

WHY MINNESOTA NEEDS TO RESTORE THE VOTE



America was founded on the principle of “no taxation without representation.” Our ability to choose our government is fundamental to our democracy.

Yet thousands of Minnesotans who live in our communities raising their families, working and paying taxes are barred from participating fully in our civic life.

More than 53,000 people living in our communities with felony convictions are not allowed to vote, even though they’ve been released from prison. They can lose their right to vote for decades because our state imposes such long probation and supervision sentences.

Minnesota statutes should be changed so that citizens living in the community are eligible to vote.

Changing the policy will make it easier to administer elections, eliminate confusion at the polls and boost positive participation in society.

Prison and parole populations have skyrocketed in Minnesota. Our incarceration rate is increasing while it’s decreasing in other states. Our probation and supervision rate is one of the highest in the nation. The number of disenfranchised people here has gone up more than 400 percent in four decades.

Restoring voting rights is a step in the right direction, a step that a growing number of states are taking. Our Minnesota Constitution clearly allows people convicted of a felony to vote once they are restored to their civil rights.

WHO IS BARRED FROM VOTING?

- More than 53,000 Minnesotans.
- People from across the state, including an estimated 70 percent from Greater Minnesota.
- A diverse group of people including 35,700 white people, 12,240 African Americans, 3,060 people who are Latinx and 3,060 Native Americans.
- A disproportionate number of African American Minnesotans, who are seven times more likely to be disenfranchised than white Minnesotans.

WHY CHANGE?

- We need to remove barriers to people reintegrating into the community and living productive, crime-free lives. Voting gives people deeper ties in their communities, which makes them less likely to reoffend.
- Public safety organizations like the Minnesota County Attorneys Association support this change because they want to ensure that people are held accountable and then engage positively in their communities after being released from custody, and they want to reduce confusion at the polls about who can vote.
- A broad cross-section of faith and civil rights groups, valuing compassion and forgiveness, believe that our criminal justice system should not only be about punishment, but also about justice and restoration. Once someone has taken responsibility and is rehabilitated, they should be restored to their family and community, and serve as a positive example for their children.

RESTORE



VOTE MN

www.restorethevotemn.org

RESTORE THE VOTE COALITION

Public Safety/Legal/Government

Association of Minnesota Counties
City of Saint Paul
Conflict Resolution Center of Minnesota
Council for Minnesotans of African Heritage
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
CTAC Social Justice Ministry
ISAIAH
Jewish Community Action
Jewish Community Relations Council of MN & the 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
National Coalition of Jewish Women Minnesota
Transform MN | 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
Tubman
Twin Cities Rise!
Volunteers of America – MN and WI
Ujamaa Place

Civic Engagement and Advocacy Organizations

ACLU of Minnesota
Advocates for Human Rights
African American Leadership Forum
AFSCME (Council 5)
Asian American Organizing Project
Black Civic Network
Black Votes Matter
Blue Republican Minnesota
CAPI USA
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota
Citizens for Election Integrity
Common Cause Minnesota
Growth & Justice
Innocence Project of Minnesota
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 on Foundations
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits
MN Second Chance Coalition
Minnesotans Standing Together to End Poverty
MPIRG
NAACP Minneapolis
NAACP St. Paul
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
Women's March Minnesota
World Without Genocide

For more information on Restore the Vote or to have your organization added to this list, contact Anika Bowie, 651-373-8161, contact@restorethevotemn.com.