Safe, fair, and accessible elections are a nonpartisan priority for elected officials nationwide—especially in light of the threats posed by COVID-19. After listening to recommendations from policy experts and nearly 100 legislators in the Future Caucus Network, MAP developed a set of strategies for policymakers to mitigate public health risks while building election resiliency.

**ENABLE VOTERS TO VOTE-BY-MAIL**
- No Excuse: States that require a valid excuse to cast an absentee ballot should remove the need for an excuse OR declare the COVID-19 public health crisis a legitimate excuse.

**ACCOMMODATE SOCIAL DISTANCING**
- Set up online portals for mail-in ballot requests.
- Provide prepaid, pre-addressed return envelopes for all absentee ballots.
- Expand early voting: Maintain in-person voting options, and expand early voting dates to reduce voter concentration at polling places.
- Extend deadlines: Plan for increased mail-in ballot processing time and other potential disruptions.
- Expand ballot drop locations: Ballot drop boxes are a low cost, highly accessible option for ballot returns.

**ENHANCE BALLOT SECURITY**
- Implement ballot tracking to provide legitimacy, ensure voter confidence, and eliminate potential for fraud.
  - Use electronic scanners to count absentee ballots. Any signature review should be conducted by a bipartisan or nonpartisan authority.
  - Develop audit procedures: While incidents of fraud are markedly low, protocol should exist.
  - Provide ballot replacement guidance: Include with mailed ballots and have available online.
  - Add security: Consider background checks for workers processing absentee ballots. 24-hour live-streamed surveillance is a lower-cost option for election watchers to monitor ballot drop, and ballot processing location.

On his plan to ensure every Ohian who desires can vote at home:

"A plan that does not afford every Ohioan an opportunity to vote free of charge would be unconstitutional."

**Vote at Home Rules by State as of April 3, 2020**

- **Automatic vote-by-mail**
- **No excuse needed**
- **Excuse required**
- **Temporarily allowing it due to COVID-19**
- **Automatic in some counties**

**Vote-by-mail isn’t a Democratic or a Republican issue in Oregon, it’s just… the way things are and the way they’ve been for about 20 years now.**

Rep. Julie Fahey (D) Founding Future Caucus Co-Chair, OR