

# The Election Kentucky Deserves

*An open letter sent to Kentucky's top election officials on August 12, 2020*

TO: Governor Andy Beshear  
Secretary of State Michael Adams  
All members of the State Board of Elections,

Most Kentuckians agree that our democracy works best when we all have a voice and a vote in the decisions impacting our lives.

In this year's primary election, many Kentuckians could vote early or by mail for the very first time and overwhelmingly chose those options. We had record voter turnout and largely did it safely from our homes. It wasn't perfect. But that's something to celebrate in any election, and especially impressive in the middle of a pandemic.

Now, the risk of COVID-19 is greater than ever. Kentucky has the opportunity to improve upon that election process and give Kentuckians the election we deserve – one that makes voting safe, convenient, secure and robust.

It's more important than ever that the voices of all Kentuckians are heard on election day, and we know from experience how to do that.

We urge you to implement these measures to give Kentuckians the election we deserve:

## **Preparation for the Election**

- **Community input** at the county and state level: Voters deserve to provide input on the process.
- **No new photo ID** rules (SB 2) so that people don't need to photocopy ID when voting by mail and there's no confusion about what ID people need to vote.
- **A well-funded, public information campaign** to spread the word about changes to the election process statewide, with a focus on communities with low voter turnout and limited access to the internet and libraries.
- **Include [www.CivilRightsRestoration.KY.gov](http://www.CivilRightsRestoration.KY.gov)** so the 170,000 Kentuckians whose voting rights were restored through Governor Beshear's executive action know that they can vote.
- **Accessible election materials:** large print for Kentuckians with visual impairments, written at a 4th grade reading level, include visual guides, and Spanish translation in counties with a significant Spanish-speaking population.
- **Strong poll worker training:** accessible, vast and starts as soon as possible.
- **Resources for voters** to ask and get answers to questions: a statewide hotline staffed by well-trained workers and a centralized website sharing each county's voting process and hours.

## **Fair and Accessible Election**

- **Free mail-in option** for all Kentuckians, without an extra step to mail in an application
- **Early in-person voting** for weeks before Election Day, including evening and weekend hours so that essential workers and others can find time to vote
- **More polling locations** open than in the primary, particularly in our most populous counties

- **Polling locations open late** – until 8 p.m. or 9 p.m. on Election Day
- **Accurate and public-facing ballot tracking**, including whether someone’s vote counted or was rejected, with an option to fix or resubmit rejected ballots.
- **Publicly-accessible drop boxes** for ballots

We can choose to have an election that makes us proud - one that includes thousands more Kentuckians. We will have to invest - time in shaping a collective process and resources to make it happen. Kentucky’s democracy and people are worth it. The alternative is to ask poll workers and voters to risk their lives to vote – something we truly cannot afford.

We are committed to doing our part – registering thousands of voters, making tens of thousands of calls to encourage people to vote, and letting them know about changes to the election process. We’re asking you to invest in Kentucky too, and to give us the election Kentuckians deserve.

Respectfully submitted by:

874K Disabilities Coalition  
 ACLU of Kentucky  
 All of Us or None Louisville  
 Central KY Council for Peace & Justice  
 Community Farm Alliance  
 Fairness Campaign  
 Food in Neighborhoods Community Coalition (FIN)  
 Forward Kentucky  
 Four Rivers Indivisible  
 Homeless and Housing Coalition of Kentucky  
 Indivisible Danville  
 Indivisible KY  
 IUE-CWA  
 Jefferson County Teachers Association  
 Jewish Community Relations Council of Louisville  
 KBC-LEO  
 Kentuckians For The Commonwealth  
 Kentucky Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression  
 Kentucky Black Caucus of Local Elected Officials  
 Kentucky Center for Economic Policy  
 Kentucky Coalition Against Domestic Violence  
 Kentucky Council of Churches.  
 Kentucky Interfaith Power & Light  
 Kentucky Mental Health Coalition  
 Kentucky Poor People's Campaign  
 Kentucky State AFL-CIO  
 Kentucky UU Justice Action Network

Kentucky Voices for Health  
 Lexington Friends Meeting/Quakers  
 Lexington-Fayette Co. Branch - NAACP  
 Life Coach Each One Teach One Re Entry Corp.  
 Louisville Family Justice Advocates  
 Louisville Showing Up for Racial Justice  
 Louisville Urban League  
 Matthew 25 AIDS Services  
 Mijente Louisville  
 Mission Behind Bars and Beyond (MB3)  
 Mountain Association  
 NAACP, Kentucky State Conference  
 National Council of Jewish Women, Louisville Section  
 Northern Kentucky University NAACP  
 Pennyroyal Indivisible Kentucky  
 People Advocating Recovery  
 Planned Parenthood Advocates of Indiana and Kentucky  
 Pride Community Services Organization  
 Quaker Committee on Kentucky Legislation  
 The Interfaith Alliance of the Bluegrass  
 The League of Women Voters of Kentucky  
 The Women's Network  
 Together Frankfort  
 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 227  
 United We Stand  
 University of Louisville's Youth Violence Prevention Research Center  
 Volunteers of America Mid-State