

Restrictive Voter Registration Laws: Impacts and Short Term Mitigation Strategies

A report by the Student Public Interest Research Groups (Student PIRGs)

Summary

It is a well documented fact that many states and localities have laws on the books that unfairly restrict citizens' ability to both register to vote and vote. These laws should be reformed to allow the broadest access to the political process possible. Until these reforms are achieved, however, there are ways in which on-the-ground voter mobilization efforts can mitigate the impact of some, but not all restrictions. During the 2006 midterm elections, the Student PIRGs tested the effectiveness of a selection of these mitigation methods – namely enhanced voter education and intensive relationship building with local elections officials - on five college campuses in Arizona and New Mexico. The results were mixed; we successfully eased some of New Mexico's restrictions, but not Arizona's. Our conclusion is that while voter mobilization organizations should definitely incorporate these methods into their organizing efforts, focus on such efforts should not distract from focusing on reforming these unfair voter participation restrictions. Many barriers are nearly impossible to overcome, even by using our tested methods. Moreover, many communities do not have the resources, access or influence with local elections officials to use our techniques successfully.

In light of these findings, we recommend that voter mobilization organizations should prioritize outreach to local elections officials and educate volunteers and voters about registration and voting rules. However, voting groups must also advocate for a uniform, national set of standards to make voting for all U.S. citizens easily accessible.

The Student PIRGs' New Voters Project

The Student PIRGs are a network of state-based, student-directed and funded public interest organizations working on over 250 college campuses in more than twenty states. We have a thirty-five year track record of successfully organizing and mobilizing young people on issues of environmental protection, corporate accountability, political reform, social justice, and many others. Additionally, for two decades, the Student PIRGs have been leaders in youth voter registration and mobilization efforts.

In 1983, to address the problem of declining youth voting rates, the Student PIRGs launched the National Student Campaign for Voter Registration, the nation's first major youth mobilization effort since 18 years-olds received the franchise in 1972. This initial effort registered nearly one million students to vote through the 1980s. In 1994, working with Rock the Vote, the Campus Green Vote, ACORN and Green Corps, the Student PIRGs launched the Youth Vote coalition, which included 100 organizations, registered more than a million voters through the participating organizations, and helped to ensure coordination and collaboration within the youth civic engagement community. In 2003, we launched the New Voters Project and have since registered 600,000 young people to vote and made 650,000 peer-to-peer Get Out the Vote contacts to encourage them to vote on Election Day.

Through our on-the-ground experience in Virginia, we encountered systematic challenges to the right of students to vote in the cities where they attend school. Virginia law gives county registrars broad discretion to determine whether or not students may register to vote at their campus addresses.ⁱ As a result, in some counties and municipalities (such as Montgomery County and Charlottesville City), students can register and vote using their dorm addresses yet in others (such as Norfolk City and Radford City) students are not allowed to use dorm addresses, and sometimes are even barred from using rental addresses as a residence from which they can vote. This means that in some counties in Virginia, it was easy to register and turn out students to vote using their campus addresses, and in others the majority of voter registration forms collected during on-campus voter registration drives were rejected.

Such restrictions can significantly impact youth turnout rates. A study by the Institute for Public Affairs and Civic Engagement (PACE), "Democracy and College Student Voting,"ⁱⁱ identified twelve states that restrict students' ability to vote at their school address and found that, on the whole, voter turnout in the 1996 presidential election was lower in states with restrictions on student voting than states with encouraging statutes.ⁱⁱⁱ Indeed, in Virginia, which the PACE study found to be a state with significant restrictions on student voting, 2004 youth voter turnout declined – a complete reversal of trends in other parts of the country that saw increases in youth voter turnout. Such a striking difference in young voter turnout rates is indicative of the severe implications that such restrictions have on democratic participation.

While the experience of the Student PIRGs New Voters Project in Virginia revealed the existence of significant restrictions on young voters and their impact on student turnout, it also revealed strategies that can be effective in mitigating these restrictions. Throughout our history, the Student PIRGs have thoroughly trained volunteers to effectively register and turnout voters. As such, we were able to adapt to the individual requirements for voter registration in individual districts. These adaptations included integrating more of the technical details into our training programs and a strong focus on building solid relationships with local elections officials. We attribute our ability to register large numbers of young people with relative ease in Montgomery County, for example, to the ability of our local staff to establish a close working relationship with the local registrar. Similarly, we learned from our experiences in both 2004 and 2005 that on campuses where we invested the time to train student volunteers to communicate all the various rules surrounding voter registration and voting, we encountered fewer registration and voting problems.

The Student PIRGs 2006 New Voters Project presented an ideal opportunity to test our theory that if both the enhanced volunteer training and registrar relationship building techniques used by the Student PIRGs New Voters Project in 2005 were conducted in a more systematic manner and on a wider scale, youth voter registration drives can overcome similar restrictions in other states. The midterm election also offered the chance to further document and expose instances of unfair restrictions on voting, and help build the case for structural reform.

Study Goals

In the course of our 2006 project^{iv}, we set out to determine the extent to which certain techniques could mitigate the impact of restrict youth voter registration rules, document additional instances of restrictive voter participation rules,, and increase general awareness about the negative impacts such rules have on youth turnout.

Report Scope

We performed three sets of analyses. First we performed a qualitative assessment based on the on-the-ground experience of our volunteers and organizers in Arizona and New Mexico – both states with restrictive voter registration rules. Second, we employed a quantitative comparison between the voter registration rates at the schools in Arizona and New Mexico, and of comparable Student PIRG campuses in 6 other non-restrictive states. Third we performed an additional quantitative analysis of youth voter turnout rates in all eight states and assessed the degree to which restrictive voter laws impact Arizona and New Mexico voter turnout.

We studied the impact of restrictive voter participation rules on five college campuses in New Mexico and Arizona: the University of Arizona; Arizona State University-Tempe; Arizona State University-West; Northern Arizona University; and the University of New Mexico. We chose these campuses because both states have restrictive voter registration rules, and because the Student PIRGs had the capacity to conduct a traditional voter mobilization campaign at those campuses. This would enable us to compare the results of our effort fairly consistently with other, comparable Student PIRG efforts in states without restrictive laws^v.

Qualitative Assessment of On-the-Ground Organizing Experience

New Mexico

In New Mexico, state regulations adopted in 2005 placed new restrictions on voter registration drives. The restrictions required that all “all third-party registration agents” sign an oath to obey the laws of New Mexico prior to registering voters in the State. According to the implementation guidance issued by the Secretary of State, this oath “shall contain language advising the agent of criminal penalties for false registration,” and asks for the agent to provide his or her social security number, date of birth and address. The oath must be provided to the Secretary of State’s office or a local county clerk. In addition, third-party registrants must obtain voter registration forms at either a local county clerk or Secretary of State’s office, and may only be provided with more than fifty voter registration forms at one time, although county clerks “retain discretion to increase these quantities for special events or circumstances.”^{vi} The Secretary of State’s website implies that may use the National Voter Registration Form without any of the above restrictions^{vii}; however our experience on the ground was that this practice was actively discouraged by local elections officials enough to virtually remove it as an option for our local organizers and volunteers.

Prior to launching our voter registration campaign at the University of New Mexico, we analyzed these restrictions and concluded that they could significantly dampen our voter mobilization effort at the University of New Mexico. One of the cornerstones of a successful voter mobilization effort is the ability to centrally coordinate the recruitment, training and deployment of large numbers of volunteers, most of whom have never engaged in a political activity before. If each of our volunteers had to make an individual trip to the registrar’s office in order to even obtain voter registration forms – let alone make repeated trips – we knew we would not be able to recruit the number of volunteers necessary to run a serious voter registration drive.

To overcome this potential hurdle, we developed a plan to develop a relationship with the local registrar. Through this relationship, we hypothesized that we could educate the local registrar sufficiently to allocate our operation as a “special event or circumstance” as provided for by statute. This would enable us to run our traditional voter mobilization drive.

This theory turned out to be correct. In the fall of 2006, Student PIRG Campus Organizer Jamison Tessneer met with the Albuquerque City registrar almost immediately upon arriving at the University of New Mexico. Through this and several subsequent meetings, he succeeded in developing a relationship with the local registrar and investing him in the success of our efforts. As a result, we were able to successfully overcome the barriers that we anticipated. Although our volunteers were still required to go through a voter registration training and, in some cases, did need to pick up voter registration forms individually at the registrar’s office, the registrar’s office came to regard our efforts as important and unique enough to allow Jamison to pick up and drop off large batches of voter registration forms on behalf of the other volunteers. This greatly enhanced the efficiency of the effort.

Arizona

In contrast, Arizona’s voter identification requirements were more difficult to overcome. In Arizona, a person who is registering for the first time must present an Arizona driver’s license number. This requirement can place out-of-state entering freshmen at a disadvantage because most do not possess an in-state driver’s license when they arrive for school in the fall. For students who do not possess an in-state driver’s license, the Secretary of State allows them to present a passport, birth certificate, or out-of-state driver’s license if it “indicates that the applicant has provided satisfactory proof of citizenship. A copy of these documents must be attached to the voter registration form.”^{viii}

These alternative forms of identification, however, are often not readily available to students. Many may not have ready access to a passport or birth certificate, and typical driver’s licenses do not list what forms of

identification were provided to the issuing authority. Thus, Arizona's driver's license requirement can suppress participation by out-of-state students.

We believed that if we educated students about the citizenship requirement and encouraged out-of-state students to come to campus with birth certificates and/or passports, that enough students would do so to surmount the initial obstacle.

In an attempt to overcome the restrictive effect of Arizona's drivers license law, our campus volunteers were trained to provide specific information about where and how to vote, and what to do if the student encountered problems on Election Day. Volunteers were provided with, and trained to use, specific scripts for all of the above activities. Samples of materials used in this education process, such as voter registration volunteer scripts, Get Out the Vote canvassing scripts, Get Out the Vote volunteer phone calling scripts and emails sent prior to voter registration deadlines and Election Day, are included in Appendix A. To ensure that no incorrectly filled out registration forms fell through the cracks, each night volunteers combed through all the voter registration forms collected that day to double check for missing or incorrect information, and called back students whose forms were incomplete. This allowed us to flag potential problems before we delivered any forms to elections officials.

In addition to these standard education tactics, in Arizona we also put a letter in every first year student's mailbox explaining the requirements to register to vote, and obtained portable copy machines in order to photocopy passports and birth certificates from registrants on the spot.

These additional education efforts were unable to overcome the impact of Arizona's requirement that all first-time registrants possess an Arizona driver's license or present a passport or birth certificate. We believe this failure is a result of several factors: As volunteers registered students on campus, most students attending University from other states did not carry passports and birth certificates with them. Without the ease and encouragement provided by an on-campus volunteer, these students were unlikely to vote at another time. Furthermore, the audience targeted by our efforts is not inclined to register to vote on their own accord and therefore, particularly disinclined to remember to carry birth certificates or passports with them. Additionally, our volunteers found that students regard birth certificates and passports as particularly sensitive documents that they are reluctant to bring with them to campus, or ask their parents to mail to them.

Quantitative Analysis #1: Impacts of Restrictive Voter Registration Rules on the Student PIRGs' Voter Registration Efforts

Our qualitative experience in New Mexico and Arizona found that peer-to-peer mobilization efforts such as those operated by the Student PIRGs can successfully overcome some restrictions placed on registration drives such as attempts to limit volunteer participation in the drives. Operations such as ours, however, cannot successfully overcome other restrictions such as requiring an in-state driver's license for first-time registrants.

To determine whether or not our qualitative conclusions were correct, we performed a quantitative analysis of the results of our voter registration efforts in New Mexico and Arizona with our voter registration efforts at nine other comparable universities in 6 other states without restrictive voter registration and voting rules. The results are outlined in Table 1 below.

We found that our voter registration drive at the University of New Mexico performed as well as the other nine campuses in this study, but that our efforts in Arizona performed below par.

The median registration rates on all campuses in six states in which the New Voters Project operated in 2006 was 3.8 percent of the student body. Registration rates at the University of New Mexico matched this

average, indicating that restrictions on registration did not noticeably depress registration rates. On the Arizona campuses, however, the New Voters Project only registered 3.5% of the student body.

The 0.3% difference in Arizona may seem small. However, this is a very significant discrepancy that represents 863 students who could have been registered to vote. Moreover, it is likely that the impact of registration restrictions is muted in our analysis because Arizona's identification requirement was actually lifted for the four days prior to the voter registration deadline.^{ix} After confirming with local elections officials that most forms of identification were acceptable for the last four days, we made one last voter registration push. Anecdotally, our volunteers and staff reported that our voter registration rates went up significantly in those last four days as a result of the injunction.^x Were the injunction not in place, we are confident that our results in Arizona would have been even lower as compared to the other schools.

Table 1: Comparison of Student PIRG voter registration efforts in New Mexico and Arizona with Student PIRG voter registration efforts in states without restrictive voter registration and voting rules

Campus	Enrollment (Department of Education)	Number Registered	Percent of campus registered
University of Arizona	37036	1028	2.8%
Northern Arizona University	18773	460	2.5%
Arizona State University-West	7734	746	9.6%
Arizona State University-Tempe	51612	1824	3.5%
University of New Mexico	26172	1001	3.8%
University of Southern California	32836	1277	3.9%
California State University-Long Beach	34547	1110	3.2%
California State University-Fullerton	35040	1379	3.9%
University of Northern Colorado	13622	1316	9.7%
University of Southern Maine	10974	520	4.7%
University of Nevada-Reno	16336	748	4.6%
Ohio State University	50504	1681	3.3%
University of Rhode Island	15095	474	3.1%
University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh	11433	671	5.9%
Median	21955	831	3.8%
AZ	28789	1015	3.5%
NM	26172	1001	3.8%

Source: Student PIRGs' New Voters Project and U.S. Department of Education

Quantitative Analysis #2: Impacts of Restrictions on Overall Youth Turnout in New Mexico and Arizona

To further assess the degree to which restrictive voter laws impact student turnout in Arizona and New Mexico, we performed an additional quantitative analysis. This analysis revealed that youth voter turnout in Arizona and New Mexico was lower than the median turnout for all eight states. While this analysis does not translate into a definitive conclusion, it does provide an indication of the degree to which voter registration restrictions contribute to Arizona and New Mexico's relatively low youth vote turnout. In addition, earlier studies have reached similar conclusions.

Table 2 directly below contains 2006 voter turnout for 18-29 year olds. Because there are many factors that account for a state's voting rates, we attempted to focus the data on simply youth voting behavior. We did this by weighing each state's youth voter turnout with the turnout rate of older voters.

We found that once adjusted for overall population voting habits, both New Mexico and Arizona's voter turnout was considerably lower than the median for all eight states. Nevada, a non-restrictive state, also fell significantly below the median average. California, a non-restrictive state, fell below the median, but not significantly.

Table 2: Comparison of 2006 youth voter turnout in eight states targeted by the Student PIRGs' New Voters Project

State	Voter Turnout Among 18-29 year old Citizens	Voter Turnout Among 30 year old and older Citizens	Ratio of 18-29 voter turnout to 30 and older voter turnout
Arizona	23%	52%	0.44
California	25%	54%	0.46
Maine	32%	65%	0.49
Nevada	20%	48%	0.42
New Mexico	25%	62%	0.40
Ohio	31%	59%	0.53
Rhode Island	35%	65%	0.54
Wisconsin	40%	63%	0.63
Median			0.48

Source: Center for Research and Information on Civic Learning and Engagement's analysis of the U.S. Census Bureau's November 2006 Current Population Survey Supplement.

<http://www.youngvoterstrategies.org/index.php?tg=fileman&idx=get&inl=1&id=1&qr=Y&path=Research&file=Young+Voter+Turnout+Up+in+2006.pdf>

Other instances of restrictive practices

Although the scope of this study was deliberately focused on Arizona and New Mexico, our 2006 New Voters Project uncovered several other instances of significant restrictions on voter participation in the course of our twenty state project. These additional findings should reinforce our conclusion that vigilance by voting organizations and serious structural reforms are critically needed.

South Carolina

The Student PIRGs conducted voter mobilization efforts at both the University of South Carolina and Winthrop University, in Columbia and Rock Hill, respectively. However, the two efforts could not have been more different, due to differences in the way each town's local registrar interpreted South Carolina election rules. While we were able to register University of South Carolina students to vote with virtually no restrictions, at Winthrop students could only register to vote at their parents' addresses. According to the Winthrop student government leaders and administrators we worked with, the local voting registrar does not regard a campus address as a legitimate domicile, and refuses to approve registration forms with a campus address. As a result, our registration drive met with only limited success in Rock Hill, but great success in Columbia.

The restrictive registration efforts practiced in Rock Hill are a result of inconsistencies between state law and the South Carolina State Elections Commission's guidelines. On the one hand, South Carolina law defines a person's residence as 'the place where a person has his true, fixed and permanent home and principle establishment, to which he has, whenever he is absent, an intention of returning.'^{xi} Under this definition, local registrars can allow students to vote where they attend college and reside the majority of the year. On the other hand, the South Carolina State Elections Commission's official guidance provided to localities states: "Students may register to vote where they attend college only if they establish that they are a resident of that

community. In establishing such residence, students must demonstrate that they have a present intention to remain in the community."^{xii}

In doing so, the Elections Commission effectively changed the intent of the statute by putting the burden on the registrant to demonstrate their intent for their campus address to be their domicile. This effectively empowered registrars to restrict on-campus registration if they choose to do so.

Denver, Colorado

Our experience in Denver on Election Day demonstrated the importance of voter mobilization organizations to be ever-vigilant about problems all the way through Election Day.

In the 2006 election cycle, the Denver Election Commission made changes to its systems that in theory should have increased voter participation. First, in response to a campaign led by student government and the CoPIRG Student Chapters, the Commission established a new polling center in the student union of the University of Colorado Denver. Second, the city modified its voting system to allow Denver residents to vote at any polling site in the city.

The Commission, however, did not plan adequately for the subsequent dramatic spike in turnout to the new polling site in the Student Union, which had a central location that attracted both students and downtown workers. They did not install nearly enough voting machines, or hire enough staff to handle the volume of voters. As a result, a long line snaked from the polling site throughout and outside the building, and students and citizens waited for hours to vote. The line was so long that the Commission kept the poll open until 10:30 pm, more than three hours after the official close of polls in order to allow every one who wished to vote.

The CoPIRG Student Chapters worked to make the best of the situation, securing emergency food donations and entertainment that helped persuade most of the students to stay in the line and vote. However, this is a good example of how even a well-intentioned elections office can unintentionally impose voting restrictions as a result of poor planning.

Recommendations

In light of these findings, we offer the following recommendations:

1. Voter mobilization organizations should prioritize outreach to local elections officials.

Although overly restrictive voter registration laws should be eliminated, working with local registrars to understand local voting rules and facilitate voter registration can help build partnerships that over time can eliminate barriers to student voting and significantly higher youth voting rates.

2. Educate volunteers and voters about registration and voting rules.

Many students are completely unaware of what identification or proof of residency they need in order to register and vote at the polls. Proof of address is sometimes difficult to find for the average college student – their state-issued ID is often from their hometown and if they live in residence halls they are unlikely to receive utility bills. Therefore, educational efforts are critical in order to ensure registration forms are processed correctly and students have a successful experience at the ballot box.

Volunteer training is essential to making this happen. Just as volunteers should be trained to be effective at persuading people to register to vote, volunteers should also be trained to be familiar with the rules around voter registration and voting. The Student PIRGs invested a considerable amount of resources in the summer of 2006 researching all of the relevant registration and voting rules for each of the target states and precincts, designed a unique set of volunteer training materials for each locality, and prioritized training volunteers to communicate those rules to their fellow students.

3. There should be a uniform, national set of standards to make voting more accessible. The Student PIRGs have developed a set of principles that should guide these standards:

- Citizens should be able to register and vote wherever they currently choose to reside, with no interference from the state.
- Any identification requirements for voter registration or voting should be as broad as possible, should include items that average citizens commonly have in their possession, and should not include items that average citizens do not typically carry with them.
- Citizens should be able to register and vote up to Election Day.
- Citizens should be given an opportunity to register to vote as soon as they become eligible.
- Citizens should be notified in writing, by phone and electronically anytime their registration status is changed.
- Citizen-sponsored registration drives should be encouraged, not discouraged.

Future work in this area

Following up on the 2006 New Voters Project, the Student PIRGs are teaming up with our national advocacy office, USPIRG, and our allies in the election reform community, to promote policies that make elections more accessible. We plan to conduct a fifty state assessment of election and registration laws in order to identify where changes are both needed and politically feasible. We will release a state-by-state scorecard of our findings that we will use to improve both media coverage and public awareness of the problems and possible solutions. From all of this, we will choose four to six target states with the greatest potential for reform before November 2008. Then, starting in fall of 2007, we will begin a defined campaign to enlist support of key policy makers, opinion leaders and engage the public.

Simultaneously, we are gearing up to run the Student PIRGs' New Voters Project in up to twenty states in 2008. A major part of the workplan includes developing strong relationships with local elections officials in order to both mitigate potential voting restrictions, and in some cases, expand the range of voting opportunities for young people. In preparation, we will use the above mentioned research to inform our volunteer training materials to ensure that we clearly communicate voter participation rules to students.

Acknowledgements

This report is possible thanks to the support of the Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Appendix A: Samples of Volunteer Education Materials 2006 Student PIRGs' New Voters Project

New Voters Project
Fall 2006
AZ Student Vote Coalition GOTV Phonebanking Rap

Hi, is _____ there?

Hi, this is _____ from the Arizona Student Vote Coalition and Arizona PIRG's New Voters Project. How are you?
Great!

I'm calling to make sure we can count on your vote on Election Day/this election season.

We're making sure we all vote so we can get politicians to pay attention to us.

Can we count on your vote?

When will you be voting? [mark on voting sheet]

IF VOTER NEEDS EXTRA CONTEXT: This year is a HUGE election year in Arizona and the candidates are mostly talking about issues that concern older people, like prescription drugs and property taxes. They're not really talking about the issues we're concerned with. Their focus isn't all that surprising – we don't vote and senior citizens do. In this upcoming election, if we don't do anything about it, older people are almost 3 times as likely to vote as we are. We're changing that by making sure we all vote.

Great! Have a good night!

HOW YOU VOTE: In Arizona, every voter needs the following to cast a ballot:

1. A valid photo ID with your voter registration address
or
2. Two pieces of mail that prove your address – acceptable mail are utility bills, a vehicle registration, and bank statements

EXTRA INFORMATION:

1. For polling information on campus, students should visit: www.azstudents.org
2. If a student is having problems voting, they should contact: Serena Unrein, 602-294-6900

Tips:

- 1) Be friendly and conversational.
- 2) Listen actively to people and be sure not to interrupt if they are talking.
- 3) Keep good records on the back of the interest card.
- 4) Only count definite yeses as a "yes". Anything else is a "maybe" or a "no". Separate these into separate piles so we can count how many people say they are definitely coming
- 5) Our office number is _____, in _____. Weekly meetings are _____ at _____.
- 6) The next upcoming events are (include day/time/location/descriptions):

**OSU Votes
Fall 2006
GOTV Phonebanking Rap**

Hi, is _____ there?

Hi, this is _____ from OSU Votes. How are you? Great!

I'm calling to make sure we can count on your vote on Election Day.

We're making sure we all vote so we can get politicians to pay attention to us.

Can we count on your vote?

When will you be voting? [**mark on voting sheet**]

IF VOTER NEEDS EXTRA CONTEXT: This year is a HUGE election year in Ohio and the candidates are mostly talking about issues that concern older people, like prescription drugs. They're not really talking about the issues we're concerned with. Their focus isn't all that surprising – we don't vote and senior citizens do. In this upcoming election, if we don't do anything about it, older people are almost 3 times as likely to vote as we are. We're changing that by making sure we all vote.

Great! Have a good night!

HOW YOU VOTE: In Ohio, every voter needs any one of following to cast a ballot:

1. a current and valid photo id (like a drivers license)
2. state id showing current address and not expired
3. current utility bill in your name at your current address
4. bank statement in your name at your current address
5. pay check stub that shows your current address
6. government check that shows your current address
7. military id with your name and current address

EXTRA INFORMATION:

3. For polling information on campus, students should visit: www.osuvotes.org
4. For non-partisan information:
 - a. Vote-smart.org
 - b. Lwvohio.org
 - c. Ohioelect.com
 - d. Campaign.com
 - e. Ontheissues.org

Tips:

- 1) Be friendly and conversational.
- 2) Listen actively to people and be sure not to interrupt if they are talking.
- 3) Keep good records on the back of the interest card.
- 4) Only count definite yeses as a "yes". Anything else is a "maybe" or a "no". Separate these into separate piles so we can count how many people say they are definitely voting.

Sample Tabling Rap
OSU Votes
Fall 2006

Hi! Will you sign a pledge to vote?

<hand over the clipboard.>

Voter Registration/Absentee Ballot Request (As they're filling out the pledge):

I'm _____ with OSU Votes. We're getting students to sign this pledge to show politicians we're voting – that way, they'll start to pay attention to us. We're getting 5,000 students to pledge to vote on campus. Will you pledge? Make sure to give us your number and email, and please note what time you're voting, so we know when to follow up with you.

Volunteer Pitch:

Like I said, I'm with OSU Votes, and this is just one part of our campaign to get politicians to pay attention – we already registered 1,681 people to vote and over the next week we're doing tabling, door-to-door canvassing, and phoning. Our goals hinge on getting a ton of people talking to potential voters – so to make it all happen we're looking for people to volunteer. Are you interested in getting involved?

Just put a star next to your name and we'll get in touch with you – or better yet, do you know when you're free, I have a list of scheduled events at the table over here...

Ohio State University Get Out the Vote email

Get Out and Vote!

As you all probably know, Tuesday is Election Day! The OSU Votes coalition is working hard to make sure that young people in Ohio get out to the polls again this year, because if we show up in force, we can make sure politicians pay attention to us. We registered almost 1700 students to vote this fall and have contacted more than 1000 students to remind them to get out to the polls!



There are some important things that you should know as you get ready to go to the polls tomorrow.

The polls open at 6:30 a.m. and close at 7:30 p.m.

You must bring an I.D. that has your current address. You can bring a driver's license, a utility bill, a copy of your lease, or your advising report, which you can get online from Ohio State.

For more information about where to vote and what will be on the ballot, visit the coalition website at <http://www.osuvotes.org>.

And make sure to remind your friends, roommates, classmates, etc., to get out to vote!

We need all the help we can get to make sure that we have record voter turnout here at OSU. To volunteer throughout the day tomorrow, show up at the USG office in the Ohio Union, Room 201.

Sincerely,
Ellen Montgomery
Ohio PIRG Student Chapters
<http://www.ohiopirgstudents.org>

Ohio State University Get Out the Vote email

**Election Day is almost here! Remember to vote!
Bring your friends!**

Now is the time to make politicians pay attention to us. Look, it's understandable that politicians don't pay attention to young voters and the issues that we care about. Older voters vote almost twice as much as 18-to-24-year-olds and so politicians pay attention to the age groups they think are the most likely to go out and vote.



If we vote, we change all that.

We voted big in 2004...and politicians began to pay attention. But only a little bit. Now we need to do it again and show them that 2004 wasn't just a blip on the radar screen. Let's take it home.

This Tuesday, make sure you get to the polls! And bring your friends, roommates, classmates - help make sure everyone you know votes on Election Day.

If you don't know where to vote, you can find your polling place online:

<http://www.newvotersproject.org/find-your-polling-place>

If you want more information about the candidates and issues on your ballot, check out:

<http://www.vote-smart.org>

Need more info? You can find lots of voting resources at:

<http://www.newvotersproject.org>

This Tuesday, let's make politicians pay attention to us!

Sincerely,

Deborah Slosberg

Ohio PIRG Student Chapters

<http://www.ohiopirgstudents.org>

P.S. We're working hard over the next few days to make voting reminders. The more reminders we can make, the more people will vote, so we need all the help we can get! If you want to volunteer and help turn out the youth vote, sign up at: <http://www.newvotersproject.org/get-involved>

If you want us to stop sending you e-mail then [follow this link](#) to a web page where you can remove yourself.

Endnotes

- ⁱ See www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Voter_Information/Registering_to_Vote/Index.html, www.sbe.virginia.gov/cms/Voter_Information/Registering_to_Vote/College_Student.html
- ⁱⁱ http://www.salisbury.edu/pace/programs/stuvoting/DemCollStuVoting6_2001.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ http://www.salisbury.edu/pace/programs/stuvoting/DemCollStuVoting6_2001.pdf
- ^{iv} Overall, the Student PIRGs 2006 New Voters Project ran voter registration and turnout campaigns at 112 campuses in 20 states - ME, NH, MA, CT, NJ, MD, OH, WI, MO, IN, IA, CO, AZ, NM, NV, CA, OR, and WA. We worked most intensely at 78 schools. We recruited 3,795 student volunteers, registered 76,323 new student voters, and made 95,384 personalized voter reminders via phone or in person.
- ^v We compared our efforts in Arizona and New Mexico with efforts on 10 comparably sized other campuses in Ohio, Nevada, Maine, California, Rhode Island, and Wisconsin.
- ^{vi} N.M. Code R. §1.10.25.7 (A) 2005.
- ^{vii} <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/displayContent.asp?id=17>
- ^{viii} “How to register to vote in Arizona,” Arizona Secretary of State Jan Brewer, downloaded from http://www.azsos.gov/election/How_to_register.htm, July 31st, 2007.
- ^{ix} <http://moritzlaw.osu.edu/electionlaw/litigation/index.php>. The Ninth Circuit Court issued a temporary injunction on the law on 9/29/06. The law is still being challenged in the courts.
- ^x Arizona PIRG Lead Organizer Erin Eccleston anecdotally reported that average volunteer voter registration rates prior to the injunction were roughly 3 registrations per volunteer per hour, and between 5 and 6 registrations per volunteer per hour after the injunction. Similarly, volunteers got an average of 7 registrations back from each class presentation made prior to the injunction and between 13 and 20 per class after the injunction.
- ^{xi} *Gasque V. Gasque*, 246 S.C. 423, 426 S.E. 2d 811, 812 (1965)
- ^{xii} South Carolina State Election Commission, “South Carolina Voter Registration Information,” downloaded from http://www.scvotes.org/south_carolina_voter_registration_information