

Election Countdown

Every election matters from voting in a new president to a new school board member

August 10, 2020

We now have less than 100 days until the 2020 presidential election and this year's election is perhaps the most important of our time. I know, I know — you've heard this before and it's a tired cliché, but clichés are clichés for a reason — they often tend to be true. This year, the decisions voters make will reverberate for generations to come — through all three branches of American government and around the globe.

The election, to be held Tuesday, November 3, will include voting for president and vice-president, one-third of the U.S. Senate, and all of the U.S. House of Representatives. State and local races will be on the ballot, too. The presidential contest alone will represent perhaps the starkest choice between two competing visions we've ever known.

The president who takes the oath of office in January, will almost certainly have the opportunity to reshape the face of the U.S. Supreme Court. By the time he is sworn in, four justices — Stephen Breyer, Clarence Thomas, Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Samuel Alito — will be north of 70-years-old. Justices Breyer and Ginsburg are in their 80's. Justices Breyer, Thomas and Ginsburg each have served on the court for more than a quarter century — making them three of the longest serving justices in American history.

The importance of this election was perhaps most eloquently emphasized in a recent [op-ed in the New York Times by the late congressman John Lewis](#), following his death on July 17. Congressman Lewis, a civil rights pioneer, said "Voting and participating in the democratic process are key. The vote is the most powerful nonviolent change agent you have in a democratic society. You must use it because it is not guaranteed. You can lose it." Recent polls indicate voter enthusiasm is at an all-time high and we will have record voter turnout on November 3 — be it in person or by mail. For these reasons, vote early, where permissible, to reduce the strain of long lines come November 3. Foresee and anticipate delays at the U.S. Postal Service and plan accordingly to ensure your ballot arrives on time.

Get Out the Vote

You have the power to decide on the quality of life you want for yourself, your family and friends, and future generations. By voting, you take a stand and express your position on the issues you care about like raising the minimum wage, ensuring adequate funding for public transportation, affordable housing, or public schools. Elections are decided by those who vote, so please take time to learn about the ballot measures and the candidates' positions on them, and then vote your conscience.

Voting is your chance to choose how your tax dollars are spent – including funding for social services and health care. Support the candidates and ballot measures who will help your community, city, state, and country for the greater good.

If you're not yet registered to vote, it's ok – there's still time. If you've moved, changed your name, or want to update your political party affiliation, you simply need to [update your voter registration](#). While you're doing that, think about calling, writing or emailing your family and friends and letting them know where you stand on the issues, and which candidates you think reflect your values in this election. Ask for their support and their vote. Submit letters to the editors and opinion pieces to your local newspapers. Volunteer your time to help with voter registration or at the polls on election day. With so much in the balance, including but not limited to a worldwide pandemic and its effects on our families, friends and communities, now is the time to get involved, do something, take action, express yourself, let others know how you think and feel, and why that matters to you.

Census Participation

Yes, it's that time again. The 2020 census began in mid-March and ends on September 30. To illustrate why this is important, let's take a ride on the Way Back Machine. Remember when the iPhone didn't let us take selfies, Netflix offered DVD rentals by mail, and you were super excited to share your life with your family and friends on the world's biggest social networking website called MySpace? Ok - the government doesn't care about our selfies, but it does want to track a decade's worth of change like where we live, our family status, and how many of us live in the U.S.

Our communities benefit the most when the census counts everyone. When you respond to the census, you help your local community get its fair share of the more than \$675 billion-per-year in federal funds spent on schools, public works, hospital, roads, and other vital programs. Businesses use census data to decide where to build offices, stores and factories — all of which create jobs. Developers use the census to revitalize old neighborhoods and build new homes. Local governments use the census for emergency preparedness and public safety. Residents use the census to support community initiatives involving legislation, consumer advocacy and quality of life. The census population count also determines how many representatives each state will have in Congress for the next 10 years – who will carry your voice, your positions on the issues, to our nation's capital.

If you haven't participated yet, there's still time. The census has never been easier (or more important) to complete. There are three ways to participate in the 2020 census: 1) By mail - the paper form is available in English and Spanish and can be mailed back to the U.S. Census Bureau; 2) Online - this is the first time the census can be completed online. [Visit the Census website](#) to fill out the survey in 13 languages — including English, Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese; and, 3) By phone - respondents may call the Census Bureau and provide answers over the phone in the 13 languages mentioned and through a Telecommunication Device for the Deaf, if needed.

Census participation is required by law. The information provided on the census form is private and confidential. **It cannot be shared with any other federal department or agency, including immigration authorities – and the 2020 census does NOT ask about citizenship.**

For all our sakes, please participate, get involved, take action, and make a difference.



Henry N. Tuttle
President and Chief Executive Officer

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