Make Your Vote Count
Getting Ready for the 2012 Elections

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Health Care & Housing Are Human Rights
History of Voting

- White Men were able to vote by the time of the Civil War.
- Women, People of Color and Native Americans were not able to vote.
- Literacy, poll taxes and religious tests were used.
Poll Tax Receipt

No. 838

Birmingham, Ala. 4-9 1896

Received of J. M. File (Col.) (White)

the sum of 600 50 Cents Dollars in full of amount of Poll Tax for the year 1895

Poll Tax, --- --- --- 1 50
Assessor's Fee, --- --- --- 50
Collector's Fee, --- --- --- 50

M. Brazeel P. T. C.
Literacy Tests

- Typically had several parts
- Read out loud the Constitution
- Interpret the Constitution
- Answer 4 questions
- Citizenship Schools were instituted
The State of Louisiana

Literacy Test (This test is to be given to anyone who cannot prove a fifth grade education.)

Do what you are told to do in each statement, nothing more, nothing less. Be careful as one wrong answer denotes failure of the test. You have 10 minutes to complete the test.

1. Draw a line around the number or letter of this sentence.

2. Draw a line under the last word in this line.

3. Cross out the longest word in this line.

4. Draw a line around the shortest word in this line.

5. Circle the first, first letter of the alphabet in this line.

6. In the space below draw three circles, one inside (engulfed by) the other.

7. Above the letter X make a small cross.

8. Draw a line through the letter below that comes earliest in the alphabet.

ZVSBDMKITPHC
Example Question

“Spell backwards, forwards”
Getting the Right to Vote
Getting the Right to Vote

- Women – 1920
- Native Americans – 1924
- Asian Americans – 1965
- African Americans – 1964
- Mexican Americans – 1975
"Many of the issues of civil rights are very complex and most difficult. But about this there can and should be no argument. 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."

Lyndon B. Johnson

Civil Rights Act 1964
States that have made changes

- Legislation introduced
- Photo ID requirements passed
- Proof of citizenship passed
- Restrictions on voter registration passed
- Restrictions on early/absentee voting passed
- Executive action making it harder to restore voting rights
Turning Back the Clock?

- Increase in African American, Latino and Asian eligible voters
- Also, in 2010, more than 19 million Latinos became eligible to vote, more than in any other election year. More than 9 percent of eligible voters nationwide are Latino, up from 8.6 percent in 2006.
Changes in Voting Rights

Five areas targeted:

- Photo ID laws.
- Proof of citizenship laws.
- Making voter registration harder
- Reducing early and absentee days
- Making it harder to restore voting rights.
Voting-age Americans Who Lack Valid, Government-Issued Photo IDs

25% of African Americans

20% of Asian Americans

19% Latino Americans

18% American citizens between 18–24 lack photo ID with current name and address

15% of American citizens earning less than $35,000 per year
Current Poll

**Voter Registration, Certainty to Vote, and Vote Preference by Age Group**

Registered voters

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Registered to vote*</th>
<th>Definitely WILL vote (among registered voters)</th>
<th>Obama margin over Romney</th>
<th>Vote for Barack Obama</th>
<th>Vote for Mitt Romney</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>Pct. pts.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 to 29</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 49</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 64</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65+</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>77</strong></td>
<td><strong>77</strong></td>
<td><strong>6</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
<td><strong>43</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

April 20-24, 2012
*Based on national adults

GALLUP
Why is Election Day Registration Being Targeted?

- Voter turnout rates are typically 10 – 12 percent
- EDR allows voters who may have been mistakenly purged from voting rolls to still vote.
- EDR assists young voters and college students
- Voter turnout in 2010 was ten points higher in the states with Election Day Registration.
Restoring Voting Rights

- Over five million Americans are denied the right to vote because of prior felony convictions—the United States is the only democracy in the world that takes the right to vote away from citizens who have completed their sentences. This causes over two million U.S. citizens to be “permanently” disenfranchised from the voting process.

Source: Brennan Report, 2012
Why Focus on Voting Rights?

Remember

- Attacking voting rights was un–American then.
- Attacking voting rights is un–American now.
- We rose to the challenge then.
- We must meet the challenge now.
- It’s time for each of us to remind America that This is My Vote, and that we will work together to defend and protect our constitutional right.
WHY VOTE?

☑️ Vote

- Shut Up, And do whatever we say!
Marching for the Right to Vote!
The Right to Vote

No American who is qualified to vote should ever be denied the right and opportunity to do so. That seems so simple. So basic. How can "government by the people" work if certain groups of "the people" are not allowed to vote?
My Vote, My Voice

- "So long as I do not firmly and irrevocably possess the right to vote I do not possess myself. I cannot make up my mind – it is made up for me. I cannot live as a democratic citizen, observing the laws I have helped to enact – I can only submit to the edict of others."

- Dr. Martin Luther King, 1957
What Should Drive All of Us!

- Everyone who wants to be registered is registered
- Everyone who wants to vote can vote
- Every vote that is cast is a vote that is counted.
Get Involved

- Create Coalitions in your Community
- Prepare to identify impacted voters
- Facilitate transportation for voters
- Identify sources of internet access
- Seek out potential sources to offset costs
- Follow up with voters
Time is Running Out!

- Wake-up!
- Calling all voting rights advocates: get moving to ensure everyone can vote.
WHY VOTE?

- It is YOUR VOICE— and the only person who can silence your voice is YOU!