



**Statement from Citizens for a Strong Democracy founders: former, bipartisan
Secretaries of Homeland Security
Tom Ridge, Michael Chertoff, Janet Napolitano, and Jeh C. Johnson**

“Voting in the 2020 presidential election is over and the American people have made their voices heard. By all credible accounts, state election officials have been diligent in conducting a fair, legal, and accurate count—county by county, state by state. President Trump is assured the benefit of a fair process and the right to file legal challenges and request recounts in certain states, but his legal claims cannot and must not prevent the transition process from beginning. The Presidential Transition Act requires a transition to run concurrently with any election challenges and is intended to ensure the incoming administration is prepared to handle any challenge on Day 1.

“A peaceful transfer of power was defined as essential to national security by the 9/11 Commission. It was critical following the 2008 election, when the country was confronted with active terror threats during the transition and what was then the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. It was essential in 2016 when America was working to defeat ISIS. And it is essential now.

“As four former Secretaries of Homeland Security, we have actively participated in presidential transitions. One of us, Secretary Chertoff, who served under President George W. Bush, oversaw the transition of the Department of Homeland Security to another of us, Secretary Napolitano, who served under President Barack Obama. And, Secretary Johnson oversaw the DHS transition from the Obama administration to the Trump administration.

“Leaders must protect our historic democratic processes. We will use every resource at our disposal to support our republic’s cherished, peaceful and orderly transition of power between administrations.

“Our country is in the middle of twin crises: a global pandemic and a severe economic downturn. The pandemic will make any transition more complicated. At this period of heightened risk for our nation, we do not have a single day to spare to begin the transition. For the good of the nation, we must start now.”