



How Ohio Elections Would Look Different if the Freedom to Vote Act Had Been Enacted

By Greta Bedekovics, Sydney Bryant, and Alice Lillydahl October 3, 2024

The Freedom to Vote Act (FTVA) would expand access to the ballot box for millions of Americans and ensure that all citizens can easily exercise their right to vote, regardless of their ZIP code. At the same time, this transformational voting rights legislation would strengthen election security, improve election administration and campaign finance transparency, and ban partisan gerrymandering.

The FTVA would make voting easier and more secure for 8.7 million voting-age Ohio citizens, including 5.9 million currently registered voters. A new report from the Center for American Progress provides analysis and statistical extrapolations to illustrate how the 2024 and subsequent election cycles would be transformed if the FTVA's key voting policies had been enacted in 2022, when the legislation was blocked through the use of the filibuster on the U.S. Senate floor.¹

Analysis and projections for Ohio, based on previous academic and expert research as well as original research, demonstrate the transformative impact the FTVA could have for voters in the state.

Read the full report:
[Pass the Freedom to Vote Act: How Elections Would Look Different This Year and in the Future](#)

Unless otherwise cited, the author conducted original analysis and created projections primarily based on data published by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Election Assistance Commission for past federal election cycles. For a comprehensive look at the data analyzed for this fact sheet, see [here](#).

To put some of the below findings into perspective, the 2020 Ohio presidential election was decided by 476,000 voters, and the 2022 Ohio U.S. Senate election was decided by 253,000 voters.²

476,000

voters decided the 2020 Ohio presidential election

253,000

voters decided the 2022 Ohio U.S. Senate election

276,000

additional Ohio voters would likely vote in the 2024 presidential election

Automatic voter registration

The FTVA would ensure eligible Ohio citizens can automatically register to vote through the department of motor vehicles.³ Automatic voter registration (AVR) has been shown to be critical not only for registering voters and keeping voter rolls up to date but also for closing racial gaps in voter registration rates. Given the measured impacts that AVR has had in other states:

- Approximately **571,000 voters** likely would have newly registered to vote through AVR, including more than 117,000 Black Ohioans and 5,600 Hispanic Ohioans.
- Approximately **1 million already registered voters** would have updated their voter registration information using AVR.
- Nearly **276,000 additional Ohio voters** would likely cast a ballot in the 2024 general election, including almost 57,000 Black voters and 2,700 Hispanic voters.

Same-day voter registration

The FTVA would ensure eligible Ohio citizens can register to vote at the polls on Election Day and during an early voting period.⁴ Same-day voter registration (SDR) greatly benefits communities that tend to move more frequently and therefore need to update their voter registration information more often; Hispanic Americans and young Americans are among the demographic populations that move around the most frequently.⁵ Additionally, SDR helps mitigate issues with inaccurate voter roll purges that often disproportionately affect voters of color.⁶ The SDR policy in the FTVA would ensure that voters inaccurately removed from the voter rolls are able not only to re-register at the polls but also to cast a nonprovisional ballot.

Across the past three federal election cycles, Hispanic voters in states with SDR had an average voter turnout rate that was 6.6 percentage points higher than that of Hispanic voters in states without SDR; during the last presidential election, it was 4.5 percentage points higher. Additionally, academic experts have found that SDR increases youth voter turnout by between 3.1 percentage points and 7.3 percentage points.⁷ Given these findings:

- More than **41,000 additional Hispanic voters** would likely cast a ballot if voter turnout for Ohio Hispanic voters was at the same rate as for Hispanic voters in states with SDR.
- As many as **77,000 more young Ohioans**—those ages 18 to 24—would likely cast a ballot in the 2024 general election.

Endnotes

- 1 Greta Bedekovics, "Pass the Freedom to Vote Act: How Elections Would Look Different This Year and in the Future" (Washington: Center for American Progress, 2024), available at <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/pass-the-freedom-to-vote-act-how-elections-would-look-different-this-year-and-in-the-future/>; Freedom to Vote Act, S. 2747, 117th Cong., 1st sess. (September 14, 2021), available at <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/2747>.
- 2 Ballotpedia, "Presidential election in Ohio, 2020," available at https://ballotpedia.org/Presidential_election_in_Ohio_2020 (last accessed October 2024); Ballotpedia, "United States Senate election in Ohio, 2022," available at https://ballotpedia.org/United_States_Senate_election_in_Ohio_2022 (last accessed October 2024)
- 3 National Conference of State Legislatures, "Automatic Voter Registration," available at <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/automatic-voter-registration> (last accessed September 2024); Movement Advancement Project, "Automatic Voter Registration," available at https://www.lgbtmap.org/democracy-maps/automatic_voter_registration (last accessed September 2024)
- 4 Ballotpedia, "Same-day voter registration," available at https://ballotpedia.org/Same-day_voter_registration (last accessed September 2024).
- 5 Jacob M. Grumbach and Charlotte Hill, "Rock the Registration: Same Day Registration Increases Turnout of Young Voters," *The Journal of Politics* 84 (1) (2022): 405–417, available at <https://www.journals.uchicago.edu/doi/abs/10.1086/714776?journalCode=jop>; Paul Taylor and others, "American Mobility: Who Moves? Who Stays Put? Where's Home?" (Washington: Pew Research Center, 2008), available at <https://www.pewresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2010/10/Movers-and-Stayers.pdf>; Hire A Helper, "32+ Key Moving Statistics You Should Know in 2023," available at <https://www.hireahelper.com/moving-statistics/> (last accessed September 2024); U.S. Census Bureau, "Current Population Survey Data Tables, 2022," available at https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/data/tables.2022.List_1020932829.html#list-tab-List_1020932829 (last accessed September 2024).
- 6 Michael Waldman, "Mass Purges are the New Voter Suppression," Brennan Center for Justice, March 12, 2024, available at <https://www.brennancenter.org/our-work/analysis-opinion/mass-purges-are-new-voter-suppression>; Megan Henry, "Ohio's voter purge 'disproportionately targets voters of color', civil rights organizations say," *Ohio Capital Journal*, July 25, 2024, available at <https://ohiocapitaljournal.com/2024/07/25/ohios-voter-purge-disproportionately-targets-voters-of-color-civil-rights-organizations-say/>.
- 7 Grumbach and Hill, "Rock the Registration: Same Day Registration Increases Turnout of Young Voters."