



Statement on the Protection of Voting Rights for the Black Community

April 1, 2021

The right to vote is a core American value that should unite us all, regardless of party. We support free, fair and peaceful elections that allow everyone entitled to vote to do so easily and without unnecessary burdens. In allyship with the Black community, we as business leaders oppose efforts underway across the country to hinder the ability of eligible voters to exercise their right to vote, especially efforts that disproportionately impact Black Americans. The following principles describe the kind of equitable, efficient, and effective electoral process that is consistent with our democratic values:

1. Security of and access to the voting process are not mutually exclusive. Modern technology and transparent procedures enable a modern democracy to achieve both goals.
2. Voter registration can be simplified in ways that facilitate updates and verification without placing onerous burdens on those who wish to participate in open and fair elections.
3. Early and absentee voting can be made available to those who need it in an effective and cost-efficient manner through in person voting and via mailed ballots.
4. Deadlines for casting votes by various means should bear in mind the time required to count the ballots themselves. Every vote received on time should be counted.
5. Local election officials need appropriate resources and funding in order to administer elections. If necessary, additional support and funding should be provided by the state and federal governments.

We feel compelled to heed the words of the late civil rights leader John Lewis, who said, "When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up." Historically, the fundamental right to vote has been denied to Black Americans, and several of the election reforms being proposed at the state and local level reduce the ability of eligible voters to cast their votes easily and conveniently. We are choosing to use our voices to ask that such proposed measures be opposed.

CEO Action for Racial Equity is a Fellowship of over 100 companies focused on improving the lives of the 47+ million Black Americans through advocacy and advancement of public policies that will root out and end systemic racism. Using CEO Action for Diversity & Inclusion as a platform, our Fellowship is the first business-led coalition of its kind with a mission to advance racial equity through public policy.



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