

Seven Simple Proposals to Fix Our Broken Elections

Joe Biden may have declared victory, but whether he or Donald Trump officially wins the presidency may remain undetermined for weeks, even months, and even then we may see the election brought before the Supreme Court.

Who knows?

What we do know is that this election has delivered a mess not seen since 2000, when the Supreme Court had to rule on whether Bush or Gore had won the race. We'll see recounts and accusations of voter fraud, and as time drags on, the bitter acrimony that already divides our country will only deepen.

A contested election weighted by accusations of deceit and ballot irregularities was the last thing this country needed. When tens of millions of voters believe the election was stolen from their candidate, our American Republic is in serious danger.

Here are some proposals for the future that might help end some of these troubles.

First, declare the first Tuesday in November a national holiday. Voting is a primary right and duty of the American citizen, and we should honor that right by giving Election Day the same status as Independence Day, Martin Luther King Day Jr., or Presidents' Day. I've read of [frustrated voters](#) having to leave the polls without depositing a ballot because of work obligations. Making Election Day a legal holiday would ease that situation.

Require voter identification. We need an ID to drive a car, obtain a library card, and board an airplane. It's absurd not to demand ID for voting.

Limit the availability of early voting to one week directly ahead of the election. The number of days and weeks given to our elections is not only ridiculous, but also allows for more fraud.

We should say “Never again” to mail-in ballots. This year the excuse for this procedure was avoiding the COVID-19 virus, which is ridiculous when we consider the new normal of our everyday lives. If wearing masks and social distancing work in Walmart and Kroger, then why wouldn’t they work in polling locations?

While mail-in ballots should be a thing of the past, absentee ballots for military serving overseas, for citizens living abroad, and for those who are traveling or too ill to leave their homes on Election Day should remain in place.

Shorten the election season. Cut it by two-thirds. Many of us have come to dread this relentless, lengthy ordeal. These campaigns are divisive and incredibly expensive, in part because the United States has the longest election process of any country in the world by far. In 2015, for example, [NPR reported](#) that the national election campaigns in the USA were 596 days compared to Great Britain’s 139 days and Canada’s 78 days. The difference? Most other countries in the world have laws limiting the length of such campaigns.

It’s time to do the same here.

Prosecute those who commit fraud during an election year. The people who try to vote more than once, those who create false ballots, and those who refuse to permit legitimate [monitors](#) from another party to enter polling places should be hauled before a judge and face stiff fines and time in prison. These cheaters are undermining American democracy.

For a number of years America has endured a culture war – a battle, depending on which side you stand – between good and evil, between right and wrong. Our election procedures just

widen that divide, pushing us apart rather than making us citizens of the same land.

So let me leave my readers with a question: Why is it that a yutz like me with little direct experience in politics can come up with these proposals? Why aren't those in our government considering these or similar alternatives to avoid the next train wreck coming down the tracks? Is this truly the best they can do? Or are they just that corrupt?

As the National Inquirer used to ask, "Enquiring minds want to know."

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