

RESTORE THE VOTE

America was founded on the principle of “no taxation without representation.” Our ability to choose our government without unnecessary restriction is fundamental to our democracy. But today, due to the greatly expanded scope of government through the criminal justice system, there are more than 47,000 Minnesotan citizens who live in the community but are barred from voting due to a felony conviction. This policy unnecessarily limits positive behavior and inclusion, which makes our communities less safe. Minnesota statutes should be changed so that, like in many other states, once someone is no longer incarcerated, they are eligible to vote.

When Minnesota was founded there were fewer than 75 felony crimes in statute. Just over 30 people were in prison, which amounts to about .02 percent of the voting population at that time. Today, there are 368 felony crimes in statute.

HISTORY

Our country has an “over-criminalization” problem — and it’s getting worse. Prison and parole populations have skyrocketed in Minnesota, moving away from what our founders intended. When the Minnesota Constitution was written there was no system of probation or parole, which meant if a Minnesotan wasn’t in prison they could vote.

WHO IS IMPACTED?

More than 51,000 Minnesotans and their families, of whom:

- An estimated 64% live in Greater Minnesota.
- 35,700 are White, 12,240 are African American, 3,060 are Latinx and 3,060 are Native American.
- African American Minnesotans are seven times more likely to be disenfranchised than white Minnesotans.

WHY CHANGE?

- We need to remove barriers to offenders re-integrating themselves into the community and living productive, crime-free lives. Voting is an indicator of one’s stake in the community. Public safety organizations like the Minnesota County Attorneys Association support this. They ensure people are held accountable, but once released from custody they want people to be positively engaging in their community.
- A broad cross-section of faith groups, valuing compassion and forgiveness, believe that our criminal justice system should be not only about punishment, but also about justice. Once offenders have taken responsibility and are rehabilitated they should be restored to family and community, therefore able to be positive examples for their children.

RESTORE

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VOTE MN

For more information visit www.restorethevotemn.org

RESTORE THE VOTE COALITION MEMBERS

Public Safety/Legal/Government

Association of Minnesota Counties
Conflict Resolution Center of Minnesota
Domestic Abuse Project
Legal Rights Center
Minnesota Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers
Minnesota Community Corrections Association
Minnesota Corrections Association
Minnesota County Attorneys Association
State Public Defender

Faith Based Organizations

CHUM Duluth
ISIAAH
Jewish Community Action
Jewish Community Relations Council of MN & Dakotas
Joint Religious Legislative Coalition
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing
Minnesota Catholic Conference
Minnesota Council of Churches
Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance
Muslim American Society of Minnesota
Transform Minnesota - The Evangelical Network
Westminster Presbyterian Social Justice Ministry Team

Direct Service Organizations

A Place at the Table
African Immigrant Services
American Indian OIC
Amicus Services of Volunteers of America MN
Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis
EMERGE Community Development
Goodwill/Easter Seals MN
L.I.F.E. In Recovery
Loaves and Fishes Community of Duluth
Mad Dads Minneapolis
MN Adult and Teen Challenge
MN Community Action Partnership
Minnesota Recovery Connection
The Neighborhood Hub
Northside Achievement Zone
Open Access Connections
SOAR Career Solutions
St. Stephen's Human Services
Summit OIC

Twin Cities Rise!

Civic Engagement and Advocacy Organizations

Advocates for Human Rights
AFSCME (Council 5)
African American Leadership Forum
ACLU of Minnesota
Asian American Organizing Project
Blue Republican Minnesota
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota
Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota
Common Cause MN
Council on Crime and Justice
Growth & Justice
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc.
Land Stewardship Project
League of Women Voters Minnesota
Liberty Minnesota
Minneapolis Urban League
Minnesota AFL-CIO
Minnesota Association of Professional Employees
Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
Minnesota Council on Foundations
Minnesota Innocence Project
MN Neighborhoods Organizing for Change (NOC)
MN Second Chance Coalition
Minnesotans Standing Together to End Poverty
MPIRG
NAACP Minneapolis Branch
NAACP St. Paul Branch
People for the American Way
Prison Policy Initiative
R3 Collaborative
Republican Liberty Caucus Minnesota
Richfield Human Rights Commission
SEIU Local 26
SEIU Minnesota
TakeAction Minnesota
Ten25Fifty
Voices for Racial Justice
World Without Genocide

For more information, to get updates on voting restoration work, or to have your organization added to this list, contact Mark Haase, 612-819-0738, or contact@restorethevotemn.org