to Selective Service, despite the requirement, there's an enormous number of citizens -- male citizens, of course, who are the only ones who have to register with Selective Service -- who don't actually register with the Selective Service.

FOGEL: Right.

GOLDMAN: And isn't it, at least for the immediate term -- and I think that universal registration, again, is a terrific idea. But for the immediate term, isn't it incredibly important for us to try to implement the types of reforms, like Election Day registration, that aren't just a Band-Aid; that are a serious structural reform that would really have the effect of allowing, in a lot of these cases -- overcoming these obstacles?

FOGEL: I'm in favor of Election Day registration. And everything you said about the databases are true, and we need to improve them. But the problem I see with Election Day registration is that it doesn't address the real disparity between people who don't have access and those who -- Election Day registration is just going to make voting easier for them, people that would vote anyway.

So I think that while Election Day registration is a good short-term solution and, certainly, is going to make voting more accessible, especially for young people, what I worry is that if we say, "Election Day registration is the goal," and we don't think about the systematic reform that I'm talking about, that all that systematic reform is getting brushed to the side: "You have your Election Day registration. Now, what else do you want?" And I'm worried that that's going to be the next argument.

And same-day registration definitely makes it easier for people who are already going to vote, but I don't know if the evidence is in to say that Election Day registration actually helps people that weren't going to vote anyway.

And I would be very interested in seeing more data, more research done on that issue, and seeing if a state like Hawaii, that has 16-year-old advanced registration -- if that sort of reform does address the disparity between those who have no interest in voting to begin with and those who were going to vote anyway.

GOLDMAN: And I think that, actually, DEMOS and Stuart's research on this probably, would actually refute the idea that it doesn't actually increase registration. While that's a criticism -- and a criticism that I think, at this point, hasn't been overcome when it comes to mail-in voting -- I think Election Day registration, when you look at the numbers and the percentages of the states that do have Election Day registration -- of the people who actually register on

those days -- certainly, when we're talking about a group like students in a forum like this, I think Election Day registration is, in some way, at least, maybe comparable, if not the silver bullet.

SEGAL: Mr. Gans?

GANS: Once suggestion -- if we're concerned about civic education, the easiest way to bring that about is if the No Child Left Behind Legislation is reauthorized, if you've got to have testing on citizenship, as well as math and reading.

SEGAL: Good suggestion.

GANS: Back in 1986, the Republican parties in New Jersey and Louisiana essentially intimidated black voters. And they were brought to court. And they were both find and had a cease-and-desist order. There is case law if you can find who the perpetrators are. So that's very important. And then take your appeal (ph) to court.

You raised a question that's one of my favorite questions. In Canada, you're not allowed to broadcast election results until all the polls are closed. There is no election coverage until 11 o'clock at night.

You know, we, in this country, ought to, one day a year, interfere with the free speech of the networks and tell them that they cannot project election results while the polls are open and that they cannot base their election results on exit polls; that they have to report the actual results. And if they reported the actual results, they would never be premature and they would never be wrong.

(UNKNOWN): Yes.

GANS: The original Motor Voter Act -- it's first passage was passed here in the House by two-thirds, and it was the Gingrich-Foley Act -- had a provision that when you got your driver's license, you would be automatically registered and you would have to tell them you didn't want to be registered.

I think, you know, doing that is the way to go, with more agencies. And it is better because you're not going to get Election Day registration in about two-thirds of the state in the country because there are certain things it does not protect against.

I am a little concerned about 16-year-olds. I have no problem with 17-year-olds. But the mobility rates in this country are pretty high, you know, and you're going to get screwed-up voting lists, you know, if you extend it down to 16-year-olds. But I would be in favor of using the high school, rather than college, as the primary base.

My last comment is on early voting. It sounds like a good idea. But suppose in the 2004 election, on the Friday before the election, Osama bin Laden had been captured or there had been a domestic terrorist act or the stock market tanked or there was a provable issue of moral turpitude and an arrest. There would have been 25 million people who would cast irrevocable votes who did not have that information.

I think you need to be very careful when you use that type of gimmick to, you know, enhance voter turnout; similarly, an Election Day holiday. The

research of other countries shows that where they have voluntary voting, as we do, turnout is lower when they have elections on weekends and holidays.

The few places that have experimented with weekend voting, which is Louisiana and Santa Monica, had very low turnout. If you have it on a holiday, you deprive the system of its mobilization efforts -- skilled shop stewards, teachers, employers (ph). And if the problem of voting in America is a motivational problem, then if you create a holiday, you're going to have more people going fishing than voting.

I very strongly support the other thing that you said, which is people ought to get time off, you know? And every state ought to have New York's hours, from 6 a.m. to 9 p.m., so that you have three hours on each side of the work cycle. I think that's better than an Election Day holiday. And I think that would be helpful.

FRYXELL (?): No. I completely agree with that.

And just to say, really quickly, that I believe that if we got rid of early voting because of that same thing that absentee balloting (inaudible) to you, and then a larger problem would be created. Early polling is incredibly popular in the state of Tennessee, but in the last election cycle they voted ...

(CROSSTALK)

GANS: It's popular every place, but it's dangerous.

FRYXELL (?): No, I agree. But then they would also call into question absentee balloting, which would completely disenfranchise a large portion of the student population.

SEGAL: All right.

There's obviously some controversy on the early voting issue. I think that early voting is a choice. No one is required to vote early. So you bring up a good point, Mr. Gans, in saying if a major sudden event happens, their vote might be irrevocable. But that said, you're also making the decision to vote early with the information given. And you're not, by any means, coerced to.

With that, Mr. Moon, go ahead. And we're running out of time. So, if you could, ask a few questions.

I'll then make two or three minutes of closing remarks and we can conclude the hearing.

MOON: Great. Well, let me just preface my statement with this: Ms. Fryxell made a comment of voting being a habitual behavior. And so, I guess, all of -- before we can even get to motivating people, I guess -- let's just assume everything that we all want up here gets done -- great voter-registration databases, same-day registration, early voting, whatever.

Beyond that, I guess, what do you -- I'm curious to see what the panelists think would be something that a policy-maker could do to actually try and push that habit if, assuming, everything else is taken care of. Obviously, that's not going to happen. But assuming people are registered and they're there on the rolls in a timely manner, you know, what can we do to sort of create the

habit, other than having an exciting and competitive election, which is outside of the real control of policy-makers?

COHEN (?): One thing that we need to pay attention to, as Adam was saying, because not every young person has the ability to go on to college or a university -- you know, some people have to go straight into a career or maybe become single parents -- there has to be some provision early on so that there can be a commitment for individuals to, you know, become accustomed to caring about these things.

And there's no reason that in my public-school education that I was required to go to gym, though I played at least two sports a year, to graduate high school, but had no education about voting or how the government works or anything, even though I did take A.P. American history. So it just seems a little bit silly that that's not included at all in most high schools.

And, I mean, if you had something for freshmen in high school, because, you know -- accounting for people who may drop out of high school -- and get them early on -- that could be a way to instill this value in participating in the democratic process, regardless of, you know, the level of education you're going to receive and where your income stands.

We're all lucky to go to good, private colleges and universities and whatnot, but that's not the reality for every young person.

FRYXELL (?): I completely agree. I think that students' education -- the younger you get a voter, the more likely -- or a person -- the more likely that they're going to continue to vote the rest of their life, have vigilance (ph) in voting.

I personally did an inner-city civics education. I went in to an actual inner-city school, talked to a social studies teacher who didn't have the ability or the money -- the funding -- to do civics education, and did a day of civics education and voter registration.

Those students were excited. But if I go back, I hope that they're all voting. And I have a good feeling that they are, because they got excited about it. It would be something different (inaudible). I mean, they were guaranteed a right to.

FOGEL: And I don't think that high school is really enough. Montgomery County in Maryland has a really good program where they have student board members on their board of education, and middle-schoolers and high-schoolers actually vote on the same machines that everyone uses, to vote for that student board member.

And starting in sixth grade, I think, is great. But students in elementary school -- kindergarten -- aren't too young to learn about democracy, aren't too young to learn about government -- the way our system depends on citizens and depends on the electorate; so that the younger you instill that, the more habitual it's going to be once you turn voting age.

FRYXELL (?): Plus, I remember that when I was younger, that I would want to go into the polls (ph), where there was a mock election for youth when I was in Pennsylvania. That was the coolest thing ever. I wanted to keep doing it. And now I do, you know?

I think the younger that you get someone to push a button and pull a lever and to advocate (ph) on the issues, the better.

PADERA (?): Right.

I think that the main problem is that right now, we have the abstinence-only education of voting going on all throughout our nation's high schools. And, you know, kids are going to try to vote and they're going to do it wrong. So why don't we just teach them (inaudible) today?

(UNKNOWN): Bumper Sticker.

SEGAL: I think you've all done an excellent job of advertising for what we're trying to do in hitting people while they're young with the idea of democracy.

Like you said, Adam, you really can't be too young to practice voting in a mock situation for the first time. And I don't know why the process of voting is not prepared more for people when they turn 18, rather than being sprung upon them. And so they're hurled into this system that they know nothing or little about, rather than being prepared and having a deep and fundamental understanding of democracy. And that's something that, through several of our programs, we're trying to do.

As I close here today, I just want to ask any of our committee members if they want to make any important or vital closing remarks or have any analysis on what was said here today. Anyone?

HILLMAN (?): Well, I don't know how important or vital, but I would encourage SAVE to do a couple of things.

There are national associations of state and local election officials. And I would encourage you to work with them to get on their agendas at their mid-winter and summer conferences to have a dialogue about this, because that's where, really, as long as the state retains the responsibility for election administration and setting the various rules -- that's where you're going to penetrate, in addition to your attempts at the federal level.

I would also encourage the students to penetrate the process through internships at election offices, working as poll workers and seeking employment in election offices to actually be on the inside. It's not as bad as making sausage, I'm told. If you work in a factory that makes sausage, you never want to eat sausage again. I don't think it's the same thing with elections. I don't think you'll be totally turned off. But it's not easy work. It is complex.

I would also encourage your state chapters to look at the membership of the state HAVA advisory committees. Get to know the people who are on there and try to see if somebody representing SAVE can't get on to these state chapters to make sure that states are taking advantage of the Help America Vote Act in away that fully enfranchises its citizens.

And EAC doesn't have a lot of direct authority over your suggestions, but we do have a standards board that is made up of 110 people; one representing a state election official and the other representing an associate of local election officials. They have an email address. And if your suggestions and

thoughts are emailed to this address, I will be sure that they are sent to all 110 members.

And it's a very simple address. It's www.standardsboard@eac.gov.

And institutionalize your work so that when this great leadership and talent graduates from college and moves on, you don't find a void or, you know; that you will have students coming along to take over the leadership and to further your good work.

SEGAL: Thank you very much. I appreciate that.

And with that said, I want to thank everyone in the audience for coming. I want to thank our committee members, again, our panelists.

We've addressed some extremely important issues today regarding policy. But like Curtis Gans said at the beginning, "The issue is certainly two-fold." Part of it is motivation, too. And it's important that we channel the motivation we have onto our college campuses and into our local communities to really galvanize people for elections and also galvanize them to want to take full part in the process as administrators and poll workers and as concerned citizens who are active year-round.

And I also want to plug our final event of the summer, which is occurring on July 31st at the National Press Club. And that is going to be a town hall meeting with some members of the political community on the left and on the right who are going to engage in a bipartisan discussion on how to create a society of high civic engagement.

And on the left, confirmed, we have Secretary of Transportation Norm Mineta. We have Congresswoman Eleanor Holmes Norton. We have former Congressman Jim Turner, of Texas and also the Newsweek columnist Eleanor Clift. And on the right, we're in the process of confirming our speakers right now.

But I encourage you to come to that. And check out our Web site. It's savevoting.org. Thank you, everyone.

END

The CHAIRMAN. We do have a vote. We are going to go a little further, as far as we can go, but we will come back for questions. We will come back to ask questions for you.

Lauren Burdette is a junior at the University of Pennsylvania. I am delighted to have Lauren here today with us to share some of her experiences with the voting process.

Lauren.

STATEMENT OF LAUREN BURDETTE

Ms. BURDETTE. Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Ehlers, committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today at this important hearing. Thank you also to the Student Association for Voter Empowerment for inviting me here to speak on behalf of student voters.

My name is Lauren Burdette, and I am here to represent my perspective as a student leader at the University of Pennsylvania. On Penn's campus there is a huge student-led effort to register other students to vote. We have had a lot of success reaching out to students who are involved in groups on campus. We have a table on the main walkway every day between 10 and 4 p.m. Where students can register and drop off their completed forms. We hang posters throughout campus on a weekly basis, advertise on our listservs Web page and Facebook page. Penn does not allow dorm canvassing, although we are staging weekend off-campus and fraternity house canvassing. Overall we have had a lot of success working alongside Penn's administration and other student groups to promote voter registration at Penn this semester.

Some of the problems we have run into, however, have serious potential to hamper student voting. The bureaucracy and inefficiency of the Philadelphia board of elections is staggering. The voter registration deadline is typically 1 month before the actual election. Philadelphia does not have same-day registration. The biggest problem students face is not knowing whether their registration form was processed before the deadline passes. It generally takes 4 to 6 weeks once the form is received by the board of elections before a voter registration card is issued. If something is wrong with a form and it is not processed, the board of elections does not notify the individual; therefore, most students do not realize their form did not go through until they actually reach the polls. At this point they are unable to vote normally in the election.

But under the 2002 Help America Vote Act, they should be able to vote provisionally. Unfortunately, most pollworkers are not trained properly, and most are not well versed in voter registration law. In the 2008 Pennsylvania primary, several Penn students who registered to vote were not on the rolls and were turned away at the polls by uninformed and untrained pollworkers instead of being given the option to vote provisionally. This is an egregious problem, especially in Pennsylvania, since it is a critical swing State in all Presidential elections. But more importantly, it illegitimizes the entire voting process for students, making it less likely that they will vote in the future.

I do not think this is a concerted effort to disenfranchise students; rather, it is ineffective training and an uninformed group of

pollworkers unintentionally preventing students from exercising their full rights under the law.

There are other examples, however, of a much more complicated misinformation campaign that results in students not knowing their full rights under the law and purposefully not voting because of those incorrect beliefs. Many students are told that voting at their college residence will cause them to be taken off their parents' health insurance or prevent their parents from claiming them as a dependent, or will cancel their Federal financial aid, none of which are true. Still other students are told they must vote absentee if they are going to vote at all. While some students manage to navigate the complicated absentee ballot system successfully, many do not get their ballots turned in on time or filled out correctly and thus are not allowed to vote at all.

Beyond silent misinformation campaigns, there are overt examples of false information being posted around campuses and in the community. I have an example of a flier that I would like to submit for the record that was plastered on the 37th Street SEPTA stop at Penn's campus that said in a rather bipartisan manner that anyone who has an outstanding parking ticket will be arrested if they try to vote on election day. Clearly the letter is not official, and I personally do not believe it is targeting Penn students, but instead is targeting the employees who work at Penn or the hospital at the University of Pennsylvania. Regardless, the only spot these have been found so far is at the trolley stops on Penn's campus.

We are continually combating false information, and it makes the job of registering students and turning them out to vote much more difficult.

A final factor that makes voter registration and voting itself difficult for students is their mobility. Most students change residences each year they are in college, which means they need to re-register. This is a time-consuming, confusing and often unknown requirement for voting.

One perennial problem is that voter rolls have multiple individuals listed at the same address. Dormitories especially have a high turnover rate. This process makes figuring out who actually lives there and is therefore eligible to vote very difficult. To combat this problem, for the first time this year we are telling college students to put their room numbers in the apartment number section of the form. No one typically does this because a college student's room number is not part of his or her address like a normal apartment is. They always deliver to a box number, which is different from the room number. By ensuring the room number is listed, we can verify without a doubt who actually lives in the room and who owns the box number should the eligibility of any of the voters be questioned.

A major part of an easier voter registration for students lies in allowing for same-day registration on college campuses everywhere. This will alleviate many of the problems students face by allowing them to change their address at the polling place, receive accurate answers to any questions they may have, and, more importantly, to ensure that they have the same right as every other citizen in the United States, the right to vote.

Thank you.
The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.
[The statement of Ms. Burdette follows:]

Testimony of Lauren Burdette
Student
University of Pennsylvania
On "Ensuring the Rights of College Students to Vote."
Before the House Administration Committee in the United States Congress

Chairman Brady, Ranking Member Ehlers, committee members, thank you for the

opportunity to testify today at this important hearing on "Ensuring the Rights of College Students

to Vote." Thank you also to the Student Association for Voter Empowerment for encouraging

me to speak on behalf of student voters. My name is Lauren Burdette, and I am here to represent

my perspective as a student leader at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania. On Penn's campus, there is a huge student-led effort to register other students to

vote – we collaborate with all student groups on campus by attending their general body

meetings with blank voter registration forms. We have had a lot of success reaching out to

students who are involved in groups on campus – our efforts are currently ramping up to try to

reach those students who are not involved in groups and those who aren't plugged into the online

environment. We have a table on the main campus walkway every day between 10am and 4pm

where students can register and drop off their completed forms. We hang posters and flyers

throughout campus on a weekly basis and advertise on our website, listservs and Facebook page.

Penn does not allow dorm canvassing, although we are staging weekend off-campus housing and

fraternity/sorority house canvassing. Overall, we've had a lot of success working alongside

Penn's administration and other student groups to promote voter registration at Penn this

semester.

Some of the problems we've run into, however, have serious potential to hamper student

voting. The bureaucracy and inefficiency of the Philadelphia Board of Elections is staggering.

The voter registration deadline is typically one month before the actual election – Pennsylvania

does not have same-day registration. The biggest problem students face is not knowing whether their registration form was processed before the deadline passes. It generally takes 4-6 weeks once a form is received by the Philadelphia Board of Elections before a voter registration card is sent out. Since most students do not return to campus until the beginning of September, even if they register during the first week of classes (which many do not), they might not receive their card until after the deadline. If something is wrong with their form and it is not processed, the Philadelphia Board of Elections does not notify them, therefore it will be mid-October before the students realize their form did not go through, and often it is not until they actually reach the polls. At this point, they are unable to vote normally in the election, but under the 2002 Help America Vote Act, these students should be able to vote provisionally on Election Day. Unfortunately, many poll workers are not trained properly and most are not well versed in voter registration law. In the 2008 Pennsylvania primary, several Penn students who registered to vote were not on the voter rolls and were turned away at the polls by uninformed and untrained poll workers instead of being given the option to vote provisionally. This is an egregious problem especially in Pennsylvania as it is a critical swing state in all presidential elections, but more importantly, it illegitimizes the entire voting process for students, making it less likely that they will vote in the future. I do not think this is a concerted effort to disenfranchise students – rather, it is ineffective training and an uninformed group of poll workers unintentionally preventing students from exercising their full rights under the law.

There are other examples, however, of a much more complicated misinformation campaign that results in students not knowing their full rights under the law and purposely not voting because of these incorrect beliefs. Many students are told that voting at their college residence will cause them to be taken off their parents' health insurance, will prevent their

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parents from being claimed as a dependent on tax returns, or will cancel their federal financial aid, none of which are true. Still other students are told that they must vote absentee if they are going to vote at all. While some students manage to navigate the complicated absentee ballot system successfully and turn in their ballots in time, many of them do not get their ballots turned in on time or filled out correctly and are thus not allowed to participate in either their home state's election or their college state's election. Beyond silent misinformation campaigns, there are overt examples of false information being posted around campuses and in the community. I have an example of a flyer that was plastered around the 37th street SEPTA stop at Penn's campus that says, in a rather bipartisan manner, that anyone who has an outstanding parking ticket will be arrested if they try to vote on Election Day. Clearly this letter is not serious, and I personally do not believe it is targeting Penn students, but instead is targeting employees who work at Penn or at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania who take SEPTA to work. Regardless, the only spot these have been found (so far) is at the trolley stops on Penn's campus. We are continually combating false information, and it makes the job of registering students and turning them out to vote much more difficult.

Another complicated situation I've run into is trying to get students who are studying abroad the required information about voting absentee, either in their home state or the state where they attend college. Most college/university Office of International Programs do not give out the addresses of the students studying abroad for privacy reasons, but the result is that there is no coordinated effort to educate the students abroad about the time requirements of turning in their forms. We had particular trouble at Penn until we contacted our Undergraduate Assembly, several members of whom convinced the necessary staff of the importance of this effort and

agreed to send not only information about voter registration deadlines, but also the applications for absentee ballots.

A final factor that makes voter registration and voting itself difficult for students is their mobility. Most students change residences each year they are in college, which means they need to re-register each time. This is a time-consuming, confusing, and often unknown requirement for voting, and if student organizations like ours did not exist on campus to help facilitate this process, many of these students would not be able to vote. One perennial problem is that voter rolls have multiple individuals listed living at the same address (dormitories have an exceptionally high turnover rate). This process makes figuring out who actually lives there and is therefore eligible to vote very difficult. To combat this problem, for the first time this year we are telling college students to put their room numbers in the "Apartment Number" section of the form. No one typically does this because a college student's room number is not part of his/her address like a normal apartment is – mail is delivered to a box number which is *different* from the room number. By ensuring the room number is listed, we can verify without a doubt who actually lives in the room and who owns the box number should any of the individuals on the voter rolls be questioned.

A major part of an easier voter registration system for students lies in allowing for same-day registration on college campuses everywhere. This will alleviate many of the problem students face by allowing them to change their address at the polling place, to receive accurate answers to any questions they may have, and, most importantly, to ensure they have the same right as every other citizen in the United States – the right to vote.

The CHAIRMAN. We do a good job at the University of Pennsylvania. I happen to be prejudiced toward that university. I teach there, and still teach there for the last 13 years. I want everybody to know what a great job you did representing them. Unfortunately, could we put you on hold? You will be the last and the best, I am sure, and not the least, that is for sure. We do got to vote. We will come right back. Thank you. Just relax. We will be right back. Thank you.

[Recess.]

The CHAIRMAN. I would like to call the hearing back to order, please. I apologize for our brief recess due to votes.

Our next member of the panel is Jackie Vi.

Ms. VI. Vi.

The CHAIRMAN. Jackie Vi. Jackie Vi is a current student at American University, and we look forward to her testimony. Thank you for coming here today. You may proceed.

STATEMENT OF JACQUELINE VI

Ms. VI. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and members of this committee. I am honored to have the opportunity to appear before this committee to discuss college student voting. My statement will be brief because I think this issue is simple.

College students should be given all the information they need to make well-informed decisions about where and how to vote.

My name is Jacqueline Vi. I am 18 years old and a freshman at American University, majoring in international relations. I hope to one day work for the State Department at an embassy overseas.

My feelings about voting as a college student comes from my basic belief that with a right to vote comes responsibility. As a young adult voting for the first time, I feel it is important to be aware of whom and what one is voting for on Election Day. Voting is a sacred right, and democracy works best when voters know about what is going on in the world and in their community.

At this committee's hearing yesterday many of the witnesses talked about the importance of educated voters. And I think they are right. Part of the college experience, in addition to learning math, science and history, is learning how to think for ourselves and how to make adult decisions. I think that the issue of voting is a perfect example of what I mean. I am from Lakewood, California, which is in California's 39th Congressional District, represented by Congresswoman Linda Sanchez.

In March of this year, 1 month before my 18th birthday, I registered to vote. As a legal resident of California I feel that my vote would be better served in the community where I have lived for most of my life and which I remain to have ties to, because my family still lives there. For example, in the upcoming election California's Proposition 6, also known as the Safe Neighborhood Act, will be on the ballot. Prop 6 will take away State funding from education and direct it towards eliminating bail and increasing penalties for several crimes. As a former student in the public school system, I believe that the money would be better spent on bettering the education system rather than paying for longer jail time for criminals.

I know that several members of this committee are also from California, Mr. McCarthy, Mr. Lungren, Ms. Lofgren and Mrs. Davis. And whether your supporters oppose Prop 6 I am sure that just because you spend a lot of time here in D.C., like I do, that doesn't mean that you don't want to be able to vote on its proposition on Election Day.

Many students like me choose to keep their legal residency as home because we feel connected to the place where we grew up. For students like us, we believe that we should vote for the elected official who represents the community of our legal residence and vote on issues that impact the place that we consider home. I don't know where I will live after graduation, but I know as of right now my home is still California.

However, in order to be able to vote as a Californian I have to vote absentee. I do not believe that just because I will physically be in Washington on November 4th that I should vote in Washington, D.C., especially because I am more like a visitor than a resident of this city. I know that decisions made by the local government officials in Washington, D.C. May have an impact on me, but I have a California driver's license and in my heart I know I am a Californian.

I know that every State has different rules about how to vote absentee, but it is easier in California than in some other States like Virginia. But I still managed to register and request an absentee ballot without any problems. First, I went to the Post Office to get a voter registration application. It only took a few minutes to fill out. I mailed it back to the election boards and they mailed me back a confirmation. After that, requesting an absentee ballot only took one focal. I expect my ballot to arrive at my address here in D.C. sometime this week.

I know that some people say that it is too complicated for students to request an absentee ballot, but I think that is just an excuse for laziness. Sure, it would be much easier to roll out of bed on Election Day and then think about voting rather than planning in advance to vote absentee. But I don't think that kind of attitude is the right one for our Nation's young people.

Shouldn't we strive to develop civic pride and awareness in college students? After all, aren't they the future of this country? Plus, these days people move all around the country more frequently than our parents' generation did, either for jobs or for other reasons. We will need to know how to register to vote in these new cities and towns. What better time to teach young people these important lessons than in college?

I would like to thank the committee for listening to my testimony, and I really appreciate the committee's interest in the importance of student voting rights. In addition, I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to participate in this hearing. Not many college freshmen can say they have testified before the U.S. Congress on an issue directly impacting college students. I will never forget this experience, and I would be happy to answer any of your questions you might have.

[The statement of Ms. Vi follows:]

Testimony of Jacqueline Vi
Freshman, American University, Washington D.C.
September 25, 2008
Committee on House Administration
Title: Ensuring the Rights of College Students

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Members of this Committee. I am honored to have the opportunity to appear before this Committee to discuss college student voting. My statement will be brief because I think this issue is simple: college students should be given all the information they need to make well-informed decisions about where and how to vote.

My name is Jacqueline Vi, but my friends call me Jackie. I am 18 years old, and a freshmen at American University, majoring in International Relations. I hope to one day work for the State Department, hopefully in an embassy overseas.

My feelings about voting as a college student come from my basic belief that with the right to vote comes responsibility. As a young adult voting for the first time, I feel it is important to be aware of whom and what one is voting for on Election Day. Voting is a sacred right, and democracy works best when voters know about what is going on in the world, and in their communities. At this Committee's hearing yesterday, many of the witnesses talked about the importance of educated voters, and I think they are right. Part of the college experience, in addition to learning math, science, and history, is learning how to think for ourselves, and how to make adult decisions. I think that the issue of voting is a perfect example of what I mean.

I am from Lakewood, California, which is in California's 39th Congressional District, represented by Congresswoman Linda Sanchez. In March of this year, one month before my eighteenth birthday, I registered to vote. And as s a legal resident of California, I feel that my vote would be better served in the community where I have lived for most of my life, and which I remain tied to because my family still lives there. For example, in the upcoming election, California's Proposition 6, also known as the Safe Neighborhoods Act, will be on the ballot. Prop 6 would take away state funding from education and direct it toward eliminating bail and increasing penalties for several crimes. As a former student in the public school system, I believe that the money would be better spent on bettering the education system rather than paying for longer jail time for criminals. I know that several Members of this Committee are also from

California – Mr. McCarthy, Ms. Lofgren, and Mrs. Davis. And whether you support or oppose Prop 6, I am sure that just because you spend a lot of time here in Washington D.C., like I do, that doesn't mean that you don't want to be able to vote on this proposition on Election Day.

Many students like me choose to keep their legal residence at home because we feel connected to the place where we grew up. For students like us, we believe that we should vote for elected officials who represent the community of our legal residence, and vote on issues that impact the place that we consider home. I don't know where I will live after graduation, but I know that right now my home is still California.

However, in order to be able to vote as Californian, I have to vote absentee. I do not believe that just because I will physically be in Washington D.C. on November 4th that I should vote in Washington D.C., especially because I am more like a visitor than a resident of the city. I know that decisions made by the local government in Washington D.C. may have an impact on me, but I have a California drivers' license, and in my heart I know that I am a Californian.

I know that every state has different rules about how to vote absentee, and that it is easier to do in California than in some other states, like Virginia. But I still managed to register and request an absentee ballot without any problems. First, I went to the post office to get a voter registration application. It only took a few minutes to fill out. I mailed it back to the elections board, and they mailed me a confirmation. After that, requesting an absentee ballot only took one phone call. I expect my ballot to arrive at my address here in Washington D.C. sometime this week.

I know that some people say that it's too complicated for students to request an absentee ballot, but I think that's just an excuse for laziness. Sure, it would be much easier to roll out of bed on Election Day, and then think about voting, rather than planning in advance to vote absentee, but I don't think that kind of an attitude is the right one for our nation's young people.

Shouldn't we strive to develop civic pride and awareness in college students? After all, aren't they the future of this country? Plus, these days people move all around the country more frequently than our parents' generation did, for jobs or other reasons, and we will need to know how to register to vote in a new city or town. What better time to teach young people these important lessons than in college?

I'd like to thank the committee for listening to my testimony and I really appreciate the Committee's interest in the importance of student voting rights. In addition, I want to thank you

for giving me the opportunity to participate in this hearing – not many college freshmen can say that they have testified before the U.S. Congress on an issue that directly impacts college students. I will never forget this experience.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, thank you very much.

I would like to start off. I have heard testimony that there have been some problems at the polls because of the poll workers or poll watchers. Do any of your organizations, are you putting any kind of a program together where you can entice some of these young college students—I understand our poll workers average 72 years old. So they may have a wealth of knowledge or maybe they may move a little slower than somebody 22 years old. That is not saying nothing bad about the 72-year olds, but wouldn't it be nice to have some type of program where you can get more people, more college students right there on campus where the voting booth is, to have them there? And I shouldn't have to say that if there are people doing things that aren't right, and we heard about and I saw the fliers that they are passing out, if they see somebody right there, there is a student right there, they will be identified by just who you are. You can be identified by wearing your sweater or whatever. You can't wear anything partisan there. But that would maybe deter them from trying to do something that they can maybe try to fool somebody, because they may know somebody there who is knowledgeable. They go to class and you learn it. I think it would be a good idea to get that done and they can help us set up the election process. Have you been addressing that?

Mr. SEGAL. Yes, Sujatha and I both, both our organizations have worked really hard to make sure that poll workers are young and that young people who have grown up in this age of technology are the ones overseeing many of the electronic voting systems, and that young people are helping the elderly carry the ballots in the different boxes and the voting equipment at the polling place. So we have found that they have a great relationship. We are trying to get young people to take ownership of elections as administrators, and both the PIRGs, SAVE, and a host of other youth organizations have poll worker programs currently in place.

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. And we do believe there is a legitimate need at the local level for greater resources to administer elections, and among those are poll workers. So from a pure manpower perspective, we are very active in recruiting. In fact, next Wednesday we are sending out an e-mail blast to 250,000 of our student members recruiting, actively recruiting poll workers for the upcoming election.

The CHAIRMAN. That would be helpful for a lot of reasons. Also, it is helpful to have these hearings to make it visible, bring to light a whole lot of issues that are happening. It would be good if you can get me or get the committee some of the things. We have got a flier that was out there that was completely erroneous. Any other things that they are doing, we would like to know about that. We may be able to stop it or maybe let other people know that we know about it and educated before it happens. After it happens, that ship sails. It is really tough to bring it back in again. But we have still a little bit of time, 40 some days, to try to hopefully stop it and the propaganda issues is what I am really speaking of. Let people know that we know that and make them know that you don't lose your driver's license, you don't lose your student loan or you don't lose your residency.

In the City of Philadelphia you can't get locked up for parking tickets. I don't know where else, but not in Philadelphia. But if you let us know more of those things, it would be helpful.

So thank all of you.

Mr. Ehlers.

Mr. EHLERS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During your testimony a number of you listed a lot of different things that happened that you thought were bad and terrible, and they probably were. I just have to tell you that that it is not necessarily malicious. We just went down to vote. We spent 45 minutes casting one vote, 15 minutes, or probably 10 minutes, discovering that there was an error in the bill. We then had to proceed to unvote and then send it back up to the Rules Committee, and then we finally voted on an inconsequential bill. So in 45 minutes we accomplished one very minor task. People make mistakes.

I do have to admit I get a little nervous when you talk about people 72-years-old making a lot of mistakes, since I am older than that and I might take that personally. But in fact a lot of people——

The CHAIRMAN. He is directing that at me. You are fine.

Mr. EHLERS. No, no, everyone.

At any rate, the point is don't always assume that people are out to deliberately restrict your right to vote. Clearly some are, but not necessarily all. There were a lot of misunderstandings that have taken place, largely because poll workers, bless their souls, they are wonderful people, they work very hard, but they do this only a couple times a year. And when you do something just a couple times a year, it is very easy to make mistakes.

Ms. Jahagirdar, you talked about the problems with photo ID. I take it you were talking about Indiana.

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. Yes.

Mr. EHLERS. I was a bit puzzled by that, because I don't know the exact requirements of the law there. But isn't a photo ID issued by the university adequate to establish?

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. Yeah. Well, there actually ended up being a distinct, quite a bit of a discrepancy, in a student's ability to vote based on that particular provision, because if you went to a public university that did count because it had a photo ID and it was issued by the State. But if you went to a private institution it wasn't issued by the State. And so where we found instances of students not being able to vote were largely around Notre Dame and other private universities. And I don't believe that that was an intention of the law. I don't think they were intending to try to create a separate set of criteria for students who attend private schools, but that is what happened.

Mr. EHLERS. Okay. Ms. Vi, I was very impressed with your testimony, and I hope you have a very successful career in the Foreign Service.

Ms. VI. Thank you.

Mr. EHLERS. I do appreciate the point you make and that is partly because it emphasized the point I was making earlier. No one should try to force students into either mode. They have the right to vote either in their place of residence, their home, or where they are attending school. I think they should have that choice because,

as I said, my first few years I chose my home, I was familiar with it. Later on I chose the place where I was going to school because I had become familiar with that. And so I think the real issue here is to make sure that students have the right to vote, that they can vote and that they have a choice of which jurisdiction they want to vote in, and I think that is about all we can do here.

We are writers of the law. We are not implementers of the law. And so even though we like to hear the stories about what has gone wrong so we can try to correct it, we can't directly correct it other than by rewriting the law.

Mr. Chairman, I have no further questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And again thank all of for your interest, your participation. Someone made a point earlier that when you deter a young voter, especially a first time voter, a college voter, from voting it is really hard to get them back interested again. So hopefully this hearing will bring some light to that and hopefully we will be able to avoid all that.

Ms. JAHAGIRDAR. I apologize. I request permission to enter the campaign tool kit for the New Voters Project into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, you may.

[Whereupon, at 4:19 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

[The information follows:]
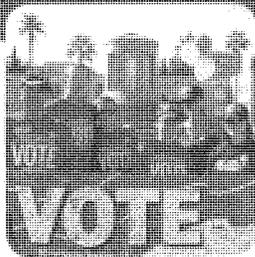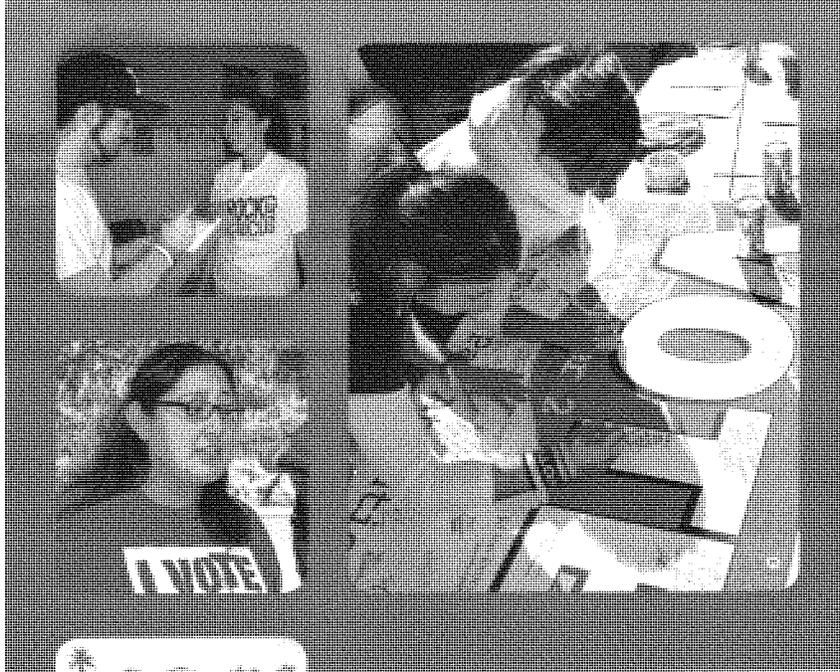
Campaign Kit

FALL 2008

Student PIRGs

NEW VOTERS PROJECT
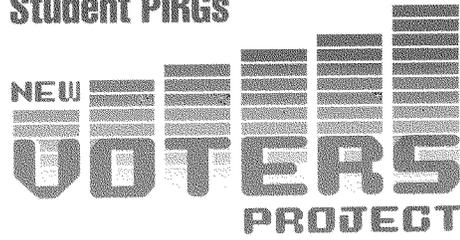
Make Them Pay Attention To Us.

The Student PIRGs

The Student PIRGs are a network of nonpartisan student-directed and student-funded organizations working on over 200 college campuses in 25 states to solve public interest problems and increase civic engagement. We work to increase the youth vote, tackle global warming, make education more affordable, address homelessness and more. Over 10,000 students get involved in our projects every year—check us out at www.studentpirgs.org.

A project of the Student PIRGs, our non-partisan New Voters Project has worked for 25 years to mobilize young voters to the polls and convince politicians to pay attention to the voice of young people across the country.

A Thank You

The Student PIRGs would like to thank our allies in our two-decade effort to increase the youth vote: United States Student Association, Oregon Student Association, Arizona Students' Association, University of California Student Association, California State Student Association, United Council of Wisconsin, Associated Students of Colorado, the hundreds of campus student government associations too numerous to mention, Rock the Vote, the Bus Project, the Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law and the League of Young Voters.

We would also like to thank Dr. Donald Green and Dr. Alan Gerber of Yale University, and Dr. David Nickerson of the University of Notre Dame for their groundbreaking research on voter turnout techniques.

And, of course, we want to thank the hundreds of thousands of hardworking student PIRG volunteers, project coordinators and staff who have worked tirelessly to strengthen America's democracy over the last 25 years.

Together, we have and will continue to make a difference!

The Student PIRGs New Voters Project Advisory Committee

Jan Brewer
Arizona Secretary of State

Michael Delli Carpini
Dean, University of Pennsylvania Annenberg
School of Communication

Maureen Curley
President, Campus Compact

Frank Fahrenkopf, Jr.
CEO, American Gaming Association

Don Fowler
Chairman of the Board, Fowler Communications

Adonal Foyle
Player, Miami Heat
President, Democracy Matters

Don Green
Whitney Griswold Professor of Political Science,
Yale University

Walter Mondale
Vice President

M. Lee Pelton
President, Willamette University

Charles B. Reed
Chancellor, The California State University

Leslie Reynolds
Executive Director, National Association of
Secretaries of State

Dan Schnur
Director, Jesse M. Unruh Institute of Politics
University of Southern California

Mary Wilson
President, League of Women Voters

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The Student PIRGs' New Voters Project Toolkit

I. Introduction

This section includes:

- Campaign Overview
- Elements Of The New Voters Project
- Campaign Message
- Leadership Positions
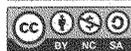
Campaign Overview

The Student PIRGs' New Voters Project is America's oldest and largest nonpartisan youth voter mobilization program. We started the project in 1984, after witnessing an alarming decrease in youth voter turnout over the previous decade.

From 1984 to the late 1990s, we developed a youth voter mobilization model, registered and turned out millions of new voters and trained thousands of leaders, many of whom now run some of the nation's leading political organizations.

Over this period, we also developed our theory of the "cycle of mutual neglect" to help explain why youth voter turnout was so anemic. In a nutshell, politicians tend to target voters who already have a track record of voting. Since young people don't have that track record, political campaigns spend most of their resources on older voters. In return, young people perceive that politics is not relevant to their concerns and opt out of participating in the process, which reinforces the conventional political wisdom that young people don't vote.

In the late 1990s, researchers at Yale University conducted a series of rigorous experiments on our and other like-minded organizations' techniques. They found that our person-to-person methods are exponentially more effective at turning out new voters than the conventional one-way, advertising-driven tactics of the political establishment. See a summary of our research at www.NewVotersProject.org/Research.

Impressed with our work, one of the nation's largest foundations, the Pew Charitable Trusts, granted us $9 million to run a massive, to-scale demonstration project for the 2004 election. The project's aim was to run our program in six battleground states at a scale similar to what a presidential campaign might do if they prioritized young people, and demonstrate to the political parties the value and proper methods of targeting young people.

We wound up running the project in 23 states total, registering 500,000 young voters and making an additional 500,000 personalized Election Day reminders—the largest nonpartisan youth turnout effort in the nation's history. Follow up study on our project found that our work had a significant impact on turnout.

We followed up 2004 with sizable turnout projects in 2005 and 2006. In 2007, we ran our *What's Your Plan?* campaign (www.whats-your-plan.org), training 500 student leaders in 28 states to speak with every major presidential candidate face-to-face a total of 106 times and generating more than 600 local and national media hits.

Thanks to our work and other important external factors, youth voter turnout in 2004 increased by 11 percentage points—almost three times more than the general population. This was the largest single election spike since 1992.

However, unlike 1992, the increases of 2004 have sustained themselves for several years, leading us to cautiously anticipate that we may be on the verge of a major breakthrough. Young voter turnout increased in the 2005 Gubernatorial elections of New Jersey and Virginia, again in the 2006 mid-term elections, and again during the 2008 primaries. Turnout in the 2008 primaries has been particularly spectacular; many states saw youth turnout double and triple over 2004 primary turnout. See more detail at www. NewVotersProject.org/Research.

There are likely several reasons why youth turnout is finally increasing. For 20 years, increasing numbers of young people have engaged in volunteer activities which have created a fertile climate for civic engagement. Since 2000, the political climate has polarized, elections are very close and therefore the stakes are higher and more people overall are engaged in the outcome. As the elections became tighter,

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political campaigns looked for non-traditional ways to get an edge over their opponent—precisely at the same time as all the studies on our work came out showing the effectiveness of person-to-person organizing over conventional one-way outreach. Subsequently, the campaigns adopted many of our techniques which, combined with the continuation of our efforts, resulted in more young people being targeted than ever before. Finally, add in the starpower factor of many of the candidates and you have an explosive mix. The result is that the underlying impulse to be civically engaged that had previously only been expressed through apolitical volunteerism finally spilled over into the political arena.

Our work has been essential to this phenomenon in two ways. First, we helped increase turnout in key areas; second, we developed and legitimized the basic youth voter outreach model and helped persuade the mainstream political establishment to adopt it as their own.

However, if a permanent upward trend is emerging, it is fragile at best. The political establishment might be waking up to the value of young voters, but it will take a lot more than one or two election cycles to eliminate twenty years of cynicism towards the youth vote. Moreover, far too few resources have been invested in youth turnout in 2008, and so once again much of the burden will fall upon us to drive registration and turnout efforts.

2008 Goals

This makes our work (read: your work) in 2008 very important.

We have several goals for 2008. First, we want to increase youth voter turnout in the communities where we are running the project. Second, we want to continue to use our successes to show the political establishment that targeting young people works.

This year the Student PIRGs' New Voters Project will target over 1.5 million students on over 100 campuses in over 20 states.

We are shooting to get at least 65% of our target population out to vote on Election Day. By way of comparison, about 57% of college students voted in 2004.

To do this, we first will need to register between twenty and fifty percent of our target population to vote – or secure between 300,000 and 700,000 new registrations.

Then, once the registration deadlines pass, we'll call, table and canvass at least 300,000 registered students right before Election Day to remind them to vote.

This guide will actually show you how to get even more than 65% of your campus out to the polls and we are confident that many of you will achieve this!

Elements Of The New Voters Project

II **It's not the hand that signs the laws that holds the destiny of America. It's the hand that casts the ballot."**

– Harry S. Truman

There are a few key elements to running a successful voter drive:

A. Recruitment And Logistics

Build Your Vote Coalition
A key part of our ability to reach the entire campus is to build a campus-wide coalition with student government, student groups, faculty and administrators. There's no group or person that can't get involved and make an impact. The administration has a particularly important role since they have so many resources that can help register large numbers of students.

Recruit a Volunteer Base
You will need a sizable volunteer base of your own in order to help the coalition achieve its goals. The total number of people you will need will vary depending on your school type and the size of your goals, but either way, you will need a lot of people. At your average 20,000 student traditional schools, for example, you will need upwards of 250 volunteers to really maximize turnout.

Work with the Registrar
Having a good relationship with your local elections official is an often overlooked yet very important component of a good voter drive. Good communication with your local registrar from the very beginning will ensure that as many people as possible are able to vote.

B. Voter Registration

There is no more effective way to turnout voters than to register them. 80% of the people we register to vote will turn out. We register people to vote both in-person and online. To do this well, you need a team of committed volunteers, interns and student groups that employ four major tactics: visibility, tabling, class/group presentations and door-to-door canvassing. Throughout this process, we will collect information from the completed voter registration forms, which will be added to a central database and used for get out the vote efforts.

C. Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

While we'll focus on GOTV mainly at the end of the campaign, it starts during the registration drive and will build up all fall. All of that build up will turn into a huge outreach effort in the final two weeks to boost voter turnout on your campus. We'll use a number of tactics to make this happen, including a door-to-door canvass of on-campus and other student housing; student-run phone banks; online visibility through email and Facebook; and educational events in the campus main areas.

D. Media

Obviously it will help make politicians pay attention to us if they see and hear all the great work we are doing. Make sure everything you are doing throughout the campaign includes a plan for getting media. Hosting events can be a great way to do this. Examples would be hosting a debate on campus, hosting debate watching parties or doing a tailgate for the debate, and inviting all candidates to speak on campus. You can also alert the media at each major milestone, like the completion of your voter registration drive.

E. Dealing With Election Problems

Some of you live in areas of the country where no matter how much preparation you do, elections procedures and laws will create obstacles to students voting. Although we advise that you focus most of your energies on registering and turning out as many voters as possible, there are some additional things you can include in your vote program that can help document systemic problems and build the case for longer term reform.

Campaign Message

We've tested a lot of different kinds of messages to motivate young people to register and vote and have gained important insights into what works and what doesn't.

Overall, the most powerful factor that turns out young voters is being asked by another young person. In other words, the messenger is more important than the message.

That said, the right message can increase someone's likelihood to vote even more, and the wrong message can depress turnout.

Some key insights from our research:

- Young people are skeptical that politics and campaigns are relevant to their lives.
- They are skeptical about promises that voting leads to direct changes.
- They are not receptive to appeals to civic duty or guilt (i.e. "Nelson Mandela went to prison for 30 years to vote, all you have to do it register").
- They DO care about issues like the war, health care, the economy and climate change.
- They ARE following politics in greater numbers than ever before and have opinions about politics in greater numbers.
- They are aware that the youth vote is on the rise.
- They have lots of positive experiences with volunteering in the community.
- Peer pressure is powerful. They are more likely to register and vote if they perceive that their friends and family members are doing it.

The message we developed from this research is: "**Make Them Pay Attention to Us.**"

It goes something like this:

"This is an exciting election and one of the most exciting things is that young people are voting in record numbers. We have a real chance to make the politicians pay attention to us and the issues we care about, but the ONLY way we can make sure this happens is by voting in HUGE numbers this November, bigger than ever before. So we're trying to get EVERYONE on this campus registered to vote and out to the polls and we need your help..."

This message doesn't promise any outcome and doesn't appeal to any larger sense of civic or moral duty. Instead, it makes the case that politicians pay attention to people who vote, and so if more young people vote, more politicians will pay attention to us. Also, the appeal is rooted in people's concerns about issues, but doesn't try to define what the right position is on those issues, which helps us bring in more people.

Leadership Positions

This is a big project. At a typical 20,000 student traditional campus, you will need about 250 volunteers to truly maximize turnout on the campus. It will be impossible to recruit, train and manage all of these volunteers without having a strong leadership team.

Below are the most critical leadership positions. Each coordinator will need to further identify and develop leadership to execute their part of the project, outlined in more detail later in this guide.

Overall Campaign Coordinator

Goal: Meet voter registration and turnout goal.

The Overall Campaign Coordinator will coordinate the entire project, running weekly project meetings, identifying and training coordinators, facilitating planning and strategizing and pushing to meet the project's goals.

Coalition Coordinator

Goal: Build the campus coalition of student groups, administrators, faculty and local elections officials.

The coordinator builds a team to establish relationships with administrators, student groups, faculty and elections officials; helps organize regular coalition meetings; and works closely with the local elections officials.

Visibility Coordinator

Goal: During voter registration drive, to get as much of the campus as possible to register online. During GOTV, to increase the number of people who vote.

The coordinator builds a team to run a massive online and offline visibility campaign. During the voter registration phase, the objective is to get either the Student Vote Voter Registration Widget or our site - www.studentvote.org—in front of as many students'

eyeballs as possible. During GOTV, the objective is to get the message "Vote on November 4!" in front of as many people as possible.

Lists/Logistics Coordinator

Goal: Ensure that all systems are in place to run an effective voter registration and Get Out the Vote campaign on campus.

This person will see to it that all completed voter registration forms are entered into a central database system on a nightly basis. The coordinator will ensure that forms are turned into the county clerk twice per week. He/she will see to it that each team has voter registration forms and other materials necessary to run the drive. To make it all happen, the Lists Coordinator will need to recruit a team to coordinate different databasing tasks, be responsible for returning forms to the registrar and prepare materials. This team will perform a multitude of administrative tasks to ensure that all aspects of the campaign are allowed to run smoothly.

Class Rap Coordinator

(needed for voter registration and Get Out the Vote)

Goal: Recruit new volunteers, register voters and remind voters about the election through three waves of class presentations: one at the start of the semester to recruit volunteers, one right before the voter registration deadline and one right before Election Day.

Dorm Coordinator

(needed for both voter registration and Get Out the Vote)

Goal: Register and turn out as many on-campus residents to vote as possible.

The coordinator builds a team to conduct two waves of dorm canvassing: one right before the voter registration deadline and one right before Election Day.

Tabling/Events Coordinator
(needed for voter registration and Get Out the Vote)

Goal: Register and turn out students by stopping students at high-traffic areas of campus and high-attendance campus events.

GOTV Phone-Bank Coordinator
Goal: Ensure that at least half of your voter turnout list receives a personalized Election Day reminder by phone from another student.

Media Coordinator
Goal: Get the on and off-campus media to feature positive stories about the youth vote throughout the Election.

II. How To:
Steps To An Effective
Voter Turnout Campaign

- **Setting Your Goals**

- **Making Your Plan**
  - Recruitment And Logistics
    - Build Your Vote Coalition
    - Recruit A Volunteer Base
    - Work With The Registrar
  - Run A Voter Registration Drive
  - Run A Get Out The Vote Drive
  - Getting Media
  - Dealing With Election Problems

This section provides the tools necessary to execute each aspect of the campaign, including how to recruit a strong volunteer base, build a strong coalition of campus student groups, institutionalize lasting voter registration programs, run a successful registration drive, mobilize registered students on Election Day and create a visible campaign on campus.

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Setting Your Goals

Nationally, we are hoping to get at least 65% of our target population of 1,500,000 students out to the polls—as compared to 2004 in which an average of 57% of college students voted overall.

To do this, we suggest that you shoot to get between 65% and 80% of your school out to vote.

Obviously there are a lot of factors that determine your success: cooperation from the administration, the size of your coalition, the number of volunteers, and the fact that none of this is an exact science. However, we suggest you aim high. And we have a lot of information from the past 20 years that can help you set meaningful goals.

There are two key components to setting goals: voter registration and Get Out the Vote (GOTV).

The most important is voter registration. 80% of college students who are registered will actually vote. It is possible to get 90% of the campus registered. So, if you achieve 90% registration, then 72% of the campus will vote.

The second most important part is making personalized Get Out the Vote reminders. Depending on the total number of registered voters on your campus and the GOTV methods you use, you can increase the number of voters up above 80%.

Here are some basic statistics to help you understand this more:

Voter Registration

80% of college students who are registered will actually vote.

It is possible to achieve 90% registration on your campus, assuming: 25% of the average college campus is registered to vote at the start of classes; 10% of the

average campus will never register to vote no matter what (non-citizens, etc); and 65% of the campus is "registerable".

These "registerables" are made up of two kinds of individuals: those who are likely to register to vote on their own, and those who will only register if asked by another student in person.

You probably can't register **all** of the "registerables" to vote because a lot of them will actually want to register to vote on their own. About the **most** you can register is 50% of the campus.

However, the more "registerables" you register, the more likely it will be that the remaining people will simply register on their own—and hit the magic 90% threshold for your campus.

If 90% are registered and 80% of them vote, then you will have a 72% turnout rate right off the bat!

Get Out The Vote

We know the following from our research:

- A personalized phone call from one student to another increases turnout by about 5 percentage points.
- A personalized face to face contact at someone's dorm room or house door increases turnout by 11-12 percentage points.
- While there are no studies on GOTV tabling, we think that every contact at a table is a little better than the phone but not as good as a door – so we predict a 6% increase in voter turnout from tabling.
- A text message from PIRG to someone who gives us their cell number increases turnout by about 4 percentage points.

To give you a sense of how this can affect your goals:

If you did everything perfectly during the voter registration drive, then 90% of the campus will be registered. 80% of them will vote, so you will get a 72% turnout.

In addition - IF, for example, you accomplished this at a 20,000 student campus, then you probably have a list of the 65% of the campus who registered to vote (13,000 people). If you tried to call all of those people to remind them to vote, and spoke with 6,000 of them, then that could result in an additional 300 votes (5 percentage points of 6000).

IF, on top of that, we sent that whole group a text message, you could get another additional 200 votes. If you then also canvassed the dorms and surrounding neighborhoods, made 100 classroom presentations, and had volunteers stopping people on campus to remind them to vote, you could get even more additional votes. If you do all of this well, then it is possible to drive your turnout up above 80% or even higher.

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Making Your Plan

This section includes an in-depth look at how to approach each element, followed by a handy-dandy set of planning forms to help you put it all together.

There will be up to five main elements to your plan:

- **Recruitment And Logistics**
- **Running A Huge Voter Registration Drive**
- **Running A Get Out The Vote Operation**
- **Media**
- **Dealing With Election Problems**

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Making Your Plan:
Recruitment And Logistics

This includes three components:

• Build Your Vote Coalition

• Recruit A Volunteer Base

• Work With The Registrar

Build Your Vote Coalition

Having a strong vote coalition is a critical part of the campaign. To run a great voter registration and Get Out the Vote campaign, you'll need a ton of people involved. Working with other groups will let you reach out to more constituencies effectively, provide the resources to get the job done, help you get key decision makers to help and get the entire campus abuzz.

You'll want to work with a ton of people and groups. The core of the coalition should be you and a couple of other groups that are also running the campaign. You guys should meet frequently, share responsibilities and decision making, etc. You'll also want to work with groups that are less involved, usually because they don't have the time and resources to run a full campaign in their chapter but they can still make a big impact towards the overall goal.

Things To Think About Before Approaching Potential Coalition Partners:

1. Have a clear end goal—what do you want them to do, etc.
2. Identify decision makers and well-connected leaders in student groups
3. Determine the student constituencies targeted by the groups on campus
4. Decide what you want them to do:

- In-person meeting
- Provide information/advice
- Turn out members
- Pledge volunteer hours
- Speak to campus media
- Email list-serve
5. Set goals
6. Create a list of asks (in order of priority)

Building The Coalition

1. Make contact (phone, email, etc.)
2. Steps to a productive conversation:

- Introduce yourself and your organization
- Quickly explain why you are writing/calling/stopping by
- Context your campaign and your goals
- Pitch what you want them to do/help with
- Explain why you want them to do what you are asking
- Listen to their response. Things to listen for/ask about:
  - Are they interested? What do they seem interested in?
  - What are their priorities and issues? Are there ways we can help them with their stuff?
  - Do they have a process for deciding to participate? What is the process?
- Arrange for a specific follow up plan
3. Track your progress. Keep track of each conversation, ask, follow-up and commitment of the partnering groups in the coalition.

Maintaining The Coalition

Maintaining the coalition is equally as important as creating it. Once you've had initial meetings with important student groups, the next step is to ensure that partners are trained and have the materials to run the campaign. Then, probably the most difficult task is to hold these groups accountable to their commitments.

Depending upon the role of the coalition partner, trainings may vary. If one group has simply decided to register all of its members, the training may consist simply of voter registration dos and don'ts. If the group has decided to take on the responsibility of an

institutional program, the training will consist of voter registration, streamlining processes for completion and collection of voter registration forms, and a "trainer training" so that coalition group leaders can train their own members.

Holding groups accountable can be a difficult task, but by simply following a few steps, organizers can ensure that their coalitions are successful.

- Get the group's commitment in writing (fill out a form with the stated commitment)
- Hold weekly coalition meetings and send a representative to each group's meetings
- Discuss the goals and the progress from the previous week
- Strategize how to meet goals that weren't met
- Garner media attention around the coalition – this will help ensure that partners are accountable because everyone wants good press
- Plan with the coalition partners – if other groups play an active role in the planning of the campus campaign, they will be much more likely to want to see it through

Institutionalizing The Program

There are lots of other important ways your administration can help get students registered and voting – above and beyond the efforts of your coalition. They can play a huge role in getting people to register to vote online and ensuring the active participation and cooperation of important college figures, like faculty, housing, etc.

The American College and University Presidents' Commitment to Civic Engagement (https://www.presidentscommitment.org/home) outlines the steps toward creating a comprehensive, institutionalized program to help boost student participation rates.

Ask your president to sign on to the commitment, or simply ask him or her to implement the commitment's program.

Recruit A Volunteer Base

As a rule of thumb, a 20,000 student traditional campus will need 200 volunteers for the final voter registration blitz and the same number for the final GOTV push.

To recruit, train and manage all those volunteers, you will need 50 coordinators, each of whom will be responsible for finding and working with 4 volunteers, as well as putting in four hours of work themselves for both the blitz and the final GOTV push.

In order to have 50 coordinators for the blitz, you need to have at least half (25) of those coordinators identified and trained one to two weeks before your voter registration deadline.

You can obviously adjust the number of people you need if your school is bigger or smaller, or has a higher commuter population.

The Student PIRGs' Activist Toolkit (http://www.studentpirgs.org/toolkit.asp?id2=25200) has lots of ideas and tips on recruiting.

In general, however, the most important thing you can do to recruit more people is to have lots of fun, easy activities for new people to do. If the activities are fun,

meaningful and relatively simple then you will start to get new volunteers in droves.

Before school begins, Freshman Orientation is one of your best avenues to find more people. This is described in more detail in the Freshman Orientation section.

Once classes start, some of your best activities are the ones that help promote Online Registration, which is described in that section.

In addition to activities, it's a good idea to start having a weekly all-volunteer meeting starting the first week of classes. Use the meeting to bring people up to speed on the entire plan, get more ideas from people, ask people to take on more responsibility and generally build the team.

Around week 4 (sooner if your registration deadline is earlier), we recommend that you organize a one-day "Test Blitz" that focuses on recruiting and training your initial base of volunteers to be Blitz Coordinators. Those coordinators will be responsible for recruiting a larger pool of newer volunteers from which you'll find the remainder of your coordinators.

Work With The Registrar

Overview

You have a better chance of every registrant being eligible to vote if you have a good relationship with your local registrar. On your end, this will ensure that you understand all of the rules surrounding voter registration and voting, and can clearly communicate them to your volunteer base and the student body at large. In turn, you can also help the registrar be as prepared as possible to process large numbers of voter registration forms and large numbers of student voters on Election Day.

The Role Of The Registrar

When you're running civic participation campaigns, three people are involved in the registration process: you, the person who is registering and the registrar.

The registrar can decide whether or not the form you're handing in was filled out correctly. Most registrars have the power to interpret the election code – that means they might enforce different regulations differently. If you don't know their rules and preferences, a lot of the people that you're registering might not end up on the rolls.

Meet With The Registrar BEFORE Starting To Register Voters

As soon as possible, you should arrange a face-to-face meeting with the registrar. If you are registering students in more than one jurisdiction, meet with each registrar separately.

In the meeting, you should discuss your plans and goals, confirm deadlines and procedures, and make sure to discuss rules as they relate to your voter activities. You should establish a point person inside the registrar's office whom you can contact about any issues that arise and set a regular time to check-in periodically about your progress. After the meeting,

you should type up a detailed summary of what you discussed and email it to the registrar to confirm you are both on the same page. Distribute this email to the other leaders in the coalition and keep a copy for your files.

Sample Registrar Meeting Agenda

- *Intros* – Introduce meeting attendees, what you do with the organization
- *Organizational Description*
- *Build Relationship* – Ask him or her: Are there ways to work with your office to make processing all the registration forms that we'll generate easier?
- *Checklist* – Run through the checklist of questions with them, included below
- *Offer to help recruit poll workers for them* – Ask them: In the fall we'll talk to thousands of students during the voter registration drive, and send out a ton of messages on our big email list servs. Would it be helpful if we sent a few messages asking students if they'd like to be poll workers?
- *Campaign Ask* – Based on what they are going to do in the election, ask the registrar to become involved in the campaign in a role that makes sense for your state—sample asks include: appear at a voter registration training on campus to motivate student leaders or speak at a campus panel on the importance of the youth vote

Other Tips On Building A Relationship With Your Registrar

- *No surprises.* Let the registrar know exactly what you're doing, when you're doing it.
- *Point out problems rather than skirting issues.* If you think there's going to be a problem with a set of forms, make sure to bring those problems to the

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attention of the registrar. If you work with them, they will help you.

- *Know their deadlines.* Frequently registration deadlines are closely followed by bureaucratic deadlines for the registrars. Make sure you know when they need to get their paperwork done, so you can get your forms to them in plenty of time.

- *Return your forms as quickly as you can.* The sooner they have the forms, the better.

- *Invite registrars to run trainings for your staff, student leaders and volunteers.* They will be more confident in your campaign if they have a chance to train people themselves.

- *Follow every rule.* There might be some rules that you disagree with, or there might be some interpretations you disagree with. There's nothing you can do about that, and the best way to make sure that every student you register can vote is to follow their rules to the letter.

- *Have a quality check system, share it with your registrar and implement it rigorously.* Some ideas for your system could include:

  - Have every volunteer initial every form (this way you can track who makes mistakes)

  - Track every form at the end of the day

  - Have someone always be double checking forms for accuracy

  - If legal, copy every form for your records

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Checklist Of Questions For The Registrar

Contact info for Elections Officials

- Name of Local Election Office (i.e. County Board of Elections)
- Name of person talked to
- Title of person talked to
- Date(s) of Conversation(s)
- Name of actual elections official
- Phone number
- Email
- Physical office address
- Mailing address (if different)

How do volunteers become qualified to register voters?

- Do you need to take a class?
- Do you need to fill out an application?
- Do you have to be a resident of the county?
- Do you have to be a resident of the state?
- Anything else?

Poorly filled out forms

- What are the most common mistakes people make when completing the voter registration form?
- Although we are as thorough as possible in making sure people fill in their voter registration forms correctly, we know there will be a few forms that are improperly filled out, usually because someone has terrible penmanship, miswrites a number, etc. Is there anything special we should attempt to do with these forms?

How do you turn in voter registration forms?

- Can you mail them to the state office?
- If yes, what kind of mail (i.e. delivery confirmation, etc.)?
- Can you turn them in to any registrar or do the forms from municipality x have to go only to registrar for municipality x?
- When do they have to be in to each office? What day?
- Can we use the national form?
- Can we copy the forms if we run out?

How can we keep records for a GOTV list?

- It's useful for us to be able to keep information from the forms to contact people later to remind them to vote. Here are some of the ways we'd want to this: ask if each is ok.
- Post-its/stickers on the form—we'd want to be able to ask people for email and cell phone too. Can we attach these to the forms?
- Can we keep a photocopy of the voter registration form?
- Can we database information from the voter registration form?
- Can students register to vote at their campus address?
- How are students required to show proof of address/residence?
- Can they show a utility bill or lease?
- If they need to show ID, does it have to have a local address on it?
- Can the ID be issued by a public university?
- A private college?
- Can residents of the dorms register to vote here?
- If yes, what kind of address do they need? (street address, name of dorm, room number, etc)
- What do they need to do if they were registered to vote on campus last year and have moved to a different dorm?
- What if they used to be registered at home (in the same state) and they now consider college to be their residence?
- What if they are originally from another state and they now consider college to be their residence?

Polling places

- Where are the key polling places for most students who live on or near campus?
- (If there are no on-campus polling places) What is the process for establishing a polling place on-campus?

Making Your Plan:
Running A Huge Voter Registration Drive

This includes the following:

• Overview

• Freshman Orientation

• Online Registration

• The Blitz

Overview

To recap: It is possible to achieve a 90% registration level on your campus.

25% of the average college campus is registered to vote at the start of classes; 10% of the average campus will never register to vote no matter what (non-citizens, etc); and 65% of the campus is "registerable".

These "registerables" are made up of two kinds of individuals: those who are likely to register to vote on their own, and those who will only register if asked by another student in person.

You probably can't register **all** of the "registerables" to vote because a lot of them will actually want to register to vote on their own. About the **most** you can register is 50% of the campus.

However, the closer you get to registering 50% of the campus, the more likely it will be that the remaining people will simply register on their own—and hit the magic 90% threshold for your campus.

So, this guide will show you how to register 50% of the campus to vote. Of course you should set your goals based on what makes sense for your campus.

You can register 50% of the campus to vote at your average 20,000 student traditional four-year public university by doing the following:

1. Get 10% of the campus to register at freshman orientation.

2. Get 20% of the campus to register online.

3. Get the remaining 20% of the campus to register during a "blitz" 2-3 days before the voter registration deadline.

Here's a short description of how you do each of these methods. More detail on each is included in the next section. Keep in mind that every campus is different and this is simply a framework.

A. Freshman Orientation/ Move-In Weekend

If your school has a freshman orientation that most first years participate in, during which a high concentration of new students are milling around campus over a multi-day period, you have a good shot at registering 10% of the campus right off the bat. 10% is simply the number of freshmen at a typical school who will participate in freshmen orientation, and who are not already registered at their current address.

At a 20,000 student campus, you will need about 11 returning students willing to put in 7-9 hours of work over a two day period in order to make this work. If fewer people are returning, then obviously you will recruit fewer new volunteers and register fewer freshmen, so adjust for your situation.

B. Online Registration: Week Before School Begins To Week Before Voter Registration Deadline

Online registration is the best way to register the students who are already thinking they want to register but haven't gotten around to doing it. They are motivated to register, and they will go out of their way to register. So, all we need to do is tell them where to go and they'll take care of it.

Many of the activities that help us generate online registrations are also great for recruiting new volunteers, so another objective of this phase is to recruit the volunteers you will need for the final blitz.

Students can register online through the Student Vote Voter Registration Widget at www.studentvote.org. In addition, anyone who has a website, Facebook, or MySpace page can put the Student Vote Voter Registration Widget on their site. They can even add

their logo and customize the colors. (The widget is an online tool that students can use to quickly complete a voter registration form for their state. The completed form will then be sent to the student's email address, where the student can print, sign and send the form. We will also get the student's information in order to remind them to vote later.)

You can get up to 20% of the campus to register to vote online, IF you *saturate* the campus with opportunities to register to vote online. In the online registration part of this guide, we cover the six key ways to saturate the campus.

Not every school will be able to use every method. The more methods you use, the better chance you have at saturating the campus.

C. Blitz: 3 Days Before The Registration Deadline

These last three days are the time to sweep up everyone who has not yet registered. A lot of people wait until the last minute to register, so you can get a ton of people this way.

The key to success is to saturate the campus over a very short period of time with enough volunteers that a student can't go anywhere without running into someone asking them to register to vote multiple times. If you do this correctly, you can register an

enormous amount, but if you don't recruit enough volunteers to saturate the campus, you will miss the opportunity.

If you've done all the other tactics perfectly then by now you've registered 30% of the campus to vote and you only have another 20% to go before hitting 50%. However, if you've registered less than 30%, then you can plan to register more during the blitz.

There are three key methods to hit your blitz goals:

1. Tabling: Have volunteers stand at highly trafficked areas and ask people to register.
2. Class raps: Many professors will allow you to make a short presentation, hand out voter registration forms and collect them during the first 5-10 minutes of class.
3. Dorm and Neighborhood canvassing: This last method depends on having access to dorms and densely populated student neighborhoods.

D. Systems For Managing Voter Registration Forms

We suggest you set up a system for databasing and submitting voter registration forms to ensure that the people you register to vote are actually able to vote and that you can effectively remind all your registrants to vote on Election Day.

Freshman Orientation

If your school has a freshman orientation that most first years participate in, during which a high concentration of new students are milling around campus over a multi-day period, you have a good shot at registering 10% of the campus right off the bat. 10% is simply the number of freshmen at a typical school who will participate in freshmen orientation, and who are not already registered at their current address.

At a 20,000 student campus, you will need about 11 returning students willing to put in 7-9 hours of work over a two day period in order to make this work. They will need to do the following:

- Day one: Each returning student spends 4 hours registering freshman voters, asking everyone if they are willing to volunteer the next day for 3 hours, scheduling people on the spot. One person can register 15 freshmen an hour, or 60 over 4 hours.

About 15% of everyone who is registered will agree to volunteer the next day, or about 9 people. That evening, everyone who agreed to volunteer should get an email and phone call reminder.

- Day two: Assuming one-third of the new volunteers show, each returning student will now be joined by 3 new volunteers. Together, they will spend three hours registering freshmen at 15 registrations per hour, or 180 new registrations. After the work is done, go out and celebrate with your new volunteers!

If you have 11 returning people doing this, then you will register 2600 new voters and recruit 30 new volunteers – before classes even begin!

If fewer people are returning, then obviously you will recruit fewer new volunteers and register fewer freshmen, so adjust for your situation.

Online Registration

Target Audience

Your target audience is primarily the set of people on campus who are not yet registered at the start of the school year, but who are planning to register eventually. They are likely to register to vote without much prompting, so if we make it easy for them, they will simply register online. This group of people is probably about 40% of the campus. You can probably register up to half of these folks, or about 20% of the campus.

Why Do It

There are a few reasons why you should incorporate an online registration component to your plan.

First, it's efficient. A lot of people are already planning to register on their own and by giving them an easy way to accomplish that task, you can save your resources on getting the harder-to-register students during the blitz.

Second, it's a great way to recruit new volunteers. There are so many fun things new volunteers can do to help get people to register online that involve Facebook, text messaging and other fun visibility tactics. This will help you build your volunteer base for the blitz.

Finally, it can make it easier to register the hard-to-get people, too. If your online campaign is really visible, all the people who are more skeptical of voting will be more receptive to registering during the blitz.

How To Organize An Online Registration Campaign

The Student Vote Voter Registration Widget
The Student PIRGs and our friends at CREDO Mobile have developed a state of the art voter registration widget. Anyone can use the widget to complete a voter registration form online. The completed form will be sent to the users' email inbox to be printed, signed and sent. People in Arizona and Washington can use the widget to directly register to vote online without dealing with any paper.

The widget lives at www.studentvote.org. But that's not the only place it can be used.

College administrators and organizations can place the widget on their own websites and even customize the widget with their own logos and colors.

Facebook and MySpace users can place the widget on their profile pages (through our StudentVote application).

Best of all, you can track who is using the widget to evaluate your online campaign, and to run a great Get Out the Vote push. Some state laws prohibit us from collecting information about who actually uses the widget, but even in those states we can still track how many people are registering from your efforts.

In sum, the widget is a powerful tool that allows you to run a top-notch campus voter registration drive.

With the widget, you can employ two primary strategies to generate online registrations. First, publicize www.studentvote.org as widely as possible. Second, get the widget placed on as many highly trafficked websites and Facebook/MySpace pages as possible.

Setting Goals: Saturation Is The Key

Online registration is a little different than the freshman orientation or blitz phases. During those phases, we can literally predict how many registrations one volunteer will get in one hour. In contrast, the key to a successful online registration phase depends on how intensely you implement a wide range of online and offline visibility tactics together.

The key is saturation. Most public relations experts will tell you that your audience must see your message between 5-7 times before it sinks in.

In this case, you will be most successful if students encounter the widget or "Register to Vote at studentvote.org" wherever they go.

The more saturated the campus is, the more online registrations you will get.

Methods

There are eight key methods you can use. You are the one in the best position to determine how many of these methods you need to use in order to achieve saturation. However, the more of these methods you use, the more successful you will be.

1. Get the StudentVote widget on the highest trafficked university websites.

2. Get studentvote.org publicized on the highest volume listservs.

3. Get studentvote.org publicized in the top campus public spaces through permanent signs, ads and banners.

4. Get studentvote.org publicized by the campus paper.

5. Get the widget on as many Facebook and MySpace pages as possible, and generate actions that put our studentvote.org message into the newsfeed.

6. Get 25% of the campus to get a studentvote.org text message from their friends.

7. Get at least one-third of the classrooms to have "Register to Vote at studentvote.org" on the chalkboard and posters on the walls.

8. Organize visibility stunts at high trafficked areas and events that publicize studentvote.org.

Before Classes Begin

Before school begins, prioritize Methods 1 through 4, which will mostly involve getting the cooperation of administrators who control websites, listservs and signage in public spaces.

Here are more details on each of these methods:

Websites

Ideally, you can get the school to embed the widget on EVERY university site. If you can't do that, then next best is to get the school to place them on the MOST highly trafficked sites, such as the:

- Webmail login page
- Wireless login page
- Blackboard login page
- (if not captured by Blackboard) Class registration/financial aid page
- University home page
- School football/athletics site
- Campus paper home page
- Every computer lab computer
- Apartment search site
- Jobs/internships search site
- Recreation class signup/schedule site
- All library computer homepages

Listservs

Some of the top listservs might include:

- The President's all-campus list
- Each class listserv
- Each college listserv (arts and sciences, engineering, etc)

- The top 10 Departments listservs
- The all-dorm resident listserv
- Pan Hellenic listserv, if it goes out to all Greek community members
- The all-faculty listserv (asking faculty to forward the message out to their students)

Permanent Signs, Ads And Banners In All The Public Spaces

- Buses and bus stops: ads on bus, on the digital sign, posters at all the stops, decals on the bus floor
- Football games: announcement on digital board on rotation throughout game, Billboard next to Pepsi sign or equivalent, halftime announcement, Register to vote/URL on all cups, plates, etc.
- Dorms: studentvote.org flyer in every mailbox, every elevator, on board in every lounge, on every door, studentvote.org spelled out in the windows, etc.
- Quad: have a big thermometer in the middle of campus that counts down the days to the registration deadline
- Library: big banner over exit, table tent on every table
- Any large event on campus, like a concert or big-name speaker
- Dining Hall: big banner over exit, table tent on every table
- Bookstore: big banner over exit
- Computer lab: big banner in all the labs
- Parking garage: big banners at the main exit and entrances
- Student Union: big banner at main exit and entrance
- Non-dining hall eating area

Campus Paper

- Put studentvote.org on the paper's masthead every day until the deadline
- Publish a daily free ad publicizing studentvote.org
- This will involve a lot of meetings and follow up. It will probably take up to 30-40 hours of work, and probably require 2-5 experienced students from student government, PIRG and other organizations to make happen.

We recommend prioritizing your time in the following order:

- Meet with the College President or Chancellor first to ask them to implement as much of this list as possible.
- If you can't easily get this meeting set up, then meet with the Vice-Chancellor for Student Affairs/Provost or equivalent at your school and ask them to talk to the President/Chancellor.
- Then, depending on how helpful the President or Vice-President is, meet with the individual department heads necessary. In many cases there will be overlap. For example, the Housing Director is probably authorized to OK both an all-dorm email AND to get a big banner draped over the entrance to every dorm.

After Classes Begin

After classes begin, prioritize Methods 5 through 8, which conveniently are great for recruiting all the new volunteers you need for the final voter registration blitz.

At your average 20,000 person traditional university, you will need between 50 and 70 volunteers to maximize all of these tactics.

We recommend you spend the first 2-3 weeks doing a bunch of these activities with an eye towards recruiting your volunteers.

Then, in week 3, we recommend you organize a HUGE three day burst of activity in which all of your volunteers spend at least 2 hours doing one of the major activities.

Here's more detail on each of these methods:

Text Messaging

To get at least 20% of the student body to get a text message, you need to get 4% of the campus to text five of their friends. So at a school of 20,000, you need 800 people to get 4,000 text messages out.

There are lots of avenues to do this:

- StudentVote to 41411: People can get a pre-written message into their phone by texting StudentVote to 41411. This makes it quick and easy.
- "Text the Vote" events: California students built a giant cell phone and a sign that said "Text the Vote" and stopped people and asked them to text a few of their friends right on the spot. One volunteer can get 6 people every hour to text five of their friends. So 25 volunteers working for two hours each could get 300 people to text their friends.
- Class announcements: Ask everyone to get their phones out and text 5 of their friends on the spot. You can get about 10% of people in a class to do this. At a 20,000 person campus with an average class size of 100, you can get 500 people to text their friends by doing 50 announcements. This would take about 10 volunteers doing 5 announcements.

Classroom Visibility

You can get a lot of visibility by getting just one-third of the classrooms to have our message all over them.

The key thing is to have "Register to Vote at studentvote.org" on the chalkboard, and to put flyers and posters on every available bulletin board in and outside of the classroom.

It makes sense to do this in one concentrated burst of activity, before classes begin for the day. Get all your volunteers together at 7:00 am (or earlier if buildings are open then), assign buildings and hit as many classrooms as you can before 9:00.

One volunteer can hit about 12-15 classrooms every hour. So at a school of 20,000 with 300 classrooms, you will need about 4-5 volunteers working for two hours in order to wire one-third of those classrooms (100)

Facebook/MySpace

There's two ways you can get people registered and voting through Facebook and MySpace: either directly through the StudentVote application or by driving traffic to studentvote.org.

There is a longer memo in the last section of this guide on how to do this well, but the methods for doing this are similar for both communities.

On Facebook, the basic steps are:

- Set up a StudentVote Fan Page and get as many people as possible to become a Fan. Fan Pages are way better than Groups. The last section of this guide has a memo on how to set up your StudentVote Fan Page.
- Then get your Fans to add the StudentVote application.
- Then get your Fans to engage in actions on the application. Those actions will then be publicized in the newsfeed.

Most of these same principles apply to MySpace. The difference is that instead of setting up a StudentVote Fan Page, you simply set up a StudentVote Profile Page.

Other Visibility Stunts

A fun, eye catching stunt that also advertises studentvote.org can go a long way.

For example, you could build a giant Vote Boat or a Vote Float that "sails" across campus and at events with mock voter registration forms in the boat.

Or get a Vote Goat from the ag school as your unofficial mascot (this happened, we swear!).

You can dress up like the school mascot and cheerleaders and organize a pep rally at the football game.

Or do a 20-person conga line that snakes through campus in the middle of the day.

Anyway…you get the idea.

Plan on needing about 4 volunteers total to spend about 6 hours on each stunt – 3 hours to make props and costumes (sometimes you'll need more time) and 3 hours to perform the stunt. Sometimes you will need more volunteers, like for a conga line.

In addition, the Student PIRGs have some great materials for you to use: wristbands, t-shirts, buttons, stickers and more. Find out how to get these at www.newvotersproject.org.

Coordinators

It is much more effective to recruit and train a smaller number of leaders who are each responsible for recruiting and training a larger number of volunteers. It is much harder to recruit and train a large number of volunteers by yourself.

So for example, if you need 30 volunteers to spend 2 hours each helping at a text table, it is much easier to recruit 6 people who will act as coordinators, meaning that they each help for two hours plus spend another hour recruiting 4 volunteers each to help.

The planning worksheets later in this section will suggest job descriptions for each type of coordinator. Feel free to tweak these or make up your own coordinator positions.

The Blitz

Why Run A Voter Registration "Blitz"

At first, it might seem counter-intuitive to do a 3-day blitz instead of spreading your registration over a longer period of time. It's more logistically challenging, it's a bigger risk (you could mess up your blitz and end up with very few voters registered) and it seems easier to break things into little bits and do a little bit each day.

The truth is, running a voter registration blitz is the easiest, most effective and most impressive way to run a voter registration drive. If done right, not only will we smash our goals, but we'll do it in such a way that motivates the entire campus to go out and vote.

- **Running a blitz campaign is more effective—** you'll reach more people if you run a blitz. On most campuses, when you table every day, your efforts tend to reach the same small group of people, you tend to start to fade into the background (people see you everyday, after a while, they'll stop noticing what you're doing), and it wears people out. Imagine tabling for 4 hours each day for 4 weeks straight. Whoa. When you run a blitz, you overcome all those challenges – people *notice* you because vote volunteers are EVERYWHERE. Because you're everywhere, you tend to catch all the people that might not go through the quad, or through the student union.
- **Running a blitz campaign is more efficient**—you'll spend less time running your voter reg campaign if you register people all in one giant push than if you register people day in and day out for 4 weeks.
- **Running a blitz campaign "makes them pay attention"**—when you run a campaign where there's a volunteer on every corner in front of every building for three days straight, the campus notices, the politicians notice and it builds momentum for your entire campaign.

How To Organize The Voter Registration "Blitz"

The key thing about a blitz is that you are concentrating an immense amount of volunteer power into just a few days, so that the average student is asked to register multiple times. If done right, you can meet half of your goal on the first day, reach 3/4 of your goal on second day and be finished on the third day.

Setting Goals

Your starting point is to figure out the number of "registerable people" at this point in the semester. Then, you figure out how many of those registerable people you have the capacity to register.

Remember that you can probably register no more than 50% of the campus. So for example, if you've already registered 30% of the campus through orientation, online registration and other activities, then your upper limit for the blitz is about 20% of the campus.

Once you've figured out the upper limits of what's possible, then figure out what capacity you will need to make this happen, outlined below. Once you've done that, adjust your final goal based on what you are capable of doing.

Methods

There are three basic methods you will use to hit your goals.

- *Tabling:* You can probably meet 70% of your blitz goal through tabling. One volunteer can collect about 8 registrations in an hour.
- *Class raps:* You can probably get 15% of your blitz goal through class raps. Typically, 15% of the students in a class will probably register.
- *Dorm and Neighborhood canvassing.* If you have access to dorms and densely populated student

neighborhoods, you can get up to 15% of your blitz goal through canvassing. One volunteer can collect 10 registrations/hour of dorm canvassing and 5 registrations/hour of neighborhood canvassing.

At commuter campuses, you won't do any canvassing and will probably split your registrations evenly between tabling and class raps.

Coordinators

This is the heart of your success. It is much more effective to recruit and train a smaller number of leaders who are each responsible for recruiting and training a larger number of volunteers. It is much harder to recruit and train a large number of volunteers by yourself.

You will need a set of coordinators for each of the three methods. The suggested job description for each type of coordinator is as follows:

- *Tabling coordinator:* Recruit 4 volunteers to each spend 4 hours registering voters, then spend 4 hours yourself registering voters with your volunteers. Total time commitment: 2 hours to recruit the volunteers + 1 hour to train the volunteers + 4 hours of registering yourself = 7 hours total

- *Raps coordinator:* Recruit 4 volunteers to each do 6 class raps, then do 6 class raps yourself. Total time commitment: 2 hours to recruit the volunteers + 1 hour to train the volunteers + 2 hours to schedule and do 6 class raps yourself (over 2-3 days) + 1 hour of follow up with volunteers = 6 hours total

- *Canvassing coordinator:* Recruit 4 volunteers to each spend 4 hours registering voters, then spend four hours yourself registering voters with your volunteers. Total time commitment: 2 hours to recruit the volunteers + 1 hour to train the volunteers + 4 hours of registering yourself = 7 hours total

Another way of looking at this is that each tabling or canvassing coordinator is responsible for making 20 hours of registering happen, and each class raps coordinator is responsible for making 30 class raps happen. Except instead of doing it all themselves, they recruit people to help them!

Test Blitz

Because the stakes are high for the blitz, you should organize a one-day Test Blitz 1-2 weeks before the blitz, in order to work out any kinks in the system. The goal of the Test Blitz is to identify and train at least 50% of the total coordinators you need for the blitz, plus recruit a larger pool of newer volunteers (from which the remainder of your coordinators will come).

Because the event is smaller in scale, and only lasts one day, you won't register a ton of people. That's OK – the purpose is mainly to recruit and train half your coordinators and find the other half.

Systems

This is a pretty big logistical operation, so it is important to have strong organizational systems. There are a few forms that you will need, all of which are in this guide.

- *Master Volunteer Tracking Form:* This form is the core of your preparation and tracking systems. It tracks every single potential and current volunteer, whether or not they are scheduled for an activity and whether or not they completed the activity.

- *Campus Map:* You need to map out where the hot traffic spots are and where you want to place your volunteers.

- *Daily Scheduling Sheets:* These are the forms coordinators use to schedule volunteers into specific times and days.

- *Sign in Sheet for Table:* This is the form you use to

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track volunteer show-up and registration rates. It is important to train all volunteers on the importance of signing in and signing out. Using this form correctly is important in order to track your progress on a daily basis.

- *Class rap scheduling form:* This form allows you to keep track of every class rap that is scheduled, who is doing it and when it is completed.

Making The Plan

Use the planning worksheets in the back of this guide to help you figure this out.

- Figure out the upper limit of what is possible based on the number of registrations collected to date
- Figure out how many registrations you will get through each of the three methods
- Figure out how many coordinators you need for each method
- Figure out how many coordinators you actually can recruit right now for the Test Blitz. To do this, complete the Master Volunteer Tracking Form. In pencil, list out everyone who is in the PIRG chapter, from the most involved all the way to anyone who has done at least one activity this semester. Then list people from each of the coalition groups – if you are unsure of this, then simply put in a placeholder, such as "SGA volunteer #1", "SGA volunteer #2", until you can actually figure this out with your coalition partners.
- If the number of coordinators you actually have for the Test is less than half of the total you will need for the blitz, then adjust your overall blitz goal downward (or figure out how to get more people!)
- Finalize your goal based on the actual number of coordinators you can recruit. Finalize the number of coordinators you will need for each method and for the Test Blitz
- Congratulations, you're now ready to start building momentum!

Building Momentum Around The Plan

Recruiting coordinators

- Meet with both the PIRG and coalition leadership group to reach agreement on the goal and the plan, settle on everyone's individual commitments and make a plan for each person to recruit more coordinators. The Master Volunteer Tracking Form you made should form the basis of the conversation, but hopefully it grows as the leadership thinks of more people.
- The leadership should recruit the remainder of the coordinators needed for the Test Blitz, being as creative as possible in finding coordinators.

As soon as someone agrees to coordinate

- They should get a 20 minute training on how to recruit coordinators.
- They should schedule themselves for two hours of calling volunteer lists in order to recruit their three people. They can obviously recruit their three volunteers through other methods as well, but have this be the default so everyone stays on track.
- Each coordinator should use the Daily Scheduling Sheet to keep track of the volunteers they have recruited and when they are signed up.
- Each coordinator should report all volunteers they have scheduled each day, so the Master Volunteer Tracking Form can be updated.
- At some point before both the Test Blitz and the Main Blitz, all coordinators should get trained on how to register voters and train others to register voters.

Tips for success

- Healthy competition between coordinators is a lot of fun. Who's got a bigger team, who's getting to know their team members more, etc, etc!
- Context matters a lot. You should discuss why we're

doing the blitz, why it's so important, what our goals are, what we need people to do and what people will learn from participating.

- The Master Volunteer Tracking Form can help you keep track of what everyone is doing.

- Have a big thermometer in your office that tracks how many coordinators you've recruited—update it daily.

- Do some early reconnaissance work of the campus to scope out the best places to register students to vote. Have a campus map with all the best sites numbered to make sure you have good places for all the volunteers you have scheduled.

Training Coordinators And Volunteers

Bottom line – the better trained your folks are, the better the drive. The best place to make this successful is in the first six weeks of the term – running a good recruitment drive and making the first few campaign events successful are the best opportunities to make sure your students are trained well.

That said, it is important to run trainings early and often and to train the core to run good trainings as well. Your goal is to make sure every volunteer has been through a training BEFORE the beginning of the drive. Places to do trainings include:

- At PIRG and coalition core meetings
- At PIRG project group meetings
- At other organization meetings
- The night before the kickoff
- A coordinator training the weekend before the blitz

Sample Timeline

Weeks 1-2
- Make sure you and the coalition are talking about the blitz with everyone. Everyone should understand that participation in the blitz is essential for the success of the project
- Begin recruiting volunteers through visibility activities
- Do first cut of the blitz plan, including test blitz

Week 2
- Meet with PIRG chapter and coalition leadership to agree on the blitz goals
- Recruit 50% of the coordinators for the Test Blitz

Week 3
- Entire coalition agrees on the blitz goals
- Recruit 100% of Test Blitz coordinators
- Do coordinator trainings at group and coalition meetings
- Coordinators recruit for their volunteers through friend networks, by calling volunteer lists, etc – 50% of volunteers scheduled

Week 4: Test Blitz
- Last round of Test Blitz volunteer recruitment – 100% of volunteers scheduled
- Confirm volunteers, run an all-volunteer training and potluck 1-2 days before
- Test Blitz! Database and turn in all voter registration forms; recruit the remaining coordinators needed for the Main Blitz
- Do debrief with the old coordinators
- Do training for the new coordinators
- All coordinators begin recruiting volunteers for main blitz—50% scheduled

Week 5-pre Blitz

- Final round of volunteer recruitment—100% scheduled; confirm volunteers and host a night-before potluck

Week 5-During Blitz

- Reminder calls each night to volunteers and coordinators

- Numbers tracking: There are samples of all these forms in the back of this packet

- Database and turn in all voter registration forms

- Celebration party!

Tips To Drive Momentum

- Register like the dickens. Get at least 50 per day yourself.

- Set Goals. Check progress. Huddle volunteers to give/get updates. Set hourly goals for yourself and volunteers, reiterate tips to successful pledging, do a rally cry and go out and make them happen. Check back in 1-2 hours, compare results, take a fast snack/water break and do it over again.

- Spend as little time as possible training people (they should have already done a training) or dealing with smaller glitches. During the day focus on setting the example and building momentum among the people who are out there.

- Do figure out small ways to help people get their rates up, so long as it doesn't keep you from getting your 50 per day.

- Track your volunteers. Make sure the sign-in sheets are being filled in correctly.

- Huddle the core each night to check in on our progress, celebrate our successes and set/reset goals for next day.

- Have one person responsible for checking in with all volunteers—giving pointers, doing trainings, and giving updates on progress. This person is very effective if they also are handing out candy.

Evening Checklist

Remember that you don't necessarily have to do all of this, you just have to organize to make sure coordinators are doing this and, bottom line, make it happen.

- Complete the hours done and rates on the Master Volunteer Tracking Form.

- Complete your daily tracking numbers.

- For both forms, part of what you'll be looking for is the volunteer rate overall, and for individuals.

- Confirm volunteers for tomorrow. Work to get people with high volunteer rates out in the field tomorrow, as they will help you build momentum—delegate, but make sure it happens

- Make sure VR cards are stored somewhere very safe

- Copy all the voter registration cards (if legal)

- Database

- Go have fun, get some sleep, etc

Tips On Running A Dorm Operation

You can probably meet 10% of your registration goal from a dorm operation, in which you build a network of dorm residents who canvass their floors. You can also use this dorm network to help remind people to vote right before the election.

Since many schools only allow dorm residents to go door to door in the dorms, you need to set this up accordingly. This works best when you set up a system where you recruit dorm residents to be responsible for their individual floor (floor captains), and assign one of those floor captains to also be responsible for meeting the goals of the entire building (building captain).

Steps to organizing this:

1. Figure out how many doors you need to knock on in

SMITH DORM	Captains/Contact Info	Doors	Completes	VRs	In Hand?	Comments
TOTAL	Danny Katz	75				
Floor 1	Danny Katz	25				
Floor 2	Tessa Atkinson	25				
Floor 3		25				

order to meet your registration goal. You can expect to register one person for every four doors you knock on. So, if your goal is to register 200 people in the dorms, you need to knock on 800 doors.

2. Figure out how many dorms you will need to canvass in order to knock on that many doors. Figure out how many dorms there are, how many floors are in each dorm, and how many doors on each floor. So, for example, let's say that each dorm has five floors with 24 rooms per floor. That's 120 doors per dorm, which means that you will need to canvass about seven dorms.

3. Figure out how many "captains" you will need. Since at most schools, only residents can canvass, you should work to recruit one resident for each floor. In this example, you have 35 floors to cover in seven buildings, so you should recruit 35 "Floor Captains," with one of those captains in each building doubling as a "Dorm Captain" responsible for working with the other floor captains in the building.

4. Make a chart (see above) to help you keep track of which dorms and floors you have covered and which ones you still need people for.

5. Recruit floor captains! A few suggestions on how to do this:

- Go to the Residence Hall Association meeting and pitch RAs signing up as floor captains

- Make announcements at different student organization and PIRG chapter project group meetings

- Phone bank general interest cards filled out by underclassmen

- Table in front of dorms in the evening – ask people to take on leadership

6. Do a training for floor captains. Here's a sample agenda:

- Context for project

- Campus goals, how the dorm operation will fit in

- How to canvass—demonstrate and practice once or twice

- Record keeping

- Turning forms in

Systems For Managing Voter Registration Forms

The most important aspect of your system is ensuring that the people you register to vote are actually able to vote.

The second most important aspect of your system is capturing as much information as legally permissible so you can remind all your registrants to vote on Election Day.

We suggest you set up a system for databasing and submitting voter registration forms that includes the following steps:

- Every volunteer is trained to double check every voter registration form for errors and flag problems on the spot.

- Coordinators are trained to spot check volunteers' forms for errors before the volunteer checks out and contact the individual in question right away.

- All voter registrations should be spot checked every evening and individuals in question should be contacted at least three times to come back in and fix their forms.

- Where legal, you should photocopy all voter registration forms every night.

- Accurate voter registration forms should be
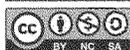
submitted to the registrar every 2-3 days except during the three days before the deadline, when you should submit forms daily.

- Where legal, database all the information into an Excel file.

- All voter registration forms, copies and database files should be stored in a secure, locked office. Database files should be password protected and backed up on disks that are stored outside of the office.

Tips On Databasing

Databasing is fairly easy, but it is time consuming and prone to errors. A few suggested steps:

- Database all forms collected every day to avoid a backlog. Have a computer available for databasing at all times, with the file easily accessible by volunteers.

- Save and back up everyday.

- Don't do all of this yourself. One volunteer can database 50 names in an hour, so if you need to database 4000 names, you need 80 volunteer hours. Recruit for databasing just like you would any other activity.

- Hold databasing parties. Blast the music, compete for rates (just don't go too fast!) and finish it off with pizza.

- Know the correct address for all on-campus housing, so you can easily enter them without looking it up.

- Have all of these systems clearly written down on paper and posted by the computer.

- Train all of your volunteers on how to do this and check in frequently.

Making Your Plan:
Running A Get Out The Vote Operation

The best way to measure your impact is by how many "contacts" you make before the Election, either over the phone or face-to-face. You will start these activities a week before Election Day, but really concentrate them in the 72 hours before the Election. You will need to re-activate the same volunteer and coordinator base as for the registration drive to make all of this happen.

This section goes through the main parts of your GOTV operation:

• Making The Voter List

• Tabling, Round II

• Class Raps, Round II

• Canvassing, Round II

• GOTV Phone Bank

• Text Messaging

• Other Visibility

Making The Voter List

The basic idea here is that you want to create the largest, most accurate list of students who are registered to vote as you can, so that you can contact them by phone, email and even face-to-face in the weeks before the election. At a minimum, you can build your list through two avenues: through collecting vote pledges from students who are already registered and through new registrations that you collected during the voter registration drive. If you database and combine both of these lists, then you should have a sizable enough list to do serious GOTV.

Making the voter list involves the following steps:

1. Gather voter registrations, pledges and any other lists of registered voters.

2. Database your voter registration forms before submitting them to the county (see Voter Registration section for more).

3. Database all other lists.

4. Try to "de-dupe" the list (remove duplicate people), depending on your technical capabilities.

5. Sort the list by address and polling place. This is important so that when we call and email them, we can tell people exactly where their polling place is.

This is a sizable job, so make sure one person is in charge of it, and that they recruit a couple of people to help them.

Class Raps, Round II

You can assume that 60% of all the professors who allowed you to do a voter registration rap will allow you to return for a GOTV rap. Assuming you set this up well, all you will need to do is make sure you have all of your now-seasoned rappers ready and send an email to all the professors reminding them that you will be coming. This is best done by asking the professors if you can do two raps when you call them for the first time during the voter registration drive.

GOTV Dorm Operation

Like class raps, if you've already set up and executed this during the voter registration phase, then all you should need to do is re-assemble your dorm team, do another training on what to do and send them all out. The difference this time around is that each floor captain will put a flyer on each door, have a slightly different pitch and track a slightly different set of things than during the voter registration phase.

Tabling, Round II

The interaction is simple – "are you planning to vote?"—but to boost the impact of the interaction, we suggest you ask people to take a quick action on the spot in which they ask at least five of their friends to vote. Two ideas on how they can do this:

- Text a voting reminder to their friends. They can text 'StudentVote' to 41411 to get a pre-written message in seconds.

- Simply call five of their friends right there.

The benefits of doing this are huge. First, the person you initially stop will be more motivated to vote herself. Second, you are multiplying the impact of one person. We already know that phone calls and text messages from trusted people can really make a difference in boosting turnout. Third, this is so easy for people to do that you can get lots of people to do it.

We recommend that you have everyone you stop also quickly complete a "voter pledge" so we can text and email them a reminder with their polling location.

Canvassing, Round II

Use the same turfs you cut for your voter registration project. This time, the volunteer leaves a leaflet at each door and also asks people to do the same actions as outlined under tabling.

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GOTV Phone Bank

You should plan to contact half of your voter list through a phone bank that you run from Wednesday to the Monday right before Election Day (excluding Friday and Saturday).

Why Run A Phone Bank?

We already outlined how a GOTV phone call can increase the chances that a person will vote. The most effective way to make a lot of phone calls in a short period of time—and have a lot of fun doing it – is to run a phone bank. A phone bank gets a lot of volunteers together in one central place to make a lot of phone calls over a period of several hours. The combined energy and momentum of the effort can get a lot done and can be extremely energizing for the volunteers.

Planning The Phonebank

Below are the key things to figure out. Use the planning worksheets to help.

- How many contacts you want to make—the rule of thumb is that you can contact about half of the total number of phone numbers on your list.

- How many coordinators you will need—each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to call for 2 hours each, plus spend 2 hours calling themselves, for a total of 10 hours of work. Each volunteer can contact about 8 people per hour of calling. So each coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 80 contacts. If your contacts goal is 500, then you need 6-7 coordinators (who will recruit another 25 volunteers).

- Where to run the phone bank—the ideal location is one big room that is easy to get to, where everyone can fit, see each other and work off each others' energy.

- When to run the phone bank—ideally, you can get enough volunteers together to meet your contacts goal during the 48 hours before Election Day. If

you have fewer volunteers, you might need more time. Bear in mind that contacts more than 5 days before Election Day are less effective. In general, your volunteers will be more successful calling later in the evening, between 8:00 and 10:00, so best to concentrate your calling time then.

- How to make sure every volunteer has a phone—since cell phone minutes are free on weekends, people can just use their cells for the Sunday night phone bank. If you are doing most of your weekday calling between 8:00 and 10:00, then you have one of two options: ask volunteers to donate an hour of cellphone minutes to the cause (since night minutes usually kick in at 9:00), or line up enough landlines with long distance for people to use before night minutes kick in. The campus paper, alumni phone bank and student government are all good places you can go to request landlines.

- A system that ensures everyone has a good list to call, all calls are tracked and the lists become more useful over time, not less—once you've created your voter list, you will want to print it out with about 10-20 numbers per page so it is easy to distribute and collect lists from volunteers. Every volunteer should be trained to clearly mark people they've spoken with, bad numbers, etc. All volunteers should turn their lists back in to the coordinator once they are done so they can be called through again by someone else.

- Phone calling scripts and other useful materials—all volunteers should get a phone script, a tick sheet to record how many people they talked to and any information about polling locations, etc. In addition, think about other materials and items to decorate the phone bank room to give it energy—a big goals thermometer, inspiring signs, balloons, streamers, etc.

Tips on Managing The Phonebank

- Every volunteer should get a quick training on how to make a great phone call. Sample trainings are in

the back of this guide.

- When calling is in full swing, try to strike a balance between making calls yourself and floating around and listening to volunteers, giving people encouragement and feedback where appropriate. Also make sure people are marking lists thoroughly and using the tick sheets.

- Every hour, do "the accordion" to build momentum—huddle everyone together, update them on the group's progress, celebrate, give some tips, eat some food, reset the goal for the next hour and then get back on the phones.

Wrapping Things Up
- Before every volunteer leaves, be sure that they filled out their tick sheets accurately and that lists are well marked.

- At the end of the night tally up # of contacts, yeses, no's, and total # of calling hours.

- Update the master volunteer log, adding new volunteers to it and updating people already in it.

Commuter Schools—Organizing a Decentralized Phonebank
At commuter schools, it won't always be possible to organize a central phonebank. If it is absolutely impossible to have everyone call from one place (or in small groups from several satellite locations), it is important that you set the phonebank up to create a similarly rigorous and focused atmosphere. Here are some ways to do that.

- Sign up volunteers to work within the same window of time so there's a feel of working together.

- Train volunteers by phone the day before.

- Coordinators should do a phone check-in with their volunteers before, midway and after the shift. Throughout, they should update each volunteer on how many others are calling, and how we're making

progress towards the goal to give it a group feel.

- Lists and other materials can be emailed to each volunteer, marked up on the volunteer's computer and emailed back along with the tick sheet.

Text Messaging

A recent study has shown that students who get a text message from Student PIRG right before Election Day reminding them to vote are 4 percentage points more likely to vote (http://www.newvotersproject.org/research/text-messaging).

To give you a sense of how significant that is: if we register 300,000 new voters, collect a cell phone number from 200,000, and send those people a message, that's potentially 8,000 additional people who vote!

The study was so encouraging that our friends at CREDO Mobile have generously allowed us to use their text messaging service to send every student who gives us their cell phone number a reminder text message the day before Election Day. Your campus' lists can be a part of this process, so long as your voter list is in Excel and you send it to our headquarters at least two weeks before Election Day.

We suspect that the impact of a text message can be even more when the message comes from a friend (as opposed to coming from Student PIRG). Therefore, in addition to joining the central text messaging plan, we encourage you to organize people to text at least 5 of their friends within three days before the Election. To make it easy, people can text StudentVote to 41411 and get a pre-written reminder message that they can forward within seconds. Use some of the text messaging ideas in the "Tabling" and "Canvassing" sections to help make this happen!

Other Visibility

There are a bunch of other visibility activities you can do to help add to the madness.

First, you can incorporate many of the same ideas outlined in the Online Registration section. The school can replace the voter registration widget with a simple "Vote on November 4th" banner on all the websites, all the various listservs can get a quick reminder message and all the public spaces can have voting reminder banners and other signage. You can incorporate all of the same online organizing ideas you used for Facebook, MySpace, etc.

In addition, here are some other ideas for raising visibility:

- The campus paper includes a daily countdown and information on the polling locations.
- Have staffed information tables all over campus.
- Put a big thermometer in the middle of campus that counts down the days to Election Day.
- Put mock railroad tracks from campus to the polling places.
- Organize a Flash Mob to meet at the central place on campus at noon and do a giant Conga Line to the polls. Or "sail" together on a Vote Boat or Vote Float to the polls.
- Have vans ready to shuttle students to and from the polls.
- Stand at busy intersections with signs; leaflet, chalk, poster, flyer, etc.
- Organize a "Tailgate for the Debate" during the presidential debates. During the California primary season debate, California students organized a "Tailgate for the Debate" event on campus. They parked a paper mache "truck" in the middle of campus, set up a big screen, cooked up some food and tailgated off the back of it. Get the latest debate dates at http://www.debates.org.
- Invite local political candidates to speak on campus—be sure to invite candidates from all parties to speak.
- Documentary Screening—Invite film students to film the work that students are doing on campus to mobilize voters and then host a screening of all the movies.

The Student PIRGs have some great materials for you to use: wristbands, t-shirts, buttons, stickers and more. Find out how to get these at www.newvotersproject. org.
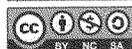
Making Your Plan: Media

Getting coverage for your voter registration and Get Out the Vote drive will help showcase the importance of young voters to politicians and the community, help motivate your team, and bring great publicity to campus.

This section outlines how you can recruit media to cover the campaign on your campus, what to say when talking to the media, and gives you a sample media plan for your campus.

For more info on how to organize these events and sample materials, go to www.newvotersproject.org or email Sujatha Jahagirdar at Sujatha@studentpirgs.org.

Types Of Media Coverage

There are four main types of media outlets that we usually target:

- Newspapers—both on campus and in the community
- Radio—both on campus and in the community
- Television
- Blogs

The two major ways you get media are to meet with individual reporters and editors to pitch stories and to invite them to cover your events.

Meeting With Individual Reporters And Editors To Pitch Stories

Meeting with reporters and editors will help get your work covered in the short term *and* the long term. Reporters and editors will be more likely to cover your events if they have met you and know who you are.

Your top five people to meet:

- Editor of your campus paper
- Reporter who'll be covering the youth vote for your local paper
- Planning editors for the NBC, ABC and CBS (or equivalent) affiliates in your community

The main goal of your meetings is to build a relationship with the reporter or editor. A second goal is to give them more background about the Student PIRGs and the New Voters Project and a third is to ask them to cover an upcoming event.

Scheduling the meeting

The best way to get started is to call them up and schedule a face to face meeting. Even if they can't meet with you, a phone call will introduce you and the project.

If you don't have a press list for your campus already, just call up the general numbers for these outlets and ask for the person most likely to cover the youth vote this election season.

Here's a sample calling script:

> "Hi, my name is _____ I'm calling with [ORGANIZATION]. Our goal this year is to register and turnout thousands of students to vote here in x city.
>
> In the next few weeks leading up to the elections, we'll be everywhere on campus, registering young voters — we'll pound the pavement and use cool technology, like a voter registration widget on studentvote.org.
>
> We'd love to sit down and let you know about the events we've got planned — would you have a window on [PICK A DATE AND TIME AND SUGGEST IT].

Preparation

- Download a media packet from www.studentvote. org, which contains a one-page description of the New Voters Project and a Student PIRG brochure (Students in Action).
- Recruit 1-2 other people working on the campaign to come to the meeting with you. Run through the agenda for the meeting with them and make sure that everyone knows what piece of the meeting they will take.

Sample meeting agenda

- Introductions—who you are, your year and major, where you go to school
- Ask the reporter/editor what they find interesting about the upcoming elections, if there are particular

angles that they will focus on.

- Describe the Student PIRGs' New Voters Project and what you're doing on the campaign.

- Describe upcoming events and reasons why they should cover the events.

You should dress for the meeting like you're going out to dinner. Don't forget that the most important thing is to get to know the person you are meeting with.

Inviting Reporters
To Cover Your Events

Inviting reporters to cover your event will help generate a buzz about the campaign on campus and in the community.

Steps to doing this
- Look up your local media list by searching for newspapers, radio and television in your area on the web.

- Send out a media advisory to your media list.

- Call through your media list and invite everyone on the list to attend. A follow-up call should go something like this:

      Hi _____, this is _____ from CALPIRG.
      We're the largest non partisan on the
      ground effort in the state to turn out
      young voters. I'm calling to let you know
      that on [INSERT TIME] we'll be holding
      a [INSERT CATCHY NAME FOR YOUR EVENT].
      [Insert a description of the event].

- Make a follow-up call the morning of your event. It should be a quick call. A sample script is:

      "Hi my name is ------------.and I'm
      calling with OSPIRG. I'm calling to
      check in and see if you are coming out
      to cover our event today."

- Send out a media release the morning of the event.

- Submit letters to the editor to your campus and local papers. The day of each event (or the day after) we'll want to submit 3-4 letters to the editor (LTE) to show our support for boosting youth voter engagement.

Talking To The Media

When you talk to the media, practice the basic talking points about the New Voters Project and look for opportunities to talk about them to the reporter. Role-playing questions and answers beforehand will help you do this. Also, remember, that as a spokesperson you cannot talk about candidates running for office or even what issues you'd like them to focus on once elected. Below are some dos and don'ts for talking to the media.

DOs
Look for opportunities to talk about our main messaging points:

- Describe your organization [i.e. WISPIRG is a statewide student run public interest group. We work to make sure students have a voice on issues important to them]

- Describe your project [i.e. WISPIRG's New Voters Project is the largest on the ground non partisan effort to turn out young voters in the community. Over the next few weeks, we'll register thousands of students to vote.

- We definitely think that young voters are more engaged than ever. In fact, the youth vote has been increasing since 2004. This is probably because more efforts are being put on the ground to reach young voters one on one. If this keeps up, young voters will turn out in big numbers once again.

- One of the events that we're doing to make sure this happens is... [INSERT DESCRIPTION OF AN NVP EVENT YOUR CHAPTER IS DOING]

DON'Ts

- Talk about a specific candidate. If a reporter asks you who you will vote for, tell them that because you work with a non partisan group, you'd rather not talk about that. If a reporter asks you who you think young people will vote for, tell them that the New Voters Project is non partisan and who young people vote for is not important to us – we just want to make sure that the voices of young people are heard, regardless of what they want to say.

- Talk about specific issues. If a reporter asks you what young people want to see happen on specific issues like global warming, etc., you should say that the New Voters Project is not an issue advocacy project. We want young people to come out to vote based on whatever issues are important to them

Sample Media Plan

There will be lots of opportunity for your chapter to get media coverage. Be flexible and look for opportunities. Below is a sample plan you can use as a basis for sketching out your media strategy for the semester.

- Week before classes start—call reporters, producers and editors in your community and schedule meetings.

- The first day of your registration drive—hold a "campaign launch" press conference and invite the local registrar in your town, the college president and the student government president.

- The second week of classes—send out a pitch memo to the media that highlights some of the campaign leaders and describes some of the events you'll do.

- The day of your state's registration deadline—invite press to come out and cover the last push before the deadlines

- The debates—organize non-partisan debate watching parties. Debate dates are at: http://www.debates.org/pages/news_111907.html.

- Election Day—invite press to cover your last push to Get Out the Vote through a phone bank

- The week after the election—contact your local registrar and find out how much turnout among young voters in the region went up this year. Hold a press conference to release the numbers to the press

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Making Your Plan:
Dealing With Election Problems

Some of you live in areas of the country where, no matter how much preparation, election procedures and laws will create obstacles to students voting. Although we advise that you focus most of your energies on registering and turning out as many voters as possible, there are some additional things you can include in your vote program that can help document systemic problems and build the case for longer term reform.

Bottom line: We recommend you report any and all election related problems to the *Lawyer's Committee for Civil Rights Under Law* Hotline at <u>1-866-OUR-VOTE.</u> Trained lawyers will be on hand to help you sort out problems quickly.

Problems

Some of the most common problems include:

- Lack of sufficient planning at the local level for extraordinarily high turnout (So the registrar's office might not be equipped to handle the influx of voter registration forms or there might not be enough poll workers or polling stations on Election Day.)
- Polling places at inconvenient locations
- Students, seniors and other eligible voters turned away from the polls for lack of appropriate ID
- Confusion among poll workers that results in eligible voters being wrongly turned away from the polls
- Technical problems with voting machines
- Flat out bad laws, such as Arizona, where the rules effectively prevent out of state students from registering to vote in Arizona

Key Solutions

- Work with Your Registrar. We said it before and we'll say it again: your first line of defense is to work closely with your registrar. If you skipped over that section earlier in this guide, go back and review it closely.
- Secretary of State. It can be helpful to work directly with your Secretary of State's (SOS) office. They are responsible for administering the elections in your state and so all local elections officials report to the SOS. We recommend meeting with the SOS's office, using the same agenda and checklist of questions as with the registrar. Often, if you encounter problems at the local level, the SOS can help you resolve the problem. Your state PIRG or Student Association's advocate can likely help you get a meeting with the SOS herself.

- Voter Education. The next best thing is to make sure you educate voters as thoroughly as possible. This begins during the voter registration drive when your volunteers help people complete the forms accurately. It continues in the GOTV phase when you make sure students know how to find their polling place, what form of ID to bring to the polls and who to turn to if there are problems with their registration status.

- Flagging Problems Quickly on Election Day. It is a good idea on Election Day to have both a booth out on campus where people can report problems, as well as a person at the key polling places to watch for any irregularities. Report all problems to the Lawyer's Committee Hotline: 1-866-OUR-VOTE.

- Lining Up On-Campus Polling Places. Depending on your situation, this might be very easy, or something that fits into your longer-term post-election plans. In some cases, the registrar will be happy to do this if you simply ask. In other cases, it might require some work on your part; at Temple University, they need to get signatures from 3,000 on-campus residents who are registered to vote requesting the polling place.

Making Your Plan:
Planning Worksheets

The Student PIRGs' New Voters Project Toolkit   45

A. Setting Goals

VOTER REGISTRATION (80% of people you register will turn out to vote on average)

students already registered to vote (25% x # Full Time Enrolled Students): _____

students you will register to vote (subtotal of below, no more than 50% of campus): _____
    Freshmen orientation (up to 10% of campus): _____
    Online: (up to 20% of campus): _____
    Blitz: (at least 20% of campus): _____

TOTAL registered: _____

TOTAL voters from Registration (Total registered x 80%): _____

GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV)

PHONE CONTACTS (each contact over the phone increases turnout by 5 percentage points)
Phonebanking Goal: _____ x .05 = _____ # additional voters

CANVASSING CONTACTS (each door-to-door contact increases turnout by 10 ppts)
Canvassing Goal: _____ x .10 = _____ # additional voters

TABLING CONTACTS (we think each tabling contact increases turnout by 6 ppts)
Tabling Goal: _____ x .06 = _____ # additional voters

TEXT MESSAGING CONTACTS (each text message from PIRG increases turnout by 4 ppts)
Text Goal: _____ x .04 = _____ # additional voters

Total # additional voters from GOTV: _____

TOTAL NUMBER OF VOTERS: _____
(# from registration + from GOTV)

YOUR OVERALL TURNOUT GOAL: _____
% (Total number of voters / # Full Time Enrolled Students)

B. Planning Voter Registration

TOTAL VOTER REGISTRATION GOAL (sum of all three pieces below):   _____

(Note: this will not capture all of the students who will register to vote on their own. Feel free to increase this number to include those students. Use these rules of thumb to help you out: no more than 40% of the campus will register to vote on their own, and that no more than 90% of the campus can be registered to vote.)

FRESHMAN ORIENTATION
(skip this step if your school does not have a multi-day freshman orientation/move-in weekend that most first years participate in)

Number of "registerable" freshmen
(# Full Time Enrolled Students x 25% are freshmen x 70% freshmen participate in orientation x 75% participants are not registered yet):   _____

Number of registerable freshmen who you have capacity to register: _____

Number of returning coordinators:
(A coordinator will be responsible for 16 hours of voter registration time over two days. On day one, they spend 4 hours registering voters and recruiting 9 people to volunteer on day two. On day 2, they spend 3 hours with their new recruits registering voters. Assuming 3 out of the 9 new recruits show, that's 9 hours of registering from new recruits and 7 hours of registering from the coordinators)

> **From your organization (i.e. PIRG chapter, SGA):**   _____
> **From coalition partners:**   _____
> **Total:**   _____

GOAL FOR FRESHMAN ORIENTATION
(Number of returning coordinators x 16 hours/coordinator x 15 registrations per hour):   _____

ONLINE REGISTRATION

This is not an exact science, but IF you are able to do mostly everything below, you can get up to 20% to register online. So figure out what you WILL accomplish, determine how close to total saturation that will get you, and estimate from there.

Total number of online coordinators needed (sum of below): _____

    # from your campus organization (i.e. PIRG chapter, SGA): _____

    # coalition partners _____

Visibility tactics the college will do:

WEBSITES

Top tier

__Banner on all university websites

__Webmail login page

__Blackboard login page

__Class registration/financial aid page

__University home page

__School football/athletics site

__Campus paper

__All computer lab homepages

__Other: _____

LISTSERVS

__All-campus

__Top 10 Department

__All dorm resident

__By class

__All Greek

__All professor

__Other _____

PUBLIC SPACES

See registration section for ideas on how to saturate these areas

__Buses and bus stops

__Football games

__Dorms

__Library

__Dining Hall

__Bookstore

__Computer lab

__Parking garage

__Student Union

__Non-dining hall eating area

__Other: _____

CAMPUS PAPER

__"register to vote/URL" on the paper header every day (3)

__Free full page add runs at least 2x weekly (3)

People in charge of meeting with all the administrators and other individuals responsible for making this happen:

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Visibility your volunteers will do:
TEXT MESSAGING (# FT Enrollment x 20%) _____
Number of "forwarders" needed (Text Goal ÷ 5 forwards/person) _____

Tabling (40% of total)
 # tabling coordinators needed (tabling goal ÷ 60 forwarders/coordinator) _____
(Each coordinator recruits 4 people to help for 2 hours, plus Text Table for 2 hours themselves, or 10 hours of text tabling. Each volunteer can get 6 people to forward a message to five friends per hour of tabling. So a tabling coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 60 people to forward the text message)

 # coordinators from your organization: _____
 # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

Class Presentations (60% of total) _____
Average class size _____
 # class raps needed (Class presentations goal ÷ [Average class size x 10%]) _____
 # class raps coordinators needed (# class raps ÷ 25 raps/coordinator): _____
(Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to do 5 raps each, plus do 5 raps themselves, a total of 25 raps per coordinator)

 # coordinators from your organization: _____
 # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

CLASSROOM VISIBILITY (Number of classrooms x 1/3) _____
 # Classroom Visibility coordinators needed (Goal ÷ 150 classrooms/coordinator) _____
(Each coordinator recruits 4 people to help for 2 hours, plus works for 2 hours themselves, or 10 hours of visibility. Each volunteer can wire 15 classrooms in one hour. So a visibility coordinator is essentially responsible for wiring 150 classrooms)

 # coordinators from your organization: _____
 # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

FACEBOOK/MYSPACE

_____ # of Fans/Profile Page Members
_____ # who add the application

List all the actions you will ask Fans/Profile
Page Members to take.

1. _____   4. _____

2. _____   5. _____

3. _____   6. _____

OTHER VISIBILITY STUNTS
List the visibility stunts you will do
___ Vote Float
___ Vote Boat
___ Vote Goat
___ Mascot at Football Games
___ Other _____
___ Other _____
 # visibility stunt coordinators (# stunts): _____
(Each individual stunt requires one coordinator to recruit 3 other volunteers to spend 3 hours building a prop, and 3 hours doing the stunt)

VOTER REGISTRATION BLITZ

Goal for blitz (remainder of overall goal, up to 50% of the campus): _____

Total number of blitz coordinators needed (sum of below): _____

    # from your campus organization (i.e. PIRG chapter, SGA): _____

    # coalition partners _____

Method of registration

    Tabling (70% of blitz goal): _____

    # Tabling coordinators needed (Tabling goal ÷ 160 registrations/coordinator): _____
    (Each coordinator recruits 4 people to register for 4 hours, plus register 4 hours themselves, or 20 total hours of tabling. Each volunteer can get 8 registrations per hour of tabling. So a tabling coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 160 registrations)

        # coordinators from your organization: _____

        # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

    Class raps (15% of blitz goal): _____

    # class raps needed (Class raps goal ÷ 6 cards/rap): _____
    # class raps coordinators needed (# class raps ÷ 30 raps/coordinator): _____
    (Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to do six raps each, plus do 6 raps themselves, a total of 30 raps per coordinator)

        # coordinators from your organization: _____

        # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

    Canvassing (15% of blitz goal): _____

    # canvassing coordinators needed (canvassing goal ÷ (100 to 200 registrations/coordinator)): _____
    (Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to canvass for 4 hours each, plus spend 4 hours canvassing themselves, a total of 30 hours of work. Each volunteer can register 5-10 voters per hour: 5 for neighborhoods, 10 for dorms. So each coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 100-200 registrations)

        # coordinators from your organization: _____

        # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

ONE-DAY TEST RUN BLITZ

(this has tabling only, although feel free incorporate the other methods)

test run coordinators needed (# coordinators for blitz ÷ 2): _____

        # coordinators from your organization: _____

        # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

new volunteers recruited (# test run coordinators x 3): _____

new volunteers recruited to coordinate main blitz (# new volunteers ÷ 2): _____

Registration goal for Test blitz:

([# test run coordinators + # test run volunteers] x 3 hours x 4 registrations/hour): _____

C. Planning Get Out The Vote (GOTV)

TOTAL GOTV CONTACTS (sum of all six pieces below): _____

TOTAL GOTV COORDINATORS NEEDED: _____
  # from your organization (i.e. PIRG chapter, SGA): _____
  # coalition partners _____

Phone Contacts goal (# phone numbers on your voter list x 50%): _____
 # Phone Bank coordinators needed (Phone contacts goal ÷ 80 contacts/coordinator): _____
(Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to call for 2 hours each, plus spend 2 hours calling themselves, a total of 10 hours of work. Each volunteer can contact about 8 people per hour of calling. So each coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 80 contacts.)
  # coordinators from your organization: _____
  # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

Tabling Contacts goal: _____
 # Tabling coordinators needed (Tabling contacts goal ÷ 300 contacts/coordinator): _____
(Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to table for 4 hours each, plus spend 4 hours tabling themselves, a total of 20 hours of work. Each volunteer can get 15 contacts per hours of tabling. So each coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 300 contacts.)
  # coordinators from your organization: _____
  # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

Class raps contacts goal: _____
 # class raps needed (Class raps goal ÷ 50 people/class): _____
 # class raps coordinators needed (# class raps ÷ 30 raps/coordinator): _____
(Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to do six raps each, plus do 6 raps themselves, a total of 30 raps per coordinator)
  # coordinators from your organization: _____
  # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

Canvassing contacts goal (# Estimated Doors ÷ 2): _____
 # canvassing coordinators needed (canvassing contacts goal ÷ (100 to 200 contacts/coordinator)): _____
(Each coordinator will recruit 4 other volunteers to canvass for 4 hours each, plus spend 4 hours canvassing themselves, a total of 30 hours of work. Each volunteer can contact 5-10 voters per hour. 5 for neighborhoods, 10 for dorms. So each coordinator is essentially responsible for getting 100-200 contacts)
  # coordinators from your organization: _____
  # coordinators from coalition partners: _____

Text Messaging contacts goal

(# cell phone numbers you sent to Student PIRG Headquarters to get texted): _____

Friend-to-Friend phone and text messaging contacts goal from Tabling and Canvassing, assuming you are planning to do this while tabling and canvassing and that 60% of the total number of contacts agree to text or call 5 friends on the spot. Depending on which tactic you use, complete below (no reason why you can't mix and match, by the way):

Phone (# total tabling and canvassing contacts x 60% x 5): _____

Text (# total tabling and canvassing contacts x 60% x 5): _____

OTHER GOTV VISIBILITY

Visibility tactics the college will do:

WEBSITES
Top tier

__Banner on all university websites
__Webmail login page
__Blackboard login page
__Class registration/financial aid page
__University home page
__School football/athletics site
__Campus paper
__All computer lab homepages
__Other: _____

CAMPUS PAPER
__"Don't Forget to Vote" on the paper header every day (3)
__Free full page add runs at least 2x weekly (3)

LISTSERVS
__All-campus
__Top 10 Department
__All dorm resident
__By class
__All Greek
__All professor
__Other _____

PUBLIC SPACES
__Buses and bus stops
__Football games
__Dorms
__Library
__Dining Hall
__Bookstore
__Computer lab
__Parking garage
__Student Union
__Non-dining hall eating area
__Other: _____

People in charge of meeting with all the administrators and other individuals responsible for making this happen:

_____

_____

_____

Visibility tactics your volunteers will do:

FACEBOOK/MYSPACE
_____ # of Fans/Profile Page Members
_____ # who add the application

List all the actions you will ask Fans/Profile Page Members to take

1.

2.

3.

4.

OTHER VISIBILITY STUNTS
List the visibility stunts you will do
__ Vote Float
__ Vote Boat
__ Vote Goat
__ Mascot at Football Games
__ Other _____
__ Other _____
__ Other _____
__ Other _____
__ Other _____
__ Other _____
visibility stunt coordinators (# stunts):_____
(Each individual stunt requires one coordinator to recruit 3 other volunteers to spend 3 hours building a prop, and 3 hours doing the stunt)

Raps And Materials

Go to www.newvotersproject.org to download sample materials that include:

• Sample Raps

- Sample Tabling and Canvassing GOTV Rap
- Sample Tabling and Canvassing Voter Registration Rap
- Sample Faculty Email and Calling Rap
- Sample Phonebank GOTV Rap
- Sample Class Voter Registration Rap
- Sample Class GOTV Rap

• Further Trainings And Ideas

- Sample GOTV Phone Bank Training
- Using Facebook and MySpace to get people registered
- How to set up a Facebook Fan Page

• Sample Materials

- Sample GOTV calling Tick Sheet
- Master Volunteer Tracking Form
- Volunteer Scheduling Form
- Class Rap Scheduling Form
- Sample Press Release
- Sample Letter-to-the-Editor
- Sample Opinion Editorial

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you all again. And without objection all members will have 5 legislative days to submit to the Clerk additional written questions for the witnesses or to submit any additional material for inclusion in the record. Again, I thank all of you, and this hearing is now adjourned.

[The information follows:]

Testimony for Submission to the Congressional Record of the United States House of Representatives

Regarding the National Residence Hall Election Program (NRHEP)

William Tarter, Jr. September 25th, 2008

What the Program Was

On September 30th, 2004, Resident Assistants (RA's) from across the country gathered their floors together to participate in the National Residence Hall Election Program (NRHEP). The aim of the program was to have RA's across the country sit down with their floors to watch the 2004 presidential debate between Senator John Kerry and President George W. Bush. After which, the RA's were to have a non-partisan discussion with their students that they could either moderate themselves or ask a series of questions that could be downloaded from ResidentAssistant.com. When downloading the questions, RA's were asked to provide their email and school name so that we might be able to track how many schools participated. After the discussion, students were then directed towards a NRHEP webpage (set up through Rock the Vote) where students could print out the information and send it in to be registered to vote. In all, approximately 110 colleges and universities from across the country participated in the effort.

How the Program Came Together

As a Resident Assistant at Ohio University in Athens, Ohio, I thought that it would be a great idea to get my floor together to watch one of the presidential debates. But then I figured that this was something that could be extended to be campus-wide, state-wide or even nation-wide. I emailed the creator of ResidentAssistant.com, Mr. Dan Oltersdorf, and asked if he would be interested in assisting me with a program that I created to reach out to RA's who could engage their residents in the residence halls, with the aim to get them registered to vote and informed about that the political process. Resident Assistants are a direct line of contact for Universities to reach their students, so I knew this could be a great benefit to both the students and any University community. Mr. Oltersdorf loved the idea. Together, we designed a flyer (attached) that could be downloaded. I formulated some questions that RA's could discuss with their residents after the debate was over. Mr. Oltersdorf created a webpage where RA's across the country could register and download the information, and the National Residence Hall Election Program was born. We settled on September 30th, 2004 as the night to watch the debate because that was the only presidential debate before the State of Ohio voter registration deadline.

September 25th, 2008

The Results

As stated earlier, RA's from approximately 110 colleges and universities participated in the event. My opinion remains that if just one student became registered to vote, or learned more about the importance of voting and discussion of issues as result of the NRHEP, then I considered the program a success. In future years, the program can continue to be used by RA's to get their students together and discuss the issues affecting their lives. It was a privilege to create this program, get it up and running and participate with my residents.

Ohio University news story about the program:
https://www.ohio.edu/outlook/04-05/37f-045.cfm

Resident Assistant.com page that was devoted toward NRHEP resources
http://www.residentassistant.com/election2004/

My interview with the San Diego Daily Aztec
http://media.www.thedailyaztec.com/media/storage/paper741/news/2004/09/21/City/Program.Educa
tes.And.Motivates.Residence.Hall.Students.To.Vote-828110.shtml

News article about the program
http://politics.press-library.com/releases/2004-09-09/CAMPUS-ADVANTAGE/Dorm-Vote-College-
Students-Mobilize-Nationwide.htm

Today, I work as Education and Outreach Specialist (Northern Region) for the Voting Rights Institute (VRI), a division of the Office of Ohio Secretary of State Jennifer Brunner. One of the goals Secretary Brunner has set is to "encourage the highest level of participation in our democracy." VRI also seeks to "work with communities, partner with organizations and implement programs that will ensure a safe, reliable and trustworthy process that fosters and enhances access to voting in Ohio by all of its eligible citizens."

There is no doubt that the lessons I learned by creating and implementing the National Residence Hall Election Program will benefit me the rest of my life. It was a humbling experience to encourage my fellow students to participate in the election process. Today, I'm grateful for the opportunity to assist Secretary Brunner in her effort to encourage the citizens of Ohio to vote.

Humbly submitted,

Will Tarter

September 25th, 2008

Recently, at school, an Obama supporter approached me during a rock the vote assembly. He informed that on the day of the election there will be undercover officers to execute warrants on those who come to vote based on the anticipated turnout. He advised me if I had any outstanding warrants or traffic offenses I should clear them up prior to voting. They assume this to be an opportunity for those who normally go by fake names and addresses, to give their real names and id's. Allowing them to place name and face together and walla, gotcha! Arrested on the spot. So if you have one or the other to take care of it.

Due to the electronic genius of wireless technology this can and will take place all around the nation from LA to New York. Why hasn't this been done before? This seems to be a great way to arrest or just be able to identify criminals in the area. I applaud the new efforts of local and state authorities and hope to see a great success rate. I'm sorry to say but I don't think they should be able to vote anyway! Question? Are convicted felons allowed to vote?

He also said that both Obama and McCain support this idea but that he "Obama", does not want the public to see any of his supporters get locked up showing their support or illegally voting for him. An incentive to avoid the legal ramifications, but still participate in the vote is being put in place. This would allow individuals to turn themselves in, prior to voting, without legal penalty. This type of incentive recently took place at a South Philadelphia church with an outstanding turnout. Is this taking away from the true freedom of voting? Is this legal?

He had also learned that at the polling sites local authorities will not only be checking for "scoff law" traffic tickets offenders inside, but this will also take place outside. There will be vehicles equipped with state identification computers. Upon identification cars will be locked with an immobilization feature locked to its tire then towed.

I think this November will be a November to remember. I love technology

Anonymous

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