

STORMING STATE CAPITOLS

Voting rights, election integrity, and voter confidence in 2022

A project of Democracy Initiative Education Fund

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Not long ago, the integrity of U.S. federal, state, and local elections was taken for granted. Sadly, this is no longer the case.

More than a year after a failed attempt to violently overturn the results of the 2020 presidential election, manufactured controversies about non-existent voter fraud have led to persistent and damaging attacks on voting rights in multiple states. In addition, thirteen state legislatures passed laws in 2021 which could allow politicians to overturn the preference of voters in future elections.

Storming State Capitols is a report from The Democracy Initiative Education Fund (DIEF), which supports a coalition of 75 civil rights, environmental, labor, and civic organizations. Due to the failure to fix or nix outdated Senate filibuster rules, federal legislation to set uniform national voting standards did not pass in 2022. Americans need to be aware of the challenges they might face in exercising their right to vote and attempts by partisan actors to undermine the election results. It is crucial to assess the current landscape for elections and voting rights in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

Information from each index summarized in a user-friendly infographic are included in the report and available at <https://www.democracyinitiative.org/storming-state-capitols-home/>

The key question driving this project is: **How confident will voters be in their state's election processes in 2022? We created a unique 10-index compendium to evaluate key elements of the electoral process, including:**

1. Voter Registration

2. Voter Identification

3. Early Voting

4. Safe Voting (Vote at Home or Ballot Box)

5. Ballot Acceptance

6. Logistical Barriers to Voting

7. Equipment, Security, and Auditing

8. Independent Election Administration and Certification

9. External Interference in Voting

10. Partisan Influences within the Political Climate

Every voter, regardless of where they live, should have full confidence in the electoral process. But even though the United States of America is the oldest modern democracy, the battle for our democratic rights is not settled. Our detailed review of the voting rights landscape shows that tens of millions of voters in multiple jurisdictions will have to be extra vigilant in 2022 to ensure they can register to vote, cast a ballot, and have that ballot reliably counted.

Twenty-three states received an overall “medium confidence” score, indicating these states have adopted policies designed to facilitate voter participation or minimize the impact of structural barriers. The medium confidence states are:

Alaska, Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Rhode Island, Virginia, West Virginia, and Wyoming.



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Based on the performance of states across these ten indices, we found 18 states with a grade of low confidence, with barriers that make it more difficult to vote, require a greater investment of time to vote, or otherwise discourage participation. The low confidence states are:

Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, New Hampshire, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin.

Among the low confidence states:



Arkansas



Mississippi



Missouri

Nine states and the District of Columbia received a “high confidence” score, showing that these jurisdictions have attempted to remove structural barriers and accelerate voter participation. The high confidence jurisdictions are:

California, Colorado, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maryland, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Vermont, and Washington.

Among the high confidence jurisdictions:



Colorado



Maryland



Washington state

