



COMMISSIONER ELLEN L. WEINTRAUB
FEDERAL ELECTION COMMISSION
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Statement of Commissioner Ellen L. Weintraub On Protecting the 2020 Election

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As Congress and the White House race to save American lives and preserve America's economy, they must also act swiftly to protect America's democracy. No one knows what the coronavirus situation will be when America votes this November. The U.S. government has the duty to prepare for the worst. And it can. But only if it acts now.

If it is not safe for Americans to go to the polls in person this fall, we must find a safe way for voters to vote.

Voting by mail offers the best path. Making vote-by-mail broadly available will not solve every election-related challenge this year, but it is a necessary and urgent beginning. The just-introduced "[Natural Disaster and Emergency Ballot Act of 2020](#)" would make it easier to vote by mail, and would reimburse the costs states would incur by making voting by mail more widely available. More important ideas have been offered by the non-partisan [Brennan Center for Justice](#) and the [Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights](#).

Our representative democracy is stronger and more representative when more citizens vote. Voting must be accessible, fair, and safe. These principles are timeless and should not be controversial. But this year, safety concerns have taken on new urgency.

No one should have to risk their life – or the lives of their loved ones – to cast their vote.

We can only avoid that risk if we tackle this problem now. Administrators will need time to ramp up their capacity. All Americans should pull together to support virus-free voting. As a critical first step, I urge every member of Congress, the President, and every American to support the immediate enactment of legislation to facilitate voting by mail.