



July 17, 2023

Dear Representative:

I am writing on behalf of WV Citizen Action Group and WV Citizens for Clean Elections to voice our strong support for the Freedom to Vote Act (FTVA) and our strong opposition to the “American Confidence in Elections” (ACE) Act.

WVCCE is a coalition of organizations working to increase transparency and accountability in West Virginia elections, and advance reforms to strengthen democracy and ensure fairness and impartiality in our courts. Our coalition came together specifically to address the negative impact money in politics has on our democratic institutions, and move us toward a government that is more transparent, accountable, and responsive to the needs of all West Virginians. It is hard for everyday people to have their voices heard above the special interests that spend money to influence our elections, but the FTVA can help empower average citizens by combatting secret money and election interference. An informed public is critical for us to function as a true democracy. The FTVA would put an end to big money funneled through groups with secret donors by requiring groups that spend money on political ads to say where the money came from. No matter our political beliefs, we all benefit when we know who is trying to influence our elections.

Removing barriers to voting and ensuring every eligible voter has an equal opportunity to participate in political life and to have a voice in the decisions that affect their lives is critically important to our coalition partners. Sadly, West Virginia has one of the lowest voter participation rates in the country. Transportation problems, illness or disability, and having a conflicting work, family or school schedule are among the reasons cited most often by West Virginians for not voting. The voter access provisions of the FTVA will go a long way toward removing barriers to voting experienced by West Virginians, and at the same time counter attacks on the freedom to vote we are seeing in other states in order to ensure we all have equal access to the ballot.

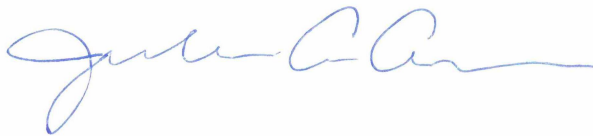
Conversely, we oppose the anti-voter ACE Act, which would disenfranchise millions of people by putting up barriers to voting, and would drown out the voices of everyday people by increasing the influence of billionaires and special interests in our elections.

The ACE Act would overturn and prevent overwhelmingly popular, bipartisan pro-voter reforms that have been passed in red, blue, and purple states. It would greatly limit the choices that voters have when registering to vote, restrict the ability of voters to cast a ballot by mail, create strict photo ID requirements, and reinforce extreme gerrymandering. Additionally, the ACE Act would further restrict the rights and voices of the residents of the District of Columbia, who already lack full representation in Congress.

The ACE Act is a giant step backward and would silence the voices of everyday Americans by putting up barriers to voting and by allowing millions of dollars more in secret money to infiltrate our political system. Despite its name, the ACE Act is an extreme anti-voter pro-corporate wish list disguised as something that would strengthen our elections. To actually fortify free and fair elections and help get big, secret money out of politics, Congress must instead pass the Freedom to Vote Act.

Democracy is stronger when it includes all of us. We need bold reforms to ensure that our voices are heard and our government represents, reflects, and responds to all Americans. Please do everything in your power to pass the Freedom to Vote Act.

Sincerely,



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