

Voting Rights in The USA and Florida

On April 21, 2026, the United States Senate voted down the SAVE ACT, a dangerous act, which would have limited the rights of many Americans to register and vote. In contrast, on April 1, 2026, Governor DeSantis signed the Florida SAVE ACT into law. SAVE stands for Safeguard Voter Eligibility. **The question is whether Voter Eligibility needs saving, and the answer is a definitive “No”.**

Although both parties agree only eligible voters (US citizens over the age of 18) should be registered and able to vote, there is a difference in opinion as to whether the SAVE Act will prevent eligible voters from voting.

As there is no proof of significant voter fraud, many are concerned the Florida SAVE Act will restrict voting rights of people of color, lower income individuals, college students, and married women. This is due to the documentation the SAVE Act requires at both the time of registration and voting. Others falsely express concern of voter fraud—i.e. votes of non-citizens and dead people.

Yet, American history is one of expanding voting rights. Four Constitutional Amendments increased voting rights in the US: the 15th Amendment (race); the 19th Amendment (women); the 24th Amendment (no poll taxes); and the 26th Amendment (age 18+).

Additionally, key Federal laws also expanded our voting rights: Voting Rights Act of 1965 (prohibits racial discrimination in voting) and the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (allows voter registration at DMVs and public agencies).

However, we are on the brink of limiting voting rights, especially here in Florida. This is probably enabled by a 2013 United States Supreme Court case of Shelby County v. Holder (finding a section of the 1965 Voting Rights Act unconstitutional, resulting in states gaining more control over voting law changes). Although several earlier Supreme Court cases upheld the constitutionality of the 1965 Voting Rights Act in its entirety, in 2013 the Supreme Court found one section of the Act to be unconstitutional based on 40-year-old data. All agreed the Act had helped reverse years of discrimination in voting, but opinions differed as to the ongoing necessity for a federal preclearance formula.

Since this Supreme Court ruling, many claim state officials have engaged in voter suppression with research demonstrating lack of previously required preclearance with the Department of Justice resulted in decreases in minority congressional representation and minority voter turnout. 2018 studies showed nearly 1,000 U.S. polling places closed in the 5

years following Shelby v. Holder, many of them in predominantly African-American counties. Following this ruling, there have been purges of voter rolls and imposition of strict voter ID laws in certain states.

FLORIDA NEW VOTING RIGHTS REQUIREMENTS

Beginning next year, the Florida SAVE Act will limit voting in several ways: New, replacement, or renewed driver's licenses or state ID cards must include their owner's legal status or specific proof of citizenship is required; several forms of ID, previously acceptable for voting and registration (including college IDs) will no longer be sufficient to vote; and legal proof of a name change is required.

The Florida SAVE Act also adds restrictions on voting by mail; limits ballot drop box availability; increases ID requirements for mail ballots; and shortens the time vote-by-mail requests remain valid.

Opponents view these changes as burdensome paperwork that could disenfranchise or discourage hundreds of thousands of eligible voters from voting.

CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ACTION

Proponents of new voter documentation requirements state the changes prevent fraud and increase confidence in elections. **Is there, however, any proof of significant voter fraud? No. And ask yourself who has caused the lost confidence in elections. You will find your answer in the dangerous rhetoric of President Donald J. Trump and his MAGA base.**

Speak Out, Register to VOTE BY MAIL and Vote Blue in this Election Year.