



MORE PERFECT

FACT SHEET: LAUNCHING 'MORE PERFECT' TO STRENGTHEN AMERICAN DEMOCRACY

In concert with nine Presidential Centers, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Karsh Institute of Democracy at the University of Virginia, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and more than 100 nonprofits and community organizations, the Partnership for American Democracy is launching “More Perfect” to marshal the nation’s energy toward strengthening and sustaining our democratic processes, institutions, and culture. Through five Sustainable Democracy Goals, leaders and institutions working across diverse identities and divergent perspectives are stepping up to drive ambitious and measurable progress on strengthening our democratic republic by 2026, the 250th anniversary of our independence.

THE NEED FOR DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

The United States of America began as a radical experiment to demonstrate -- for the first time in modern history -- that a democracy was actually *possible*. We began with a declaration of core values -- liberty, equality and self-government -- that from our founding were aspirational. We have learned that though democracy is indeed possible, it is far from inevitable. Throughout our history, many have fought to realize the promise of democracy, moving us along our journey through acts of service, struggle, and self-sacrifice.

America’s recent pain and polarization are reminders that our imperfect union still falls far short in delivering on its promise to all citizens. We now also face a new challenge -- democracy is in danger. As we approach the 250th anniversary of our independence, we see our democratic values, systems, and norms being challenged in new ways. Fractured social bonds, faltering faith in institutions, a lack of understanding of our system, and distrust of facts and information pose deep threats to our democratic system and our ability to work together to solve public challenges. Democracy is not inevitable; it is fragile absent an active commitment to nurture, improve, and protect it. There are many efforts underway to work on various aspects of democratic protection and renewal. More Perfect is focusing its efforts on five Sustainable Democracy Goals.

FIVE SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRACY GOALS

Our Sustainable Democracy Goals represent five ambitious objectives to drive collective action for democratic renewal. These goals were inspired by the *Our Common Purpose* report from the bipartisan Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship at the American Academy of Arts and Sciences with input from the American people all across the country. The goals were further developed by leading democracy practitioners who work around the country in a variety of disciplines, and further shaped by the input of dozens of other partners from the education, nonprofit, national service, business, faith and media sectors. Collectively, we aspire to align efforts from all sectors of society -- businesses, community organizations, religious institutions, academia, government, and best-in-class nonprofits -- to meet or make

substantial progress on these five Sustainable Democracy Goals by 2026 and in the years beyond. For each goal, we have developed baseline measures and we will be tracking progress over time that can be found at www.joinmoreperfect.us. Each goal is described below.

Sustainable Democracy Goal 1

Universal Civic Learning: Every child and adult in the United States, regardless of location or demographics, should develop an understanding of -- and appreciation for -- our constitutional democracy. These learners of all ages are the stewards of our country's political traditions, deliberative culture, public institutions and sense of mutual obligation. This goal arises from the [Educating American Democracy Initiative](#). To achieve this goal, More Perfect will work to ensure: K-12 students have access to high-quality civic learning opportunities through the teaching of civic knowledge, skills and disposition; schools will be 'civic ready' with civic learning plans, resources to implement them, and supports from districts, states and the nation; and students show significant progress in proficiency on the civics National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP).

Sustainable Democracy Goal 2

Expanded Service to the Nation: Regardless of income, education, or lived experience, service to community, state, or nation should be a civic rite of passage compelling for and accessible to all Americans, particularly as young Americans enter adulthood. Through national service and volunteering, individuals build skills for effective civic engagement, an understanding of others, a sense of personal agency in their ability to affect change, and investment in the well-being of the larger community. Communities should also be empowered with the knowledge that every individual's actions matter - whether an act of service, shining a light on unmet needs, or helping a neighbor. More Perfect will work to: significantly increase annual national service opportunities through programs such as the Peace Corps, VISTA, AmeriCorps, Conservation Corps and other existing and new programs at the national, state and local levels; increase national and community service opportunities for low-income Americans through paid service and pathways to employment and education; and significantly increase annual regular volunteering as measured by the U.S. Census.

Sustainable Democracy Goal 3

Increased Social Trust: Americans should increase our familiarity with, understanding of, and ability to respectfully relate to people different from ourselves. Bridging across differences does not erase disagreement, but it provides a foundation for engaging different perspectives with tolerance and respect. From that engagement, we can build a new foundation of trust and grace upon which shared humanity is recognized, common challenges can be solved collaboratively, and our democracy can long endure. More Perfect will work to: increase trust in fellow Americans, including among people of different perspectives and political parties; increase the number of trained "bridge-builders" to bring people together in productive problem-solving and engagement; increase the percentage of Americans who reject violence as a means of solving political disputes; and see progress on measures of unity and a culture of "we."

Sustainable Democracy Goal 4

Fair Elections and Effective Governance: Credible and inclusive elections are the bedrock of a democratic society, express the right of citizens to govern themselves, provide the rules of

engagement for political competition, and ensure predictable and peaceful transfers of power. Whether elected or appointed, government officials should serve the public trust on behalf of all Americans. Through fair, inclusive, transparent, and responsive governance, Americans will once again embrace the value of our democratic system and its ability to channel citizens' voice toward shaping solutions to the most challenging issues of our time. More Perfect will work to: increase voter participation and trust in election administration and results; boost federal funding for election administration; make our elected deliberative bodies more broadly representative of their constituencies; and improve transparency, accountability and resilience of government institutions through expanded safeguards against corruption, waste and abuse of power.

Sustainable Democracy Goal 5

Increased trust in accurate news and information: All Americans should have ready access to trusted news sources that provide high quality, vetted, non-partisan, accurate, reliable information and coverage of news at the local, state and national levels. Through promoting high-quality and verifiable information and curtailing the intentional or unintentional spread of harmful and inaccurate information, Americans will be able to engage in democratic debate and disagreement on the basis of shared truths and understanding. More Perfect will work to: reduce incentives and create disincentives for media and social media to spread misinformation and disinformation; teach students to understand the sources and accuracy of information; ensure more Americans have affordable access to the internet with access to news and information; increase investment in independent press, especially local journalism; and boost public trust in accurate news and journalism at all levels.



MORE PERFECT CAMPAIGN

More Perfect is a national campaign to marshal energy, visibility, resources, and results around the five Sustainable Democracy Goals. It will engage diverse leaders from across the ideological spectrum and a wide range of sectors in action-forcing events and capstone conversations that advance the Sustainable Democracy Goals with visibility, alignment of effort, and new resources. The first More Perfect Event, *Our Elections*, will affirm the role of inclusive and credible elections in a democratic society, and feature remarks from President George W. Bush, historian Jon Meacham and former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice. The event will also unveil a series of commitments designed to help restore public trust in the integrity of our elections. In September 2022, the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, together with other Presidential Centers and partners, will host the next More Perfect event on civic learning at the Reagan Library in Simi Valley, CA.

OUR PARTNERS

The Partnership for American Democracy is proud to partner on More Perfect with the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Karsh Institute of Democracy at the University of Virginia, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, and 9 Presidential Centers – the Obama Foundation, The Bush Institute at the George W. Bush Presidential Center, the Clinton Presidential Center, the George and Barbara Bush Foundation, the Carter Center, the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Foundation, the LBJ Foundation, the John F. Kennedy Library Foundation,

and Friends of the Truman Foundation. The Partnership also partners with over 100 civil society organizations committed to advancing the Sustainable Democracy Goals by 2026. Presidential Centers and partners have expertise and interest in collaborating on certain Sustainable Democracy Goals, but not others. By participating in the More Perfect initiative, it does not mean a partner embraces or works on every aspect of every goal.

NEW COMMITMENTS TO DEMOCRATIC RENEWAL

On May 18, 2022, the Partnership for American Democracy and our partners announced a series of significant initiatives to advance democratic renewal. In total, these initiatives represent \$30 million in new philanthropic investment in the future of our country.

New Initiatives to Fair Elections & Effective Governance

- ✓ The **Community Election Protection Program** is an innovative initiative focused on 5 key battleground states to empower local leaders in vulnerable jurisdictions with non-partisan technical support and resources necessary to protect the integrity of elections (Partnership for American Democracy with generous support from the Skoll Foundation and other funders).
- ✓ The **Corporation for Public Broadcasting** is increasing support for its America Amplified Journalism Initiative so that public television and radio stations in 26 states, including the battleground states, will have the resources and editorial guidance they need to develop “frequently asked questions” about elections and voting for the 2022 mid-term elections. They plan to expand this effort to all 50 states by the 2024 elections. The Corporation also recently invested in the radio talk show, “1A Remaking America,” which is examining issues such as political polarization and the dissemination of misinformation and disinformation, as well as efforts to restore trust in public institutions.
- ✓ **Civic Nation** will recruit 5,000 attorneys to volunteer their time this year to ensure trusted elections in 2022 through We the Action, a non-partisan community and platform connecting community-based organizations and NGOs with pro-bono lawyers.
- ✓ **Count Every Vote** is a cross-partisan, three-year program to re-establish faith in America's elections, support election workers and secure more federal funding for election administration and ballot security (Issue One)
- ✓ **Vote is Sacred** will activate the social capital of higher education and faith communities, across the nation, to underscore the centrality of the vote in a religiously diverse democracy (Interfaith America).
- ✓ **Protect Pennsylvania Elections and Protect Wisconsin Elections** are nonpartisan initiatives that will work with local community leaders to organize bipartisan community groups to build support for county election directors and increase public trust in state election outcomes (RepresentUS).
- ✓ **Peace at the Polls** marshals volunteers and others in the civic space to speak up and advocate for peace throughout the election and governing process (The People).

- ✓ **Combatting Foreign Influence in U.S. Elections** is a new bipartisan effort to support state ballot initiatives and federal bills that seek to eliminate foreign government influence in state and federal elections (American Promise).
- ✓ **Vet the Vote** is a national campaign to recruit 100,000 veterans and military family members to become the next generation of poll workers (We the Veterans).
- ✓ The **Civic Trust** is a new resource for employers and communities that includes activities to improve understanding of and involvement in American civics. In 2022, The Civic Trust will pilot a “Civic Time Off” (CTO) model for interested employers. CTO will include resources for employers to build a program to support employee engagement in their local elections through service as volunteer poll workers (U.S. Chamber of Commerce and U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation).
- ✓ The **Civic Alliance’s** Election Day of Service initiative will return and expand in 2022. Through our Election Day of Service, we help our 1274 member companies recruit poll workers, offer space to vote, and provide employees time to vote. This year, Civic Alliance will offer free legal support for election officials in response to serious threats facing local and state election officials.
- ✓ Through the U.S. Alliance for Election Excellence, the **Center for Tech and Civic Life** encourages Americans to support election workers by [sharing a note of appreciation](#).

New Commitments to Advancing Civic Infrastructure, Bridge-Building & National Service

- ✓ **Rockefeller Brothers Fund** President Stephen Heintz will announce an initial philanthropic investment in a new **Trust for Civic Infrastructure** that will support community-led efforts across the country to strengthen and expand the spaces, programs, information, and leadership that bolster civic capacity and offer people opportunities to live well together, build common ground, and solve local problems.
- ✓ Over the last two years, the **Walmart Foundation** has made two commitments to the Partnership for American Democracy’s bridge building programs. The most recent grant will support bridge building programs in two national sectors – higher education and libraries – to learn how bridge building can be institutionalized at scale. This work will shed light on how shared spaces in communities provide opportunities for people to come together across lines of differences.
- ✓ A consortium of donors led by Gerald and Karen Goldberg of Hartford, Connecticut is launching a **Fund for Service and Volunteering** at the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Hartford to support the Partnership for American Democracy and our partners as we work collaboratively to expand national and community service opportunities and programs.
- ✓ **The Lilly Endowment** is supporting the Partnership for American Democracy’s efforts to strengthen the pluralistic nature of our society by engaging deeply with a broad range of organizations, and sectors spanning the ideological spectrum in service of democratic renewal.