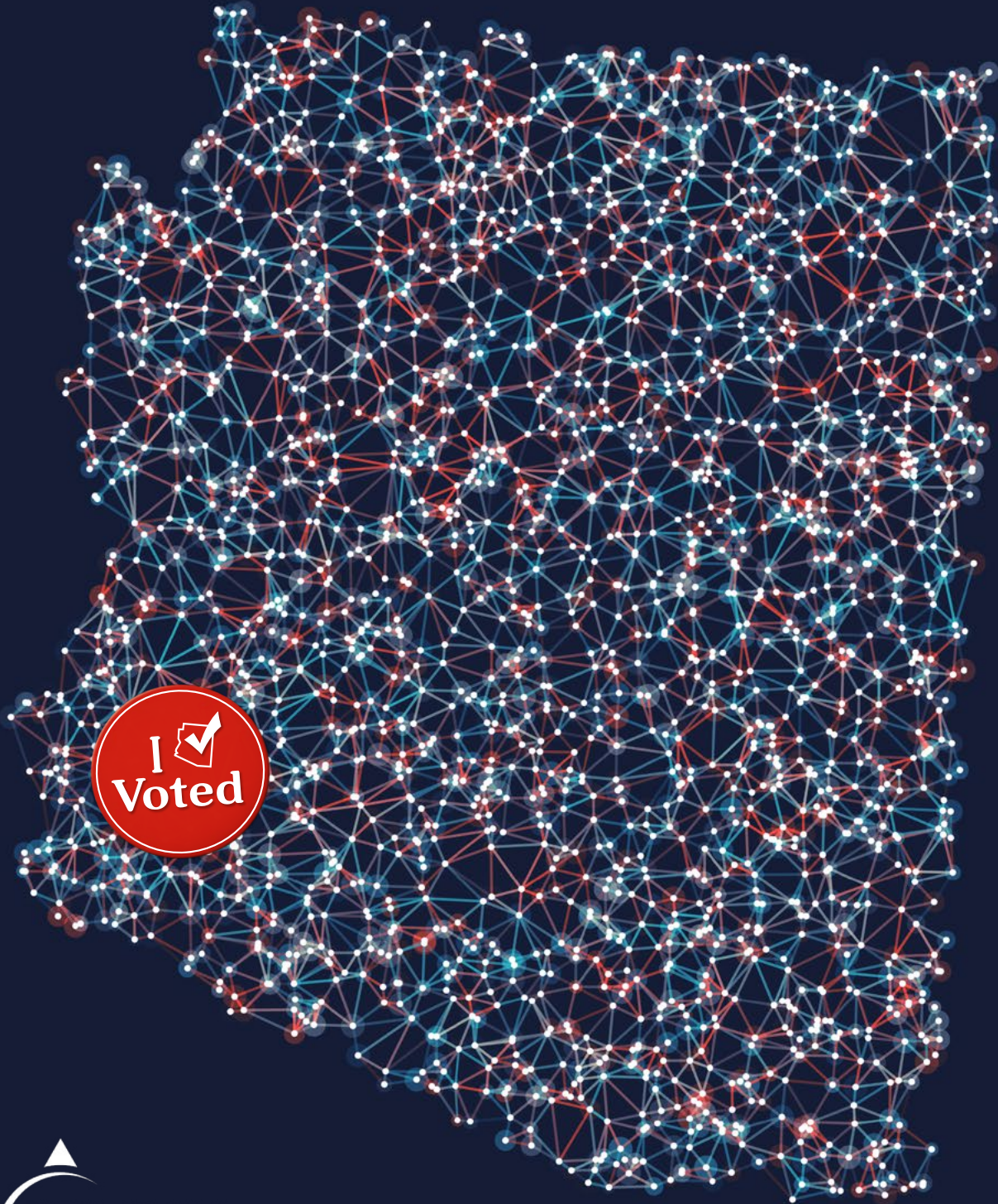


VOTING AND ELECTIONS IN ARIZONA





In 2024, Arizonans across the state will participate in Arizona Town Hall programs on the topic of “Voting and Elections in Arizona.”

An essential element to the success of these consensus-driven discussions is this background report that is provided to all participants before each program. The Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University coordinated this informative background material in partnership with diverse professionals and practitioners from around the state who have lent their time and talent to this effort. Together they have created a unique resource for a full understanding of the topic.

For sharing their wealth of knowledge and professional talents, our thanks go to the report’s authors. Our deepest gratitude also goes to Leigh Jensen Marino, Senior Analyst with the Morrison Institute for Public Policy at Arizona State University, who marshaled authors, created content, and served as editor of the report.

After the culmination of various programs, including community and future leaders town halls, the background report will be combined with consensus recommendations of participants into the Final Report. This Final Report will be available to the public on the Arizona Town Hall website and will be widely distributed and promoted throughout Arizona. The background report and recommendations will be used as a resource, a discussion guide, and an action plan on how best to address voting and elections in Arizona.

Sincerely,

Gregory W. Falls
Board Chair, Arizona Town Hall

www.aztownhall.org

BACKGROUND REPORT

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VOTING AND ELECTIONS IN ARIZONA

116TH ARIZONA TOWN HALL TOPIC

BACKGROUND REPORT - 2024

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Special thanks to Lynne Sands (graphic designer), Karen Heard (Chalk Design), and Alexandra Sedillo, Director of Publications & Communications, Arizona Town Hall for their assistance and work in designing this report.

INTRODUCTION

James Holway, Ph.D., Arizona Town Hall Research Committee Member

What is our shared vision for our democracy?

Arizona is a beautiful and diverse state. We have a strong economy and we have long been one of the fastest growing states in North America. Arizona's social and government institutions, including those relating to an effective democracy, have played a critical role in its current success and will continue to impact its future.

To maximize its future potential, Arizona and Arizonans will need to address education, health care, water, housing, the economy, and our southern border. Effective democratic institutions play an important role in solving these large and complex issues that span across diverse regions and populations of our state. The "social contract" is one theory that explores how governing institutions are formed to advance the collective needs we cannot meet individually.¹

Social contract theory posits that "persons' moral and/or political obligations are dependent upon a contract or agreement among them to form the society in which they live."

The purpose of Arizona's 116th Town Hall sessions is to explore the effectiveness of Arizona's current democratic institutions on our ability to thrive, specifically our current systems for voting and elections. This report is intended to inform a robust, respectful, and fruitful discussion at the Town Hall sessions. Town Hall discussions, as is always the case, can go beyond the content of this background report in forming recommendations to help Arizona meet its potential.

Chapter 1 assesses the strength of Arizona's civic engagement by discussing current participation rates in statewide elections, civic education programs, and incentives and disincentives for serving in public office in our state. **Chapter 2** offers a perspective from a community health leader on the impacts that a thriving democracy can have on a community's public health and vice versa. **Chapter 3** outlines barriers that students face with civic engagement and offers potential solutions to bolster their participation in our democracy. **Chapter 4** provides an overview of how elections are run in Arizona—from voter registration to campaign finance to ballot security and the tabulation process; readers will become familiar with the administration of elections in Arizona. In aggregate, the first four chapters of this report contextualize the landscape of civic engagement in our state and how the various democratic systems in Arizona are currently structured and functioning.

Reading these chapters may prompt participants to consider potential reforms. To that end, **Chapter 5** provides brief overviews of some alternatives that might be worth considering. In **Chapter 6**, we learn how political science groups identify and rank the characteristics of a thriving democracy on a global scale. Finally, the report ends with five appendices that provide a more detailed look into several specific structures within our state's democracy, including the *Independent Redistricting Commission*, *Campaign Finance Regulations*, *Initiative and Referendum in Arizona*, *the Importance of Free Press*, and the *Basics of the Arizona Legislative Process*.

We encourage readers to contemplate whether Arizona's political structures are performing as we hoped they would when they were enacted, and how they might be modified to better serve our state going forward. In addition, readers are encouraged to think about the many ways in which an individual can meaningfully participate in our democracy through social and individual actions.

1 "Social Contract Theory," The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, accessed March 7, 2024, <https://iep.utm.edu/soc-cont/>.

CHAPTER 1: CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND DEMOCRACY IN ARIZONA

Kristi Tate, Director, Civic Health Initiatives, Center for the Future of Arizona

Tara Bartlett, Ph.D., Senior Research Analyst, Participatory Governance Initiative, ASU School of Public Affairs

Daniel Schugurensky, Professor/Director, Participatory Governance Initiative, ASU School of Public Affairs

This chapter provides an overview of the landscape of civic life in Arizona, using data to inform an understanding of how Arizonans are engaged, the challenges and gaps in engagement, and opportunities for civic renewal.

Civic life in a democracy is linked to our broader individual and community well-being. Research findings indicate that connected communities are more economically resilient, that individuals who participate in civic life have greater access to opportunities and well-being, and that policies and programs are more responsive when community members are authentically engaged.

Shared Public Values of Arizonans

- Extensive research shows that Arizonans want greater civic engagement and a democracy that works for all of us.
- Three-quarters of Arizonans (76%) want to work together across differences to solve problems.
- Vast majorities agree on convenient, accessible elections through measures like early voting (79%), mail-in voting (73%), and automatic voter registration (77%).

Large majorities of Arizonans also agree that our elections are currently fair and secure.

- Almost two-thirds of Arizonans want leaders who work together: 64% prefer leaders who are willing to compromise and work across the aisle to find bipartisan solutions to complex problems.²

Hence, there is a strong foundation and an opportunity to leverage Arizonans' shared values and priorities for greater engagement. However, Arizonans are concerned about our leaders and institutions and about their ability to make an impact. Only 43% believe leaders are talking about the issues that matter most to them, and most Arizonans do not believe their leaders work across party lines, represent diverse voices, or focus on the future.

Significant Gaps in Engagement

This limited agency and belief in the process is particularly noticeable in our elections. For instance, just about 2 in 3 eligible Arizonans participated in the last general election.³ In this regard, data from Center for the Future of Arizona's (CFA) Civic Health Progress Meters confirm the connection between people's concerns about our democracy and voter

Do you agree or disagree that Arizona's elected leaders currently _____?

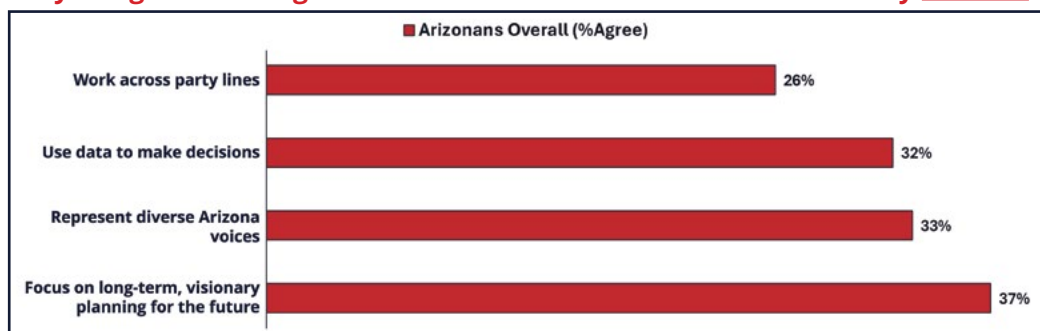


Figure Source: Center for the Future of Arizona, *The Arizona We Want: The Decade Ahead* (Gallup, 2020), https://www.arizonafuture.org/media/unfojhmh/cfa_arizona_we_want_the_decade_ahead_digital.pdf.

² "The Arizona We Want: The Decade Ahead," Center for the Future of Arizona, accessed February 23, 2024, https://www.arizonafuture.org/media/unfojhmh/cfa_arizona_we_want_the_decade_ahead_digital.pdf.

³ "Civic Participation," Center for the Future of Arizona, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/>.

Non-Voters Who Did Not Vote Because They Felt Their Vote Would Not Matter

Percentage of non-voters who selected “Not interested, felt my vote wouldn’t make a difference” on the survey.

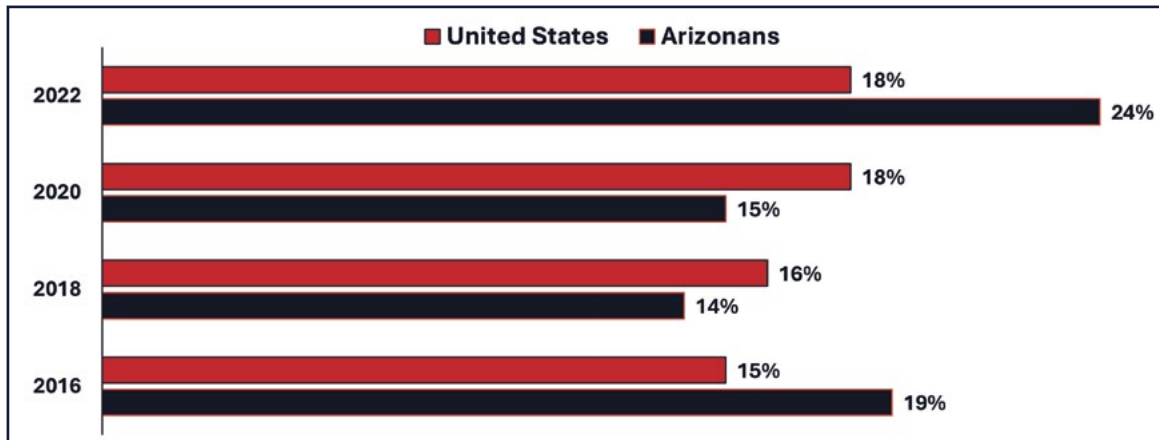


Figure Source: “How Arizona is Doing on Voter Registration and Turnout,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed March 19, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/voter-registration-and-turnout/>.

participation. A significant number of eligible voters do not participate because they feel their vote won’t matter. In the 2016 Presidential Election, 19% of non-voting Arizonans felt their vote wouldn’t matter, higher than the national average of 15%. However, by 2020, this trend shifted, with 15% of Arizonans citing this reason for not voting, while the national rate was higher at 18%. In the 2022 elections, the percentage of eligible Arizonans abstaining from voting due to disinterest or a perceived lack of impact jumped to 24%, a notable increase compared to the 16% in the midterm election in 2018.⁴

These gaps in participation show up when looking across measures of civic engagement in Arizona. In the 2022 midterm election, only 47% of those with a high school degree reported voting, a low percentage when compared with those with a bachelor’s degree or higher (73%). In the same election, 79% of Boomers participated but only 65% of Millennials. Education levels are also correlated with indicators of political efficacy. For instance, only 6% of those with some college had reached out to an elected official, a lower rate than those with a bachelor’s degree or higher (16%). These gaps have implications for the voices that are heard and represented in our democracy.

When looking at measures of connected communities and social cohesion in Arizona, the picture is even more challenging. The state has seen downward trends in indicators like spending time with neighbors, volunteerism, and group involvement. Arizona ranks

last among all states, with just 21% of its residents spending time frequently with neighbors and 40th with just 16% saying they work with neighbors to solve local problems.⁵

Despite these challenges, there are bright spots of engagement to continue building upon. Interestingly, Arizona leads the national average for residents who make their voices heard through boycotting and buying products based on their values: 19.3% express their values in this way, above 17% nationally. Arizona is also on par with national trends in charitable giving, with an increase since 2019 in those donating to causes.⁶

These simple acts of helping our neighbors and getting involved in the community have a great impact on several outcomes, including economic resilience, health and well-being, and ultimately, a more responsive and thriving democracy. However, we must also assess the systems and practices in place that can either foster or hinder community civic, electoral, and political engagement and well-being.

Elections, Systems, and Incentives and Barriers to Running for Office

Disengagement and disillusion with democracy have also impacted participation in primary elections. As previously noted, nearly one-quarter of Arizonans feel that their vote does not matter,⁷ and this mindset is especially prevalent among youth voters who are less likely to register to vote than other age groups.⁸

4 “Civic Participation,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/>.

5 “Connected Communities,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/>.

6 “Civic Participation,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/>.

7 “Civic Participation,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/>.

8 Laura W. Brill, “In Arizona’s Two Largest Counties, Fewer Than 15% Of 18-Year-Olds Are Registered To Vote,” *The Civics Center*, December 1, 2021, <https://www.thecivicscenter.org/blog/2021/11/29/research-report-in-arizonas-two-largest-counties-fewer-than-15-of-18-year-olds-are-registered-to-vote?sourceid=&emci=ba518d78-6751-ec11-9820-a085fc31ac93&emdi=6b369c76-9653-ec11-94f6-0050f2e65e9b&ceid=14774094>.

Over the last two decades, only about one in three Arizona voters have cast a vote in primary elections, with turnout rates much lower among younger voters, but also among Black voters and registered Independents.⁹ Moreover, while Arizona has seen a surge in registered Independent voters (currently 33.32% of the state's electorate, up from 11.6% in 1992), many Independents do not cast a vote in primary elections (only 10% in 2016), often citing they are unaware they can participate.¹⁰

These trends pose unique challenges and implications for Arizona's electoral and civic health, but also provide opportunities for interventions. Arizona researchers and election experts have pointed to primary elections as a key driver behind impactful system change at both the state and local levels. According to Chuck Coughlin, CEO and President of HighGround, Inc., 80% of Arizona's candidates for office are elected in primary elections.¹¹ However, most voters who engage in primary elections have extreme political ideologies.¹² As noted by Ted Maxwell, President of the Southern Arizona Leadership Council (SALC), "Systems matter, and the current system encourages partisan politics."¹³

In effect, Arizonans interested in running as primary election candidates are not incentivized to run on policy-based platforms for what most Arizonans want or even for what is best for positive systems change. To win a primary election, candidates focus their campaign on extreme partisan issues that appeal to the small number of polarized voters who vote in the primary elections and also to special interests that contribute to their campaign.¹⁴ Furthermore, the voters that must be appealed to in the primaries do not represent the demographics of Arizona as they tend to be older and non-Hispanic whites.¹⁵

While voter disengagement in primary elections is detrimental to systems change and to the voices and

interests of most Arizonans, increasing access to voter education and mobilizing voter engagement could minimize these negative effects. Primary elections are one of the most direct forms of democracy in which registered voters can participate. They allow them to choose from a variety of candidates and platforms to best address their own community's needs and interests.¹⁶ Catalyzing the knowledge of candidates and their platforms alongside the propensity to vote in primary elections would ensure increased equity in legislative input (representation) and output (policy and programs).

Those elected to office make important decisions about policies that impact every aspect of a healthy democracy. If those running for office were better incentivized through an election process that encouraged them to go beyond a small, polarized electorate and consider broader societal needs, there would be a positive impact on all Arizonans in the nature of the laws and programs being considered and adopted.

Civic Learning in Arizona

Increased engagement in civic and political life will not occur overnight, as it requires a variety of concerted efforts, including effective civic learning interventions that foster meaningful, participatory opportunities for K-12 students to ensure the long-term health of our democracy. It is important to design these interventions in ways that reach educators across grade levels, content areas, and communities; engage traditionally underserved communities; be easily adopted and scaled; and deepen learning outcomes in areas of history, government, and civics.

Arizona has been a pioneer in K-12 civic education policies and programs. Notably, in 2013, Arizona was one of the first states to create a state-level Department of Education civic education program

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- 9 "August 4th, Primary Election," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*, accessed February 23, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/arizona-elections/August-4-election>.
David Daugherty and Joseph Garcia, "Arizona's Voter Crisis," *Morrison Institute*, July 2018, <https://storage.googleapis.com.usgovcloudapi.net/public/docs/312-Voter-Crisis-Report-FINAL3.pdf>.
- 10 "Historical Election Results & Information," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 23, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/results-data/voter-registration-statistics/historical-election-results-information>.
David Berman, "Building and Rebuilding An Election System in Arizona: Where We've Been, Where We're Going," *Morrison Institute*, March 2016, https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/berman_elections.pdf.
David Daugherty and Joseph Garcia, "Arizona Primary Elections: Primarily Forgotten," *Morrison Institute*, August 2018, https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/primary_elections.pdf.
- 11 "Morning Scoop: Civic Engagement and Elections," *YouTube*, October 28, 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iBEXq4Fohml>.
- 12 David W. Brady, Hahrie Han, and Jeremy C. Pope, "Primary Elections and Candidate Ideology: Out of Step with the Primary Electorate?" *Legislative Studies Quarterly* 32, no. 1 (2007): 79-105, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40263411>.
- 13 "CivEx: A Conversation on Election System Reform," *YouTube*, April 28, 2021, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NvX5_jj4T8Q.
- 14 "Nonpartisan Primaries," *Unite America*, accessed February 23, 2024, <https://www.uniteamerica.org/nonpartisan-primaries>.
- 15 David Daugherty and Joseph Garcia, "Arizona's Voter Crisis," *Morrison Institute*, July 2018, <https://storage.googleapis.com.usgovcloudapi.net/public/docs/312-Voter-Crisis-Report-FINAL3.pdf>.
- 16 Renee Davidson, "Understanding Elections: Primaries 101," *League of Women Voters*, March 11, 2014, <https://www.lwv.org/blog/understanding-elections-primaries-101>.

aimed at 1) providing resources and professional civic learning opportunities for K-12 educators, 2) recognizing schools and programs that utilized the ten proven practices of civic learning, and 3) advocating for best practices in civic and community engagement. In 2015, the Arizona legislature passed the American Civics Act (HB2064) with bipartisan support. This landmark bill required students, beginning with the graduating class of 2017, to pass the Arizona Civics Exam, a standardized assessment based on the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services civics exam. Since then, at least 34 other states have followed suit, requiring the passing of a similar exam, with varying implementation and reporting specifics. In 2018, SB144 was passed to require all high school students to take a semester-long civic course for graduation. This requirement was intended to support students in passing the Arizona Civics Exam.

However, many K-12 civic education policies and programs (including those adopted in Arizona and diffused across other states) overwhelmingly rely on rote memorization of static facts with the purpose of passing a civics class or an exam. Moreover, under-resourced schools and ill-equipped educators continue to struggle to provide all students equitable access to high-quality civic learning opportunities.¹⁷ This confluence of factors has resulted in a well-documented civic opportunity gap,¹⁸ or what has more recently been called a civic education debt.¹⁹ Now, amidst political polarization, disillusionment of democracy, and the continued divestment of public education, there is a resurgence of interest in civic learning in schools alongside questions of what has worked and what is next for improving this field.

School Participatory Budgeting Spotlight

One promising model in civic education is Arizona's pioneering work in School Participatory Budgeting (SPB). SPB empowers students to "learn democracy by doing" by deciding and voting on how a portion of school district funds are used to improve their school communities. This democratic process prepares young people to be active, informed, responsible and engaged participants in civic life for the long term by building student agency, confidence, communication, critical thinking and problem-solving skills. SPB has also been shown to improve school climate, increase

opportunities for broader campus engagement, nurture a more deliberative civic culture, and strengthen school-community relationships.

Through SPB, students lead a process of collecting ideas, developing proposals, voting, and implementing winning projects. Phoenix Union High School District (PXU) in Arizona was the first in the country to pilot the model, scaling from one school in 2013 to district-wide expansion by 2019. In partnership with the Center for the Future of Arizona (CFA) and Arizona State University's Participatory Governance Initiative (PGI), SPB has now been implemented in nine school districts across Arizona, reaching tens of thousands of K-12 students each year, with plans for further growth and adoption in the coming years. The Arizona SPB process has also sparked implementation in the U.S. and internationally. It has also inspired the implementation of municipal participatory budgeting processes in some districts of Tucson and Phoenix. SPB is one example of an innovative approach to civic learning that can equip young people to be problem solvers today and prepare them to lead into the future.

Conclusion

Ultimately, this landscape analysis of civic engagement in Arizona can help us understand the challenges we face and also spark discussion and collaboration in creating new pathways for Arizonans to engage and make their voices heard. This requires a holistic view that considers our electoral system, the incentives and barriers to civic participation, voting and running for office, rich civic learning that prepares young people to be lifelong participants in democracy, and a thriving civic culture that motivates and inspires everyone to play their part for the common good.

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- 17 Brooke Blevins, "Research on Equity in Civics Education," *The Journal of Social Studies Research* 46, no. 1, January 7, 2022: 1-6, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2021.12.001>.
- 18 Hansen, Michael, Elizabeth Levesque, Jon Valant, and Diana Quintero. "The 2018 Brown Center report on American education: How well are American students learning." *Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution* (2018), accessed March 4, 2024, https://civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/2018-Brown-Center-Report-on-American-Education_FINAL1.pdf.
- Peter Levine and Kei Kawashima-Ginsberg, "The Republic Is (Still) at Risk- and Civics Is Part of the Solution," *CivXNow*, September 21, 2017, <https://civxnow.org/sites/default/files/resources/SummitWhitePaper.pdf>.
- Michael Rebell, "The School's Neglected Mission: Preparing All Students for Civic Participation," *The Center for Education Equity*, 2017, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED597175.pdf>.
- 19 Jane C. Lo, "The Role of Civic Debt in Democratic Education," *Taylor and Francis Online*, 2019, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15210960.2019.1606633>.

CHAPTER 2: A BROADER APPROACH TO A “HEALTHY DEMOCRACY”

David Martinez III, Director, Strategic Community Partnerships, Vitalyst Health Foundation

A healthy democracy contributes to healthier people.

There is a growing movement and body of research that shows the more civically engaged we are, the healthier we and our communities are. Yet, just under 66% of eligible voters in Arizona voted in the 2020 presidential election and not even half – just 49.4% – voted in the midterms.²⁰ Additionally, nearly one in four Arizonans say they did not vote because they believed their vote didn’t matter.²¹

Since Arizona’s eleven Electoral College seats were called in November 2020, our votes have been at the epicenter of controversy. That led to objections from some members of Congress on January 6, 2021, to counting those electors for president. It also led to the establishment of both Democratic and Republican-led election task forces at the state level, and fights in some Arizona counties about who administers our elections and how our votes are counted.

Those voting outcomes also have direct policy implications that affect our health. Forty-four percent of Arizona’s General Fund is comprised of federal funds that support health-oriented programs like health insurance for low-income adults and children, nutritional and cash assistance, housing vouchers and loans, school grants and financial aid, and transportation construction.²²

The importance of civic participation to health has been made even more apparent by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. In 2023, the country’s

data-driven goals to improve health and well-being – Healthy People 2030 – elevated civic participation to a core objective.²³

If we are to continue to improve health, we must increase the proportion of voters who participate in our democratic process.

“We’ve learned that belonging and civic muscle can significantly impact an individual’s and a community’s resilience and capacity to thrive,” says Rear Admiral Paul Reed, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Health and the Director at the Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. “Voting is one way for individuals to flex this civic muscle and help their communities determine a shared direction and shape a common vision.”

It is a message gaining ground in the health sector. The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, as well as the American Medical Association, have added their platforms to growing the understanding of the relationship between civic participation and positive health outcomes.²⁴

Public health organizations have also leveraged their voice in this movement. The American Public Health Association has lifted civic and voter participation to address determinants of health and make progress on health disparities.²⁵ These broader health indicators, referred to by Vitalyst Health Foundation as the

20 “Voting Statistics,” *US Elections Project*, accessed February 21, 2024, <https://www.electproject.org/election-data/voter-turnout-data>.

21 “How Arizona Is Doing on Voter Registration and Turnout,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed February 21, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/civic-participation/voter-registration-and-turnout/>.

22 Joint Legislative Budget Committee staff, *Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Report*, accessed February 21, 2024, <https://www.azjlb.gov/24AR/428.pdf>.

23 “SDOH-R02 Recategorized to Healthy People 2030 Core Objective,” *US Department of Health and Human Services*, June 27, 2023, <https://health.gov/news/202306/sdoh-r02-recategorized-healthy-people-2030-core-objective>.

24 “Voting and Health: Expanding Opportunities for Inclusion,” *National Academies*, September 15, 2021, <https://www.nationalacademies.org/event/09-15-2021/webinar-voting-and-health-expanding-opportunities-for-inclusion>.
Kevin B. O’Reilly, “Another Question for Patients: Are You Registered to Vote?” *American Medical Association*, September 1, 2022, <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/health-equity/another-question-patients-are-you-registered-vote>.

25 “Advancing Health Equity through Protecting and Promoting Access to Voting,” *American Public Health Association*, November 8, 2022, <https://www.apha.org/Policies-and-Advocacy/Public-Health-Policy-Statements/Policy-Database/2023/01/18/Access-to-Voting>.

What Does Civic Engagement Look Like?



Figure Source: <https://www.pacefunders.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Civic-Engagement-Chart.pdf>

“Elements of a Healthy Community,” often showcase that a person’s zip code, not their genetic code, determines life expectancy.²⁶

This intersection of civic engagement and health links voting with other “civic health” measures that also improve the health of people and communities. Things like belonging and social cohesion have evidence of self-reported health and well-being.²⁷



This concept of civic health – how people and communities can engage and unify to resolve problems – is measured through County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. This data again makes a “connection between civic health and thriving people and places.”²⁸ Why does this matter? Local data records that the percentage of Arizonans who volunteer, belong to groups, or spend time or work with neighbors often falls below national statistics.²⁹ The highest data point shows less than half of Arizonans – 48.5% – contribute to charitable organizations.

These efforts represent opportunities for the community to engage in civic life toward the common good. They are examples of activities that build social and cultural cohesion, and, ultimately, civic health.

Vitalyst published a report to showcase the intersection of civic engagement and health to show the importance of strengthening civic health in

Figure Source: <https://vitalysthealth.org/the-wheel/>

26 Donald F. Schwarz, “New Data Provides a Deeper Understanding of Life Expectancy Gaps,” *Robert Wood Johnson Foundation*, September 10, 2018, <https://www.rwjf.org/en/insights/blog/2018/09/new-data-provides-deeper-understanding-of-life-expectancy-gaps.html>.
 27 Rios, R.; Zautra, A. (2009). *Neighborhood Contexts and Health*. Phoenix, AZ: Department of Psychology, Arizona State University/St. Luke’s Health Initiatives.
 28 “2023 County Health Rankings National Findings Report,” *County Health Rankings*, March 2023, <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/findings-and-insights/2023-county-health-rankings-national-findings-report>.
 29 “Connected Communities,” *Center for the Future of Arizona*, accessed February 21, 2024, <https://www.arizonafuture.org/progress-meters/connected-communities/>.

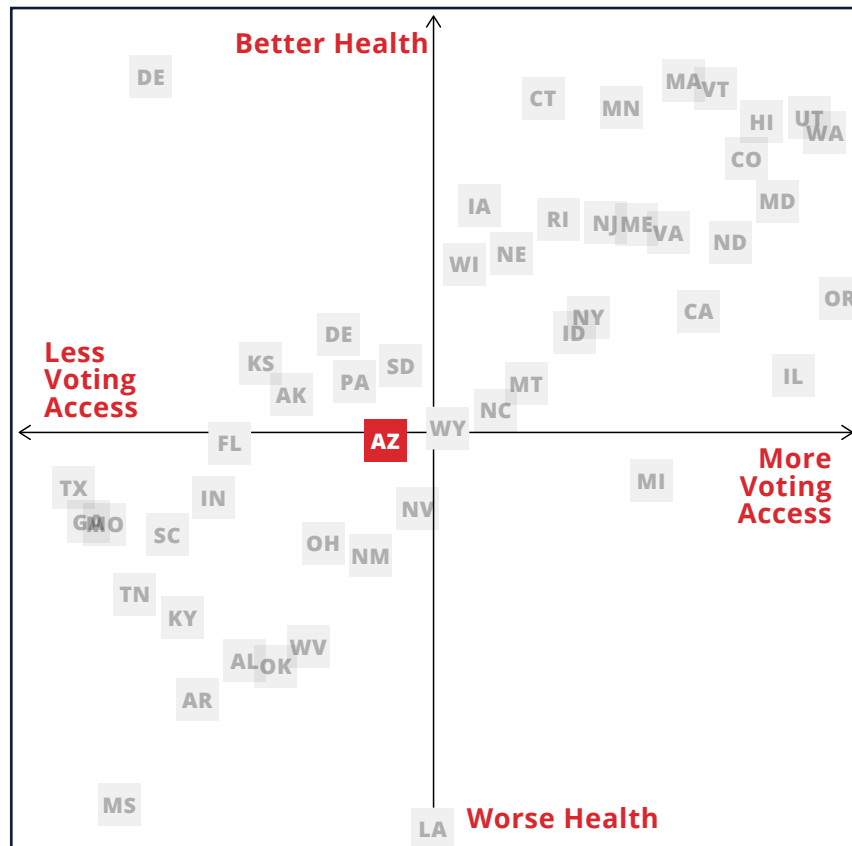


Figure Source: <https://democracyindex.hdhp.us/>

Arizona.³⁰ In partnership with the Healthy Democracy Healthy People Initiative, the report recognizes that civic participation and voting are important for health.

As the report reflects, “in 2021, a coalition of public health organizations analyzed voting structures and public health outcomes across the U.S. The coalition developed the Health & Democracy Index to compare 12 public health indicators, such as voter turnout and voting policies in each state. The Health & Democracy Index provides a shared health equity analysis of voting policy and serves as a tool to strengthen civic and voting participation. The Health & Democracy Index includes health measures only if there is an evidence-based link between the measure and civic engagement.”

That index compares those indicators and voter turnout to the Cost of Voting Index, or COVI, which refers to the time and effort associated with casting a vote, which may reflect a state’s overall climate.³¹

The elections-related systems the COVI includes are registration deadlines; registration restrictions (such as no online voter registration); registration drive

restrictions (such as training required by state); pre-registration for 16- and 17-year-olds; automatic voter registration; voting inconvenience (such as excuse required for vote absentee); voter ID laws; poll hours; and early voting.

The Index shows how voting can shape individual and community health, and how voting barriers correlate with worse health outcomes. It is just one more tool in the growing movement and body of research that shows the health and well-being of people and communities depend on residents’ active participation and engagement.

It’s also why Vitalyst has prioritized its approach to strengthening civic health, including its support of: Arizona Town Hall for effective deliberation and consensus building; Arizona Gives Day to inspire charitable giving and more donations to local nonprofits; place-based community development through the Live Well AZ Incubator, and informing public policy and nonpartisan awareness building.

Democratic processes that are inclusive and robust are vital to creating the opportunity for everyone to be healthy. Civic health matters for Arizona.

30 “Strengthening Civic Health in Arizona” <https://vitalysthealth.org/strengthening-civic-health-in-arizona/>.

31 Scot Schraufnagel, Michael J. Pomante II, and Quan Li, “Cost of Voting in the American States: 2020,” *Election Law Journal: Rules, Politics, and Policy* (December 2020): 503-509, <http://doi.org/10.1089/elj.2020.0666>.

CHAPTER 3: STUDENT VOTER ENGAGEMENT

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Every election cycle brings renewed interest in and efforts to encourage young people to vote, namely through voter registration drives and get-out-the-vote (GOTV) campaigns on high school and college campuses. Traditional efforts have failed to significantly alter the trend for young voters to turn out in lower numbers than older voters, but recent elections have shown a dramatic increase in turnout among young voters despite significant challenges, including a global pandemic, and procedural obstacles related to identification, proof-of-citizenship requirements, access to the polls, etc.

Recently, ASU's Morrison Institute for Public Policy partnered with the ASU Congressman Ed Pastor Center for Politics & Public Service on a 3-year study (2019-2021) assessing for factors that inhibit and promote voter participation among 18-25-year-old voters. This "Youth Voting Project" included focus group discussions, surveys, and interviews with community college and university students to identify these challenging and enabling factors.

This chapter will present insights and recommendations for those working to increase youth voter engagement and civic participation. These were developed through this study, along with some examples of how we have implemented these recommendations in our on-campus student voter engagement efforts through the ASU chapter of the Andrew Goodman Foundation Ambassadors, the ASU student Civic Engagement Coalition, and Pastor Center student leaders.

What We Learned About Student Voting Behavior

While we did identify attitudinal issues (perceptions of fairness/effectiveness of voting) and process barriers that inhibit voting by students, our study identified many opportunities to incentivize and promote greater student voter participation:

Obstacles and Barriers to Voting

- Lack of awareness/familiarity with candidates and races
- Confusion about meaning/impact of ballot questions
- Loss of faith in the fairness and integrity of voting and election systems
- Confusion or lack of information about voter registration and voting processes, options, and requirements
- Students that live in on-campus may face barriers with voter registration (due to address discrepancies) and with voter I.D. requirements

Factors That Promote Voting

- **Early Voting / Vote by Mail:** In 2020, 84% of ASU's student population that voted either returned early ballots by mail or voted at an early voting site (based on results of the 2020 National Study of Voting, Learning, and Engagement). This is an 18-percentage point increase from the 2016 election, during which 66% of ASU students who voted did so by mail ballot or at an early voting site.
- **Engaged & Vocal Friends & Family:** In deciding whether and how to vote, young people rely on information and cues from their family, friends, teachers, and social networks to a much greater extent than traditional news media outlets or official election sources. Having people in their networks talk about upcoming elections and the importance of voting makes it much more likely that they will vote.

Suggestions & Recommendations

General Recommendations & Strategies

- **Focus on Issues:** Generalized messages about the importance of voting are not effective. Participants recommended messaging explaining how voting impacts specific issues that young people care about - particularly *healthcare, education, law enforcement, racial & social equity, climate change, etc.*
- **Prioritize Social Media Strategies:** Project participants rely very little, almost not at all, on television news sources or official election information provided by government websites or mailers. They indicate their main sources of election and voting information come from websites and articles referenced in social media posts.
- **Explain what to expect:** Participants recommended developing fun, engaging social media campaigns that include information on how to register, how to vote, and explaining what will be on the ballot.
- **Make the case:** Many young voters feel their vote will not make a difference. Give examples of how a small number of voters could make a difference in upcoming election outcomes and how they have made a difference in past elections. Explain what is possible with even a small increase in voter turnout!
- **Create an Election “Holiday”:** Ask employers to consider adjusting hours and offering flexible scheduling on Election Day, and to remind and encourage employees to vote.
 - According to A.R.S. 16-402, employers must grant paid leave for voting if there are less than three hours between the time that polls open or close and when an employee starts or ends their shift. Employees must request leave before Election Day. The employer may specify the hours the employee can be absent from work.³²

Recommendations for K-12 Schools, Colleges & Universities

Participants identified the need for training and education in several competency and skill areas that schools, colleges and universities are well positioned to respond to:

- K-12 schools should provide instruction on voting and democratic participation at all grade levels.
- Provide training/instruction on how to distinguish credible information from “fake news” and propaganda.
- Provide students with hands-on training and

resources on voting procedures and upcoming ballot content.

- Provide links to voting and election information resources on school and college websites on high traffic pages (i.e., registration/enrollment)
- Display signage & messaging about voting and elections in prominent, high-traffic locations on campus.
- Election “Holiday”: The overwhelming majority of participants indicated that not having classes scheduled on Election Day would promote greater voter turnout among students. College and university administrators should, at a minimum, encourage instructors to avoid scheduling exams or presentations on Election Day, and to remind students to vote.

Recommendations for Elections Administrators

Project participants demonstrated almost no familiarity with any of the traditional information resources provided by state and local election offices by mail and online to inform voters about election processes and ballot content (publicity pamphlets, mailers, resources on election websites, etc.). They suggested strategies to address this, including:

- Develop school and community partnerships to promote greater awareness and utilization of official information and voter support resources, including:
 - Suggestions on how to engage your parents in discussions about voting (including vocabulary resources for students with parents whose primary language is not English)
 - Video tutorials about how to vote by mail, vote early, etc.
 - Easily shareable, accurate social media content about election processes and issues.
- Work with colleges and universities to identify and mitigate barriers that students in residence halls face with voter registration and with receiving and returning ballots by mail.

Recommendations for Civic Organizations & Government Initiatives

Participants identified the need for training and education in several competency and skill areas that schools, colleges and universities are well positioned to respond to:

- Participants said that having friends and family members who vote and talk about elections makes them more likely to vote themselves. Promote campaigns that encourage voters to talk about voting online and in person with the young people in their lives.

32 A.R.S. §16-402.

- Show how small number of votes has made a difference in past elections, and how an increase in turnout by young voters can make a real difference on specific election issues and races.
- Maintain a positive, hopeful tone; avoid negative/angry/fear-based messaging.
- Engage young people in campaigns and creative strategies (especially leveraging their social networking capacities) to explain how upcoming elections affect youth/community in a tangible way.
- Develop content that connects election outcomes with issues that young people care most about (e.g. climate change, law enforcement, social and racial equity concerns, education, etc.).

Student Voter Engagement in Action

At ASU, we view voting as the end-result of a civically engaged student. Efforts that narrowly focus on just getting students registered to vote tend to have minimal impact. Our approach has been to train, mentor, and support students to design and implement their own strategies to promote overall civic engagement among their peers, leading up to and including efforts to ensure students are well informed about election and voting processes and requirements, as well as the issues that will be decided in any given election. These efforts have many champions on our campuses, including the ASU chapter of the Andrew Goodman Foundation “Vote Everywhere” Ambassadors, and the student Civic Engagement Coalition, whose members include many student clubs and organizations focused on advocacy and civic engagement, and public policy. In addition, the Pastor Center has recently launched a social work field education internship to engage social work students in legislative and community practices. Some examples of efforts led by these student leaders and organizations include the following:

- **Polling places on campus:** ASU’s chapter of the Andrew Goodman Foundation (AGF) Ambassadors have advocated with county election officials over the past several election cycles in order to secure on-campus voting sites at our Tempe, Polytechnic, and West Valley campuses. These have all immediately experienced high voter turnout including not just student voters, but local community members and employees who find our campus voting locations to be easily accessible and convenient.
- **High-profile Civic Holiday events:** AGF Ambassadors are intentional about participating in the National Civic Holidays each year. In 2023, the AGF Ambassadors celebrated National Voter Registration Day on September 19th at the ASU Downtown Phoenix Campus, in collaboration with the ASU Undergraduate Student Government, the Citizens’ Clean Elections Commission (CCEC)

and the Arizona Secretary of State’s Office. The event not only provided students with voter registration and election information, it also highlighted the importance of active participation in civic engagement. Through our online voter registration tool, data showed 224 users utilized the site that day, a tremendous accomplishment and representation of student awareness and interest in voter engagement initiatives.

- **Independent Voter Engagement:** According to state voter registration data in August of 2023, the largest voting constituency in Arizona were independent voters, outnumbering Republicans and Democrats. In July 2023, legislative districts including and surrounding ASU’s largest campus in Tempe (LD 8, 9, and 12) included 39,326 independent voters, significantly outnumbering partisan voters. These numbers reflect a growing trend among young voters/students registering to vote without any party affiliation. In response to this trend, AGF Ambassadors have begun curating intentional experiences focused on nonpartisan student voters to engage and inform them about registration deadlines and other deadlines to participate in specific elections (i.e., the Presidential preference or any other primaries). This is done through on-campus tabling efforts, engaging with community partners both on and off campus, hosting voter education workshops and/or social gatherings, and offering virtual seminars or workshops.
- **Homeless Outreach Project:** Through social work field education, the Pastor Center’s social work intern has partnered with ASU’s Action Nexus on Homelessness’ social work interns and Human Services Campus (HSC) staff to provide voter education, registration, civil rights restoration information and limited services to those who engage with resources provided at the HSC facility. Preceding these efforts, the Pastor Centers’ social work intern trained HSC staff and interns onsite to equip them with skills to engage in effective voter outreach and education practices with those experiencing homelessness. Outreach efforts produced results that included over 60 interactions regarding rights restorations and 20 successful voter registrations. Of all the registrations during this process, 11 individuals with felony convictions were able to receive information that led to their successful voter registrations.

CHAPTER 4: ADMINISTRATION OF ELECTIONS IN ARIZONA

Gina Roberts, Voter Education Director, Citizens Clean Elections Commission

How Arizona Elections Work

Since the 2016 election, there has been an increased focus on the security and integrity of our nation's electoral system. Threats of foreign interference arose in the 2016 presidential election, leading to increased security measures and training for election officials, including the designation of election infrastructure as critical infrastructure by the United States Department of Homeland Security.³³

Recently, elections have been threatened domestically with an uptick in mis, dis, and mal information. All of this leads to an increase in voters needing to know that their vote is safe and counted accurately. The climate surrounding elections has shone a spotlight on election administration and the laws and procedures in place to ensure every vote is legitimate and accurate.

It's important to note that a majority of Arizona voters believe in the election system. In a recent survey, 65% of respondents indicated they were confident in the outcome of elections.³⁴ This confidence assumedly stems from the knowledge that there are layers upon layers of security measures in place throughout the entire election administration process.

Elections across the country are primarily conducted in a decentralized manner. This is critically important to the security of our elections as it means there is not one single entry point into the system that could disrupt elections without safeguards in place. However, it is important to note that not all states conduct elections exactly the same way.

To understand how Arizona conducts elections, we will start by discussing the United States Constitution and then the Arizona Constitution for the founding principles of how our elections shall occur. The U.S. Constitution states, "The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives,

How confident would you say you are in the outcomes of Arizona's elections, very confident, somewhat confident, or not confident?

*No Response/Did Not Know

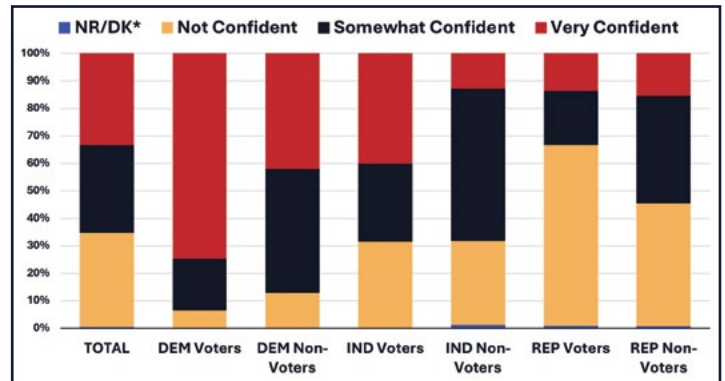


Figure Source: Dan Hunting, Thom Reilly, Jacqueline Salit, Cathy Stewart, and Christian Lorentzen, "Consensus and Concern in Arizona's Hot Political Climate: Voter Attitudes About Elections," *ASU School of Public Affairs*, July 2023, https://spa.asu.edu/sites/default/files/2023-07/Consensus_Concern_July_24_2023.pdf.

shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof..." (Article 1, Section 4, Clause 1).³⁵

This delegation allows states to adopt their own rules in the conduct of elections. Bear in mind there are still federal laws that states must adhere to, such as the Help America Vote Act. The Arizona Constitution provides the framework for our state's elections, such as mandating the right to a secret ballot, and the Arizona legislature adopts the laws that provide the policies that election officials must follow in the conduct of elections.

Each of Arizona's 15 counties is responsible for conducting elections in their jurisdiction. For statewide elections, the counties conduct the election in their county and the Secretary of State aggregates the results across counties to determine the statewide results.

33 "Election Security," *Department of Homeland Security*, November 6, 2023, <https://www.dhs.gov/topics/election-security>.

34 Dan Hunting, Thom Reilly, Jacqueline Salit, Cathy Stewart, and Christian Lorentzen, "Consensus and Concern in Arizona's Hot Political Climate: Voter Attitudes About Elections," *ASU School of Public Affairs*, July 2023, https://spa.asu.edu/sites/default/files/202307/Consensus_Concern_July_24_2023.pdf.

35 "Artl.S4.C1.2 States and Elections Clause," *Constitution Annotated*, Accessed March 7, 2024, https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artl-S4-C1-2/ALDE_00013577/.

What are the Key Roles in Elections?

Arizona has 15 counties, and each county has a Board of Supervisors (BOS, elected positions), a County Recorder (elected position), and an Elections Director (appointed by the BOS or Recorder). While these entities are responsible for election administration, that administration must be done in accordance with election law.

Obstacles and Barriers to Voting

- The Legislature adopts the laws that govern elections.
- The County Recorder administers voter registration and early voting.
- The County Election Director administers election day activities, including polling place set up, poll worker hiring and training and tabulating votes.
- The County Board of Supervisors approves election day voting locations, emergency early voting locations, and election budgets.
- The Secretary of State certifies state election results, develops the Election Procedures Manual, and maintains the statewide voter registration system.
- The Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission educates voters on how to participate in elections, including how to get a ballot and information on candidates and the issues.

All of these entities work together to administer elections in Arizona.

A Deeper Dive into Election Administration

Now that we've covered the basics of how elections are structured in Arizona, let's take a closer look at the administration of elections and how each key entity works together to ensure the accuracy and integrity of our elections.

Voter Registration

The first step in activating a person's political power is registering to vote. The process can be done with a paper form or, more commonly, online through [servicearizona.com](https://www.servicearizona.com). A voter must meet the state's eligibility requirements for voter registration* and, depending on which elections they wish to vote in, either swear/affirm their citizenship status or provide documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC).

Arizona voters passed Proposition 200 in 2004, requiring documentary proof of citizenship when registering to vote.³⁶ After litigation, the end result is Arizona's bifurcated voter registration system. Any voter who submits a voter registration form without DPOC is registered as a federal-only voter, meaning they may only vote in federal elections. This satisfies the federal requirement that states must use and accept the federal voter registration form which only requires swearing or affirming that a person is a United States citizen. Compliance with Arizona's law of providing DPOC, which is verified by the County Recorder, means a voter is registered as a full ballot voter and may vote in all state and local elections (such as Governor or City Council).

Voter Registration Statistics

There are approximately 4.1 million registered voters in Arizona. This equates to about 57% of the state's entire population or about 80% of the state's citizen voting-age population.³⁸

There are currently five recognized political parties: Democratic, Green, Republican, Libertarian, and No Labels Party.³⁹ When a person registers to vote, they select one of these official parties to register with, or they can choose to register as a "party not designated" or with a party that does not have official recognition. These latter two options result in an independent/unaffiliated voter.

*Eligibility requirements

- A citizen of the United States.
- A resident of Arizona and the county listed on your registration 29 days prior to the election.
- 18 years of age or older on or before the next general election.
- You are able to write your name or make your mark (unless prevented by disability).
- You have not been adjudicated an incapacitated person.
- You have not been convicted of treason or a felony unless you have had your civil rights restored. For a first-time felony conviction, civil rights are automatically restored upon completion of a person's sentence and payment of any fines and restitution.

36 Arizona Taxpayer and Citizen Protection Act, Proposition 200. (2004). <https://apps.azsos.gov/election/2004/info/PubPamphlet/english/prop200.pdf>.

37 "Voter Registration Statistics," *Arizona Secretary of State*, January 2, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/results-data/voter-registration-statistics>.

38 "Citizen Voting Age Population by Race and Ethnicity," *United States Census Bureau*, January 23, 2024, <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial-census/about/voting-rights/cvap.html>.

39 "About Political Parties," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/about-elections/information-about-political-parties>.

Voter Registration Statistics - January 2024*

*Voter registration statistics are calculated as prescribed by A.R.S. §16-168(G)

Party Name	Registered Voters	Percent
Republican	1,418,407	34.58%
Democratic	1,211,940	29.55%
Libertarian	32,438	0.79%
No Labels	25,924	0.63%
Green	2,514	0.06%
Other	1,410,085	34.38%
TOTAL	4,101,308	

Table Source: "Voter Registration Statistics," *Arizona Secretary of State*, January 2, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/results-data/voter-registration-statistics>.

Independent Voters

Any voter that is not registered with a recognized party is grouped into the "Other" category. These would be voters who are often referred to as "independents" and make up a significant portion of the electorate. There is not an official "independent party" in Arizona. However, with Arizona being so closely divided among the top two parties, independent voters can play a pivotal role in elections.

Arizona has an open primary law, meaning unaffiliated/independent voters can vote in the primaries by selecting a partisan ballot from the parties having open primaries. In certain jurisdictions, local nonpartisan ballots may also be available for independent voters.⁴⁰

Turnout remains significantly low among independent voters in primary elections. Numerous studies by Clean Elections indicate several reasons for low independent voter turnout, ranging from a lack of understanding and awareness of how to participate in a primary election to dissatisfaction with having to select a single-party ballot.⁴¹ As some races can actually be decided in a primary election, it is important to provide voter education on the rules of primary elections and how all voters may participate.

Voting Options

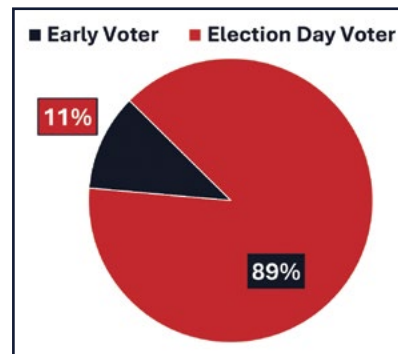
Arizona has long been a leader nationally when it comes

to elections, as we were the first state to implement online voter registration. We have a diverse state and geography, and as such, election administration cannot be a one-size-fits-all method. Voters have several options when it comes to voting. They can choose to vote early by mail, vote early in person, drop off their voted ballot at any voting location or secure ballot drop box, or vote in person on election day.⁴² Election administrators must allow for each of these options and ensure that whatever option the voter chooses, their vote is just as secure and accurately counted as any other method of voting.

Arizona's Ballot by Mail Systems

Ballot by mail has been available in Arizona for over two decades. As the majority of Arizona voters choose this method to vote, there are robust infrastructure and security measures in place to ensure ballots are safe and secure. In the 2020 General Election, approximately 89% of ballots cast were early ballots.⁴³ In the 2022 midterms, 80.1% of voters voted by mail ballot.⁴⁴

How Arizona Voted - 2020 General Election



Ballots Cast:

Early Voter
3,022,847

Election Day Voter
371,696

Early voting began on October 7th for the general election

Source: "How Arizona Voted - 2020 General Election," *Arizona Secretary of State*.

Receiving a ballot by mail:

Arizona has an Active Early Voting List (AEVL), which allows a voter to sign up for a mail ballot to automatically be mailed to them for every election they are eligible to vote in. Voters may also make a one-time request for a ballot to be mailed to them. Early voting begins 27 days before the election, so voters can expect to receive their ballot in the mail shortly after. Ballots are only mailed to registered voters who have specifically requested a mail ballot through the AEVL or a one-time request process in statewide elections.⁴⁵

40 "Independent Voters," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 1, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/no-party>.

41 David Daugherty and Joseph Garcia, "Arizona's Voter Crisis," *Morrison Institute*, November 2018, https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/voter_crisis_report_revised.pdf.

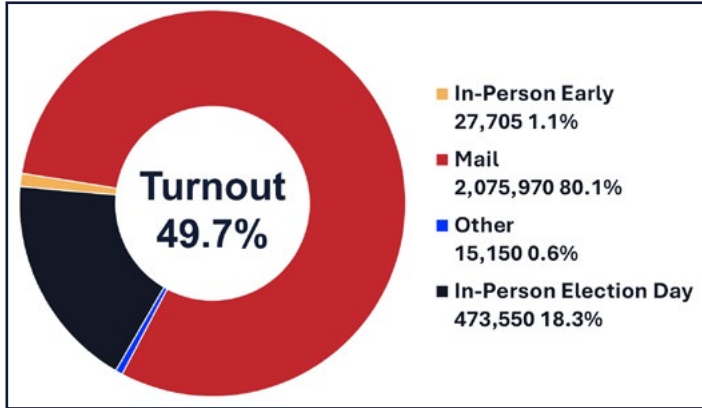
42 "2022 Voter Education Guide," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 1, 2024, <https://storageccec.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/public/docs/821-Website-ENGLISH--VEG-General-2022.pdf>.

43 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

44 "2022 EAVS Data Brief: Arizona," *Election Assistance Committee*, accessed March 7, 2024, https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/2022_EAVS_Data_Brief_AZ_508c.pdf.

45 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

Voting and Turnout Voters Participating by Mode



Total Voting Locations
767

Total Poll Workers
7,156

Image Source: "2022 EAVS Data Brief: Arizona," *Election Assistance Committee*, accessed March 7, 2024, https://www.eac.gov/sites/default/files/2023-10/2022_EAVS_Data_Brief_AZ_508c.pdf.

Returning an early ballot:

Early ballots come with a return envelope that is postage prepaid. Voters can mail back their ballot at least seven days prior to election day to ensure it is received by the county in time. If a voter prefers to hand deliver their ballot, they can do so at multiple locations in the county, including secured ballot drop boxes and voting locations.⁴⁶ Whichever method a voter uses to return their early ballot, the early ballot affidavit envelope must be signed, and the ballot must be received by the county by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day.⁴⁷

Is Voting by Mail Secure?

There are significant security measures that election officials follow when processing returned ballots. First, early ballots can only be mailed to registered voters who have already verified their identity when registering to vote and only to registered voters who have specifically requested a mail ballot. Prior to early ballots going out, the counties send a notice to every voter who is on the AEVL to confirm they still want an early ballot and that they are still at the address on record.⁴⁸

Voters must sign the early ballot affidavit envelope when voting early in order for their ballot to be counted. The voter's signature on the early ballot affidavit is compared to the signature on file with their voter registration record. County election staff receive

professional training to verify that the signature on the affidavit envelope matches the signature on the voter's registration record. This is done to ensure the integrity of the early voting process.⁴⁹

According to the Citizen Clean Elections Commission:

"If the signature is a match, the ballot proceeds to the Citizens Boards who then prepare the unopened ballots for tabulation. The Citizens Boards are made up of two board members of different political party affiliations. They confirm that the County Recorder verified the voter's signature, and then they remove the ballot from the envelope, taking special care to ensure the privacy of the voters' ballot selections. The ballots are then transmitted to the tabulation room. If the county is unable to verify the signature, the county will attempt to contact the voter. Voters have until the 5th calendar day after the statewide primary or general election to correct their signature."⁵⁰

How Ballots are Tabulated

When explaining how ballots are counted, it's important to distinguish between a ballot that is cast early and a ballot that is cast on election day. This can impact the process each ballot goes through before final tabulation. **Every single voter's identification is verified regardless of what type of ballot they cast.**

Early Ballots

As discussed above, all early ballots are reviewed for verification of the voter's identity before the ballot is transmitted to the tabulation room. An early ballot cannot be tabulated unless the voter signs the early ballot affidavit and the county subsequently confirms that the signature matches the voter's registration record.

Election Day Ballots

When a voter enters a voting location on Election Day, they must provide a satisfactory form of identification in order to receive their official ballot (e.g., a valid driver's license). Once the voter receives and votes their ballot, one of two things can occur. Some counties utilize a method called "central count," and others utilize a method called "precinct tabulation."

If a voter is in a central count county, the voter would deposit their voted ballot into a secured ballot bin. After the polls close, the secured ballots are transported back to election central (the location used by the

46 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

47 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

48 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

49 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

50 "Ballot by Mail," *Citizens Clean Election Commission*, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-to-vote/early-voting/vote-by-mail>.

county to tabulate the ballots) by election workers, who are of different political parties.

If a voter is in a precinct tabulation county, the voter or the poll worker would run the voted ballot through the tabulation machine at the voting location. The machine immediately tabulates the ballot and saves the vote counts to a removable media device located inside the tabulator. If for any reason the machines are not operational at the voting location, the ballots are secured in a ballot bin and taken back to election central for tabulation.

Tabulation

After early ballots have been processed to confirm the voter's identity, the ballots are transmitted to the early ballot board which consists of volunteers of opposite party affiliations, they then remove the ballot from the affidavit envelope and prepare to transmit the ballot to the tabulation room. Once the ballots have been transmitted to the tabulation room, election staff begins running the ballots through the tabulators. The ballot tabulation room is required by law to have a live video feed so voters can watch all of the activity during tabulation.

For ballots that have been tabulated at the voting location, after the polls close, the poll workers or sheriff deputies transmit the removable media that contains the results recorded at the voting location and transmit those results to the central count location. The election official then loads those results into the secure election management system and aggregates the vote totals for all voting locations.

Physical Ballot Security

The counties must adhere to chain of custody protocols. This means that there is a log/paper trail for every single ballot. This includes all early ballots and all ballots at voting locations. Ballots are stored in secure locations and there is a live video feed to the ballot tabulation room for every county. Counties must follow the elections procedures manual for ensuring the physical security of all ballots. This includes the use of tamper-evident seals, identification badges, the presence of two or more staff members of opposite political affiliations, audits, etc.

How Can I Confirm My Ballot Was Counted Accurately?

Each piece of tabulation equipment is tested and certified before and after the election through a process called Logic and Accuracy Testing (L&A). The County must test all of the election equipment before tabulation can begin. On top of that, the Secretary of State's Office conducts a random test of the election equipment before the machines begin tabulation. L&A tests are open to the public and political party

observers are usually in attendance. A new round of L&A testing is done by the counties after the election, to confirm once again the machines are tabulating correctly.

In addition to machine testing, a random hand count is performed to confirm the accuracy of the machine vote. Ultimately, an automatic recount is triggered if a race is within a certain margin of votes. There are several checks and balances in the election administration process to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the election.

Voters can confirm online if their early ballot was received and counted. Some counties have text and email alerts to notify voters when their ballot is received and tabulated.

Turnout

Turnout is steadily increasing in statewide elections. Year after year, we continue to see rising numbers of Arizona voters contributing to democracy through the ballot box. The chart below shows the increase in presidential elections and midterm elections, respectively. As noted above, primary elections historically have lower turnout rates, in part due to low participation rates by independent voters.

Year	General Election	Primary Election
2022	62.56%	34.92%
2020	79.90%	36.42%
2018	64.85%	33.26%
2016	74.17%	29.10%
2014	47.52%	27.02%
2012	74.36%	28.09%
2010	55.65%	30.09%
2008	77.69%	22.80%
2006	60.47%	23.07%
2004	77.10%	24.71%
2002	56.33%	25.25%
2000	71.76%	23.84%
1998	45.82%	19.66%

Table Source: "Voter Registration Statistics," Arizona Secretary of State, accessed March 7, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/results-data/voter-registration-statistics>.

Campaign Finance

Election administration also includes overseeing Arizona's campaign finance laws, which require disclosure of financial activity by political committees

Spending Across the Map

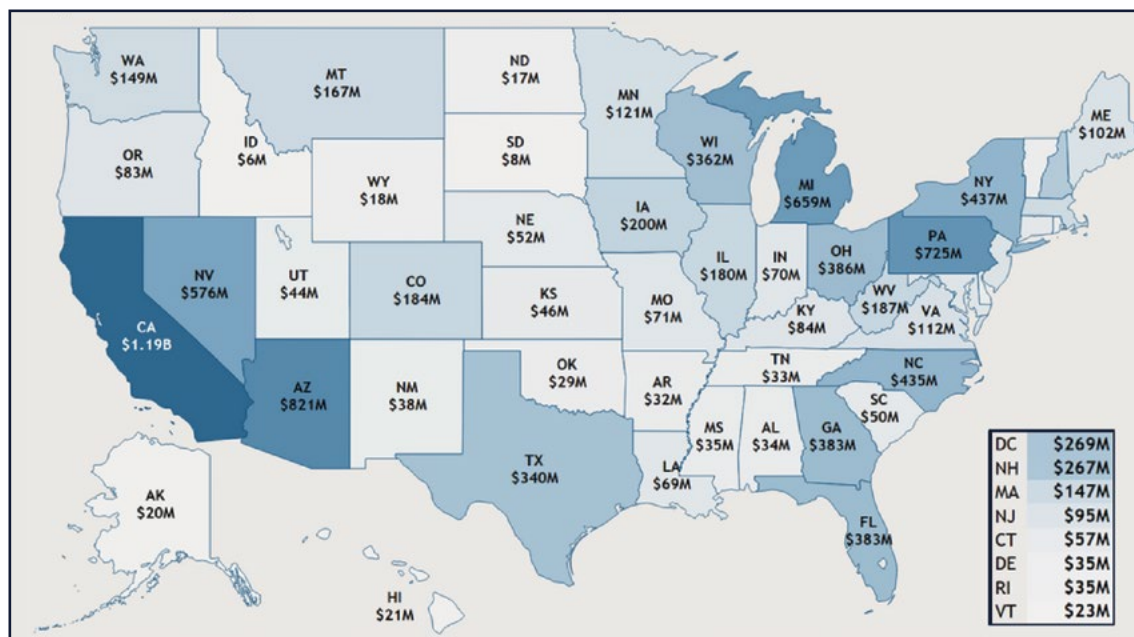


Image Source: “2024 Political Spending Projections Report,” *AdImpact*, accessed March 7, 2024, <https://adimpact.com/2024-political-spending-projections-report/#:~:text=AdImpact%20projects%20the%202023%2D2024,the%202019%2D2020%20election%20cycle.>

attempting to influence the outcome of elections. Campaign finance activity in Arizona is governed by state statutes and rules, and regulation occurs by the filing officer for the jurisdiction (such as the City Clerk for a City Council election) and the legal counsel for that entity (in this example, the City Attorney).⁵¹

Arizona is unique across the country as voters created the Arizona Citizens Clean Elections Commission (Clean Elections) in 1998 and charged it with additional campaign finance enforcement. Clean Elections is an independent, non-partisan state agency with investigative authority, enforcement and subpoena powers, as well as the authority to create rules and assess civil penalties to enforce the Clean Elections Act.⁵²

More recently, voters passed Proposition 211, the Voter’s Right to Know Act. The Act calls for additional disclosures and reporting by entities and persons whose campaign media spending and/or in-kind contributions for campaign media spending exceeds \$50,000 in statewide campaigns or \$25,000 in other campaigns, including identifying original donors of contributions of more than \$5,000 in aggregate; creating penalties for violations of the law; and allowing the Citizens Clean Elections Commission to adopt rules and enforce the provisions of the law.⁵³

Political media spending in Arizona is projected to break records. According to AdImpacts 2023-2024 Political Cycle Spending Projections Report, \$821 million in political spending is expected in Arizona alone. With this projection, the Voter’s Right to Know Act may prove to result in additional disclosure and transparency in Arizona’s elections.⁵⁴

The Future of Election Administration

Discussions continue to occur on how elections can be reformed, including topics such as election security measures, equipment regulations, voter registration access and requirements, and identification requirements. The state legislature and voters are actively proposing measures that will change/impact the election administration and voting processes. In the 2023 legislative session, there were over 100 election-related bills introduced. Citizens’ initiatives continue to be circulated and filed for voter consideration on the ballot, and the Governor assembled an Elections Task Force, which recently released their recommendations for election improvements.

Democracy is strengthened by electoral participation, and as election laws, policies, and procedures are contemplated, it is important to stay grounded in the foundation of our electoral system in the U.S. and Arizona Constitutions.

51 “Campaign Finance & Reporting,” *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/campaign-finance-reporting#resources>.

52 “What we do,” *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*, accessed March 6, 2024, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/what-we-do>.

53 “Arizona’s Proposition 211 and the Fight for the Voters’ Right to Know,” *Campaign Legal Center*, last revised August 22, 2023, accessed March 8, 2024, <https://campaignlegal.org/story/arizonas-proposition-211-and-fight-voters-right-know>.

54 “2024 Political Spending Projections Report,” *AdImpact*, accessed March 7, 2024, <https://adimpact.com/2024-political-spending-projections-report>.

CHAPTER 5: AN OVERVIEW OF OTHER APPROACHES TO SELECTING CANDIDATES

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Editors' note: the chapter below explores several alternative options for determining the winning candidate in an election. It is not exhaustive nor is it an endorsement of any one strategy. Readers can use the descriptions of methods below to contemplate which sets of guidelines best serve the goals for our democracy.

Top Candidate Primaries

Top-candidate primaries is an example of nonpartisan election reform. Top-candidate primaries are an election process in which all candidates running for an office, regardless of party affiliation, are listed on the same primary ballot. While top-two primaries are the most common version of a top-candidate primary, top-four and final-five primaries also let voters choose candidates from any party. With the top-four and final-five primary models, however, the top vote-getters move on to a general election. In all these primaries, the top candidates that receive the highest number of votes, regardless of party affiliation, advance to the general election, making it possible for two members of the same party to run against one another in a general election.⁵⁵

As of 2020, the top-two primary elects slightly less than one-fifth of the members of the House each year.⁵⁶ Washington became the first state to adopt a top-two primary system for congressional and state-level elections in 2004, with California doing the same in 2010. In 2020, a ballot initiative was approved in Alaska, creating a top-four primary system for state and congressional elections. This initiative also included provisions establishing rank-choice voting for state executive, state legislative, congressional, and presidential elections. Nebraska employs a top-two primary system in state legislative elections; however,

because its legislature is nonpartisan, no party affiliation is listed in association with any candidate.

Louisiana does not use a two-party system but allows all candidates to run in the general election and, in the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes (50 percent + 1 vote), the top two vote-recipients face one another in a runoff. While not a true top-two primary, the two-round electoral system is based on the same principles.

Supporters of the top-two primary system believe that it allows for a more accurate reflection of the will of the electorate and encourages candidates to take more moderate stances. According to Jesse Crosson of the Center for the Study of Democratic Politics at Princeton University, "According to proponents of the top-two primary, the partisan neutral, two-stage nature of the system leverages the participation of minority party voters in safe districts in order to elect more moderate winners."⁵⁷ This belief comes from the idea that in a top-two system, in order to get on the ballot, candidates must appeal to voters of all political affiliations, moving their stances closer to the center.⁵⁸ Researchers have found top-two and open primaries



55 "Top-Two Primary," *Ballotpedia*, accessed February 22, 2024, https://ballotpedia.org/Top-two_primary.

56 Jenesse Miller, "Top-Two and Open Primary Elections Produce Less Extreme Lawmakers," *USC Today*, May 14, 2020, accessed February 22, 2024, <https://news.usc.edu/170366/top-two-open-primary-elections-less-extreme-lawmakers-usc>.

57 Jesse Crosson, "Extreme Districts, Moderate Winners: Same Party Challenges, and Deterrence in Top-Two Primaries," *Political Science Research and Methods* 9, no. 3 (2021): 532-548.

58 Jesse Crosson, "Extreme Districts, Moderate Winners: Same Party Challenges, and Deterrence in Top-Two Primaries," *Political Science Research and Methods* 9, no. 3 (2021): 532-548.

are associated with more moderate legislators.⁵⁹ However, other studies have found more of a modest or inconsistent approach.⁶⁰

Top-candidate elections are used fairly widely and successfully across the United States as opposed to other untested or potentially confusing reforms which may be met with suspicion by the voting public. Top-candidate primaries have a good deal of promise in advancing goals, such as electing moderates and/or moderating the behavior of elected officials, reducing negative campaigning, assuring minority (political and racial) representation, and increasing voter participation. However, assessing their potential is challenging because their implementation takes place in the context of complete partisan control of most state and local electoral systems and the parties typically seek to retain as much control of the election system as possible.

Open Primaries

In the US, in most elections, candidates compete in two contests to win their seat: a primary election and a general election. While the general is open to all voters in a jurisdiction, in many states the primary is divided by party and limited to registered party members. “Open primaries” are those in which unaffiliated/independent voters can choose a party ballot and participate in primary elections.

Primary elections were created during the Progressive era to give voters a more direct say in the nominations process. Today, primaries are used in three distinct ways:

1. In most states, primaries are used to determine which candidates for state and federal office will receive the nomination of the Democratic or Republican parties (and to a lesser extent, minor parties like the Green and Libertarian).
2. In four states (California, Washington, Nebraska, and Alaska) to determine, in a nonpartisan way, which candidates will advance from the first round (primary) to the second round (general).
3. To elect delegates to attend the national conventions of the Democrats and Republicans to decide a presidential nominee.

Independent voters and those who are not affiliated with one of the two major parties are oftentimes excluded from voting in primary elections. Since general

elections are **overwhelmingly noncompetitive**, being barred from participation in a primary can mean getting excluded from the election altogether.

The rules for primary participation vary from state to state and oftentimes within the same state, resulting in a confusing assortment of election policy. The Supreme Court has ruled that political parties have the legal right under the First Amendment to supersede state election laws regarding who can and cannot participate in their nominating primaries. Thus, in seven states, the state parties have the jurisdiction to decide whether to create an open primary. States also vary in how voters register: 30 states register voters by party and 20 states do not. However, nine states that require partisan registration also feature open primaries for all or some of elections. Fourteen states have partisan registration and closed primaries. So, the meaning and experience of an “open” primary in a partisan-registration state and nonpartisan-registration state are different.

In 2020, 26 million independent voters were barred from voting in presidential primaries.⁶¹ These voters were in states with closed elections, or states which restrict independents from voting in presidential primary elections. In Arizona, independent voters are unable to vote in presidential primaries. These elections are called Presidential Preference Elections (PPE) and are run by the Democratic and Republican parties, not the state. Only registered members of the two major parties are able to cast a ballot in these elections. Primary elections for statewide, legislative, and local offices, however, are open to independent voters. An independent must request either a Democratic or a Republican ballot to vote; they cannot pick and choose candidates from both parties in the primary election.

Some reformers suggest eliminating primaries outright. The argument is that primaries are low-turnout elections, dominated by the most ideologically extreme members from the Democratic and Republican parties. Furthermore, primaries significantly underrepresent poor and working-class citizens and minorities of color. Focusing voters’ attention on one



59 Christian Grose, “Reducing Legislative Polarization: Top-Two and Open Primaries Are Associated with More Moderate Legislators,” *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy* 1, no. 2 (2020): 267–287.

Jesse Crosson, “Extreme Districts, Moderate Winners: Same Party Challenges, and Deterrence in Top-Two Primaries,” *Political Science Research and Methods* 9, no. 3 (2021): 532–548

60 Eric McGhee and Boris Shor, “Has the Top Two Primary Elected More Moderates?” *Perspectives on Politics* 15, no. 4 (2017): 1053–1066, doi: 10.1017/S1537592717002158.

61 *Ballot Access News*, Volume 25, Number 10 (March 1, 2020).

high-stakes general election, it is argued, would help maximize turnout.⁶²

Christian Grose of the University of Southern California's Schwarzenegger Institute found that open primaries and top-two primaries are associated with reduced legislator extremity and result in more moderate legislators.⁶³ This study was the first to find this by analyzing the voting behavior of members of Congress.⁶⁴ They also result in elected officials reaching out beyond their party to all the voters in order to get elected and stay in office.⁶⁵ Additionally, open primaries and top-two primaries are associated with higher voter turnout from women of color who are independents.⁶⁶ In contrast, closed primaries have been found to have a repressing effect on people of color, specifically independents of color. A recent study by Grose, Raquel Centeno, Nancy Hernandez, and Kayla Wolf of the University of Southern California found that, "Independent and third-party voters across four of the racial groups [studied] are more likely to vote in an open or top-two primary rather than a closed primary."⁶⁷ The study found that Latinx and Asian Americans were more likely to be registered as independent and had the lowest predicted primary turnouts when compared to Black and white independents. Similarly, Asian-American independents had the lowest predicted turnout in a closed primary state. The researchers found that closed primaries had large demobilizing impacts on voters of color.

While polls show US citizens consistently support having open primaries,⁶⁸ there is a good deal of opposition toward it from the Democratic and Republican parties. The concept of "open primaries" appears to have a good deal of promise in advancing

goals, such as assuring minority (political and racial) representation and increasing voter participation. However, assessing their potential is challenging because their implementation takes place in the context of complete partisan control of most state and local electoral systems and parties typically oppose open primary elections.

Ranked Choice Voting

Ranked-choice voting (RCV) is a system within which constituents vote for multiple candidates, in order of preference.⁶⁹ In a ranked-choice voting system, the candidate who receives more than half of the first-choice votes in races that only elect one winner will win. However, if there is no simple majority winner within the first-choice votes, then votes are subject to a new counting system, often described as an "instant runoff." When this happens, the candidate receiving the fewest total votes is eliminated from the race, and votes are re-tallied for the remaining candidates. Voters whose first-choice votes went toward the eliminated candidate will have their second-choice votes counted, and tabulation will continue until there is a candidate who has won the majority of votes.⁷⁰

In jurisdictions with multi-winner positions (such as city council or school board) or who elect multiple winners for a legislative body, a variant of ranked-choice voting is more likely to be used: proportional ranked-choice voting. In proportional ranked-choice voting, winning candidates must reach only the voting threshold -- the minimum percentage of votes to guarantee winning the seat -- in order to win one of the seats up for grabs. For example, a single-seat election needs 50 percent + 1 vote, a two-seat election needs 33.3 percent + 1 vote, a three-seat election needs 25 percent + 1 vote, and so on.⁷¹

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- 62 Pierce, Richard. "Eliminate primary elections to restore our strong democracy." *The Hill*, July 12, 2019. <https://thehill.com/opinion/campaign/452844-eliminate-primary-elections-to-restore-our-strong-democracy>.
- Katherine Gehl, "It's time to get rid of party primaries," *CNN*, last modified March 12, 2021, accessed February 22, 2024, <https://edition.cnn.com/2021/03/12/opinions/reform-american-political-primaries-gehl/index.html>.
- Nick Troiano, "Party Primaries Must Go," *The Atlantic*, March 30, 2021, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/03/party-primaries-must-go/618428/>.
- 63 Christian Grose, "Reducing Legislative Polarization: Top-Two and Open Primaries Are Associated with More Moderate Legislators," *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy* 1, no. 2 (2020): 267–287.
- 64 Jenesse Miller, "Top-Two and Open Primary Elections Produce Less Extreme Lawmakers," *USC Today*, May 14, 2020, accessed February 22, 2024, <https://news.usc.edu/170366/top-two-open-primary-elections-less-extreme-lawmakers-usc>.
- 65 Christian Grose, "Reducing Legislative Polarization: Top-Two and Open Primaries Are Associated with More Moderate Legislators," *Journal of Political Institutions and Political Economy* 1, no. 2 (2020): 267–287.
- 66 Centeno, R., Grose, C. R., Hernandez, N., & Wolf, K. (2021). "The Demobilizing Effect of Primary Electoral Institutions on Voters of Color." Paper presented at 2021 *Midwest Political Science Association, Virtual, April 14-18, 2021*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3831739>.
- 67 Centeno, R., Grose, C. R., Hernandez, N., & Wolf, K. (2021). "The Demobilizing Effect of Primary Electoral Institutions on Voters of Color." Paper presented at 2021 *Midwest Political Science Association, Virtual, April 14-18, 2021*. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3831739>.
- 68 Lucey, Catherine and Swanson, Emily. "AP-NORC Poll: Americans Want Nomination System Changed." *The Associated Press*, May 31, 2016. <https://apnews.com/article/f5821f2774c14c39ad00c1777f9ec6ea>.
- 69 Anna Kambhampaty, "New York City Voters Just Adopted Ranked-Choice Voting in Elections. Here's How It Works," *Time*, November 6, 2019, <https://time.com/5718941/ranked-choice-voting/>.
- 70 DeLeon, R. E. *San Francisco and instant runoff voting: An analysis of the SFSU/PRI exit poll data assessing voter opinions about ranked choice voting in the November 2004 Board of Supervisors elections*. Working Paper. San Francisco, CA, 2005, retrieved from http://archive.fairvote.org/media/inv/deleon2004_sanfran.pdf.
- 71 "Proportional Ranked Choice Voting," *FairVote*, n.d., accessed February 29, 2024, <https://fairvote.org/our-reforms/proportional-ranked-choice-voting/>.

Proponents assert that the expected benefits of RCV include greater openness of the electoral arena to new parties and independents, greater ideological moderation, and greater voter satisfaction.⁷² Ranked-choice voting was designed to encourage centrism and, in many cases, independent candidates. According to Evan Falchuk, a former independent gubernatorial candidate for governor in Massachusetts, “Ranked-choice voting helps you not have to feel as if you’re voting for the lesser of two evils.”⁷³

Opponents have argued that ranked-choice voting is unnecessarily complex and confuses voters. It introduces many more steps, and more complexity than would be expected otherwise in a traditional tabulation of results.⁷⁴ Others have argued that absent substantial voter education, the RCV system will effectively disenfranchise voters, especially older individuals and voters of color.⁷⁵

Ranked-choice voting is currently seeing relatively limited use here in the United States. However, its popularity is increasing. Lawmakers in 29 states are considering measures that would adopt ranked-choice voting in some form, in local, statewide, or presidential primary elections.⁷⁶ Currently, a total of only 43 jurisdictions utilize ranked-choice voting, including two states, one county, 29 cities outside of Utah, and 23 cities in Utah. Particularly noteworthy out of the jurisdictions that use ranked-choice voting are the states of Alaska and Maine, who use it in all statewide and presidential elections. Outside of the US, ranked-choice voting is used nationally by six countries: Australia, Ireland, New Zealand, Malta, Northern Ireland, and Scotland. Additionally, India, Nepal, and Pakistan use proportional ranked-choice voting for their national offices, including Senate and, in Pakistan, the presidency.⁷⁷

Ranked-choice voting appears to have a good deal of promise in advancing goals, such as electing moderates and/or moderating the behavior of elected officials, reducing negative campaigning, assuring minority (political and racial) representation, and increasing voter participation. However, assessing their potential is challenging because their implementation takes place in the context of complete partisan control of

most state and local electoral systems. Further, the added steps and complexity of RCV makes it difficult for many voters to understand, which may lead to their distrust of such a system.

72 Joseph Cerrone and Cynthia McClintock, “Ranked-Choice Voting, Runoff, and Democracy Insights from Maine and Other U.S. States,” *SSRN*, January 19, 2021, https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3769409.

73 Anthony Brooks, “‘A Greater Choice’ or ‘Confusing’: Arguments For And Against Ranked Choice Voting In WBUR Debate,” *WBUR*, October 14, 2020, <https://www.wbur.org/news/2020/10/14/wbur-debate-question-2-ranked-choice-voting>.

74 Gagnon, Matthew, “Ranked-choice voting makes elections unnecessarily complex and confusing,” *Bangor Daily News*, August 5, 2020, <https://bangordailynews.com/2020/08/05/opinion/ranked-choice-voting-makes-elections-unnecessarily-complex-and-confusing-2/>.

75 Rubinstein, Dana, Mays, Jeffery, and Emma Fitzsimmons. “Why Some N.Y.C. Lawmakers Want to Rethink Ranked-Choice Voting.” *New York Times*. Updated June 30, 2021. <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/09/nyregion/ranked-choice-lawsuit-voting.html>.

76 Matt Vasilogambros, “Ranked-Choice Voting Gains Momentum Nationwide,” *Stateline*, March 12, 2021, <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/research-and-analysis/blogs/stateline/2021/03/12/ranked-choice-voting-gains-momentum-nationwide>.

77 “Ranked Choice Voting,” *FairVote*, accessed February 22, 2024, https://www.fairvote.org/rcv#where_is_ranked_choice_voting_used.

CHAPTER 6: MEASURES OF A HEALTHY DEMOCRACY

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Editors' note: This chapter provides information intended to orient readers to some of the well-known indices that measure the health of democracies at the national level.

What is an Ideal/Healthy Democracy?

To identify an ideal or healthy democracy is a complex exploration into the essence of governance. Democracy, a term ubiquitous in political discourse and scholarship alike, lacks a single, universally accepted definition. In this chapter, we navigate the intricate landscape of academic work regarding democracy by reviewing key elements of various definitions of this concept and by introducing four widely used indices for its measurement. Datasets from Freedom House, Economic Intelligence Unit, the Polity Project, and the Varieties of Democracy Project offer valuable tools for quantifying both the various components and the overarching concept of democracy as it is (or is not) practiced around the world.

Importantly, although the datasets we address here tend to focus at the national level, the critical features of a healthy democracy should exist at many levels of government in a country like the United States, from national/federal elections and institutions to state- and local-level processes.

Ultimately, we argue that a “healthy” democracy is one in which:

- More than one political party contests* regularized “free and fair” elections;
- Those contesting elections refrain from interfering in the electoral process and respect the final outcome;
- Elected representatives and others appointed to government office can be held accountable by other institutions within government and by the broader voting public;
- Citizens have equal and uninhibited access to cast their vote; and

- The government refrains from physically abusing and violating citizens’ civil liberties.

*A contested election is defined as “an election of which the legality or validity of the result is challenged by the losing candidate.”⁷⁸

Defining Democracy

How can we recognize a democracy when we see one? To answer this question is surprisingly difficult. Like terrorism and many other political (and politicized) terms commonly used in our everyday conversation, democracy lacks a unanimous definition. Although many academics agree on the relevance for democracy of Robert Dahl’s two-dimensional conception of “polyarchy”:⁷⁹ **participation** and **contestation**, we do not have a consensus on how these dimensions are best measured. Scholars have identified myriad components that are crucial to a robust democracy, yet their findings tend to complicate, rather than clarify, the definition of democracy.

We therefore start defining democracy from its minimalist criteria. Classic scholarship regards **elections** as the fundamental and foundational characteristic of democracy. For example, Schumpeter argued that democracy is an “institutional arrangement for arriving at political decisions in which individuals acquire the power to decide by means of a competitive struggle for the people’s vote.”⁸⁰ Schumpeter’s definition encompasses both participation and contestation from Dahl’s framework. We can confidently agree that a regime without elections cannot be democratic.

On the other hand, however, all regimes that hold elections are not democratic. Since the late 1980s, an increasing number of authoritarian regimes (e.g.,

78 Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. “contested election,” accessed March 11, 2024, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contested%20election>.

79 Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (London: Yale University Press, 1971), 6.

80 Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, (New York: Taylor & Francis, 2010), 241.

Ghana, Myanmar, Russia) hold elections, but only a few of them have democratized.⁸¹ These “electoral autocracies” employ a wide range of extralegal methods to ensure favorable electoral outcomes, such as stifling or banning opposition parties, manipulating media coverage, and intimidating voters or otherwise violating their civil liberties.⁸² Stemming from this, it is generally agreed upon that democracies must experience the peaceful transfer of power between political parties.⁸³

Because electoral processes and outcomes can be easily distorted, it is important to ensure that democracies are those with “free and fair” elections, where coercion of voters and opposition is rare, and results are not manipulated by those in power.⁸⁴ Still, there are many ways to operationalize free and fair elections. We might also want to extend the conceptualization of “free and fair” elections to account for how socioeconomic and institutional configurations impact who gets to vote, since some contend that democracies must exercise universal suffrage.⁸⁵ For instance, wealth inequality⁸⁶ and a lack of access to social programs such as healthcare and education⁸⁷ can undermine political access and equality for citizens.

We have so far focused on the electoral process. But some scholars argue that democracy is not only about elections, but also about how decisions and policies are made. For example, while free and fair elections help to guarantee that politicians are “vertically” accountable to voters, **institutional checks and balances** provide “horizontal accountability,”⁸⁸ which is equally important to a healthy democracy by constraining the power of the executive and limiting their ability to adopt policies and behaviors that are not acceptable or even harmful to a majority of the population. Moreover, Lijphart distinguishes between **consensus** and **majoritarian** democracy and argues that the former, which involves rule by as many people as possible, is superior to rule by a simple majority of the population. *A note that these two forms of democracy differ in deciding to whose interests the government should be responsive. Majoritarian democracy is responsive to*

*the majority of the voters, whereas consensus democracy seeks to include as many people as possible.*⁸⁹

Ultimately, all these attributes are interrelated. Although it might be tempting to dump everything into the basket of democracy, doing so risks redundancy and the inclusion of less critical factors that do more to complicate our definition than to clarify it.⁹⁰ As we will see in the next section, differences across indices measuring democracy around the world partly come from this lack of theoretical and definitional consensus.

Measuring Democracy

There are numerous indices of democracy available to the public. We focus on some of the most widely used measures: Freedom House, Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index, Polity, and the Varieties of Democracy project. These resources have some shared characteristics. Most importantly, all these indices are at the country-year level, meaning that they measure the characteristics of each country once a year. Each index, therefore, accumulates a series of scores over time for each country, allowing for cross-country comparisons in a specific year, as well as longitudinal analysis to assess how the regime of a particular country evolved over time.

There are also important distinctions across these indices, too. These indices have different scopes in terms of country and year. In addition, the scales of the indices vary greatly, making a direct cross-index comparison difficult. Even if we transform these indices into similar scales, we might quickly notice that a country may score differently across indices in the same year. These differences are rooted in nuanced conceptual and methodological decisions, and a full explanation is beyond the goal of this chapter (for a detailed explanation of the inter-index differences, see Munck and Verkuilen’s article “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy.” Fortunately, precise differences in scales and scores might not concern users interested in understanding democracy in a general sense. But if they do, we encourage the users to take advantage of the richness of this publicly available data and select measures according to their

81 Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, *Competitive Authoritarianism: Hybrid Regimes After the Cold War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

82 Susan D. Hyde and Nikolay Marinov, “Which Elections Can Be Lost?” *Political Analysis* 20, no. 2 (2012): 191–210.

83 Adam Przeworski, *Democracy and the Market: Political and Economic Reforms in Eastern Europe and Latin America* (Cambridge University Press, 1991).

84 Robert A. Dahl, *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, (London: Yale University Press, 1971), 6.

85 Jørgen Elklit and Palle Svendsen, “The Rise of Election Monitoring: What Makes Elections Free and Fair?” *Journal of Democracy* 8, no. 3 (1997): 32–46.

86 Robert A. Dahl, *Democracy and Its Critics* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989), 326.

87 David Beetham, *Democracy and Human Rights* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1999).

88 Guillermo A. O’Donnell, “Delegative Democracy,” *Journal of Democracy* 5, no. 1 (1994): 55–69.

89 Arend Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, 2nd ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012).

90 Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: Evaluating Alternative Indices,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 5–34.

questions. It is often useful to begin by clarifying which aspects of democracy (e.g., respect for civil liberties, free and fair elections) are most interesting and relevant to the user, and then consider consulting a dataset that more directly measures those particular aspects, rather than one of these more abstract and aggregated indices of democracy. Still, these indices are a great place to start for those interested in the overall (anti-) democratic environment in a particular country.

Freedom House

Freedom House covers approximately 210 countries and territories, from 1973 to the present.⁹¹ Freedom House Indices include two major dimensions, namely **political rights** and **civil liberties**. The Freedom House measures have evolved over time, as they have included and/or removed certain attributes in different years. Taking the indices of 2023 as an example, political rights and civil liberties are subdivided into 7 categories, as illustrated in Table 1.⁹² Scores for each category are added up to create the overall score for a country. The advantage of this additive method is its straightforwardness, but it also tends to generate greater error when aggregating scores of different indicators.⁹³ Furthermore, because of the change in methodology, we advise users who wish to conduct longitudinal comparisons based on Freedom House Indices to be cautious about this potential inconsistency in its measurement over time.

Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index

The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) Democracy Index assesses the level of democracy in approximately 167 countries from 2006 to the present.⁹⁴ The EIU Democracy Index draws from the average score of five attributes, including **electoral process and pluralism, functioning of government, political participation, civil liberties, and political culture**. The EIU Democracy Index is on a 0 to 10 scale. It is unclear the degree to which the methodology of the EIU Index has changed over time. Therefore, we advise users who intend to analyze the EIU Index across time to carefully compare the methodologies adopted in the years of interest.

Taking the index of 2023 as an example, 60 indicators add up to form the aforementioned attributes of the EIU index.⁹⁵ In other words, the EIU Democracy Index

Table 1: Structure of Freedom House Index*

Political Rights (0-40)	Electoral Process (0-12)
	Political Pluralism and Participation (0-16)
	Functioning of Government (0-12)
	Additional Political Rights (-4-0)
Civil Liberties (0-60)	Freedom of Expression and Belief (0-16)
	Association and Organizational Rights (0-12)
	Rule of Law (0-16)
	Personal Autonomy and Individual Rights (0-16)

*Note. These 7 categories are further broken down into 25 attributes, each of which are constructed from detailed assessment questions. Interested readers are encouraged to consult the methodology manuals at <https://freedomhouse.org/reports/freedom-world/freedom-world-research-methodology>.

is constructed in a method similar to Freedom House Index. It therefore enjoys the same advantage as Freedom House Index, which is easy to comprehend and can be tailored for special purposes. On the other hand, the downside of the EIU Democracy Index is that the aggregation process is likely to generate less accurate measures of the level of democracy when comparing across countries, as two countries could receive the same index score in spite of exhibiting very different attributes.

Polity Index

The Polity Index stands out as a classic and extensively used measure of democracy in academic research.⁹⁶ Encompassing over 190 countries that have existed or currently exist, this index spans the period from 1800 to 2018. A country's Polity score is constructed based on two primary indices, **institutionalized democracy** and **institutionalized autocracy**, by simply subtracting the latter from the former. These measures of institutionalized democracy and autocracy are based upon four indicators, including **competitiveness of executive recruitment** (i.e., free and fair elections), **openness of executive recruitment** (i.e., political participation), **constraints on chief executives**, and **competitiveness of political participation** (i.e.,

91 "Freedom in the World," Freedom House, Accessed February 20, 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world>.

92 "Freedom in the World Research Methodology," Freedom House, Accessed February 20, 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/reports/freedom-world/freedom-world-research-methodology>.

93 Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, "Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy," *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 28.

94 "Democracy Index 2022," Economist Intelligence Unit, Accessed February 20, 2024, <https://www.eiu.com/n/campaigns/democracy-index-2022/>.

95 "Frontline Democracy and the Battle for Ukraine," Economist Intelligence Unit, 2023, https://www.eiu.com/n/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Democracy-Index-2022_FV2.pdf?li_fat_id=f1fbad7e-a282-4b9e-9f8f-6a6d5a9fe6b8.

96 "INSCR Data Page" Systemic Peace, 2022, <https://www.systemicpeace.org/inscrdata.html>.

forms and types of opposition). The coding for these four indicators are translated into scores following predefined rules, and then aggregated to create the indices for institutionalized democracy and autocracy.⁹⁷ The scale of the Polity Index ranges from -10 to 10.

Again, the additive aggregation procedure of the Polity Index raises concerns about its accuracy, but its advantages are clear. Like the EIU Index, Polity is unidimensional, providing users with a quick assessment of a country's democratic status. This simplicity contrasts with the two-dimensional Freedom House Index. Moreover, Polity excels in transparency and reliability of measurement compared to the other two indices.⁹⁸ Importantly, in each of its iterations, Polity undergoes careful review of its coding to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the data. Therefore, with its expansive coverage, Polity offers an excellent tool for longitudinal comparison within and across countries.

Varieties of Democracy

The Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) project offers the state-of-the-art measures of democracy.⁹⁹ They cover approximately 200 countries that have existed or currently exist, spanning from 1789 to present. V-Dem provides five aggregated indices of democracy.¹⁰⁰

The **electoral democracy index** measures the “minimalist” concept of democracy, that is, whether government offices are filled by free and fair elections. It accounts for several nuanced measures of electoral processes. The **liberal democracy index** measures “consensus” aspects of democracy, including the electoral process, rule of law, and executive constraints. The **participatory democracy index** measures active participation by citizens in political processes, by incorporating measures of electoral procedures, civil society participation, and subnational democracy. The **deliberative democracy index** captures the extent to which decisions are reached through public deliberation. Lastly, the **egalitarian democracy index** measures whether citizens are equally empowered in terms of civil liberties, access to political power, and distribution of resources.

V-Dem indices are aggregated based on multiple layers of indicators, using complex statistical methods. This methodology effectively reduces errors in aggregation, but users may find it difficult to comprehend the aggregation process or to construct

their own indices from the raw data. Another strength of the V-Dem methodology is its consistency across time. Longitudinal comparison based on V-Dem indices should thus provide more reliable results than with Freedom House or EIU Democracy indices.

While none of these indices contemplate state-level government like we have in the United States, readers are encouraged to think about the guidelines discussed within that context. Every state, municipality, and community in the United States should strive to have a well-performing democracy that aligns with existing academic principles.

97 Monty G. Marshall and Ted Robert Gurr, “POLITY5: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800-2018, Dataset Users’ Manual,” Systemic Peace, April 23, 2020, <https://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/p5manualv2018.pdf>.

98 Gerardo L. Munck and Jay Verkuilen, “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy,” *Comparative Political Studies* 35, no. 1 (2002): 28.

99 “The V-Dem Dataset,” *Varieties of Democracy*, March 2023, <https://v-dem.net/data/the-v-dem-dataset/>.

100 Michael Coppedge et al. “Conceptualizing and Measuring Democracy: A New Approach,” *Perspectives on Politics* 9, no. 2 (2011): 247-267.

CONCLUSION

What is our shared vision for our democracy?

This background report was stewarded and edited by Morrison Institute for Public Policy in support of Arizona Town Hall in their 116th topic chosen to educate, engage, connect, and empower Arizonans. This report provides foundational information on our state government and how its systems function, along with frameworks for assessing the quality of our democratic systems.

Our hope is that readers, armed with information on how our government works through a statewide lens, contemplate what this means in their own communities and lives.

During the Arizona Town Hall discussion, participants can reflect on whether or not the way these systems of power function is reflective of our shared vision for democracy in Arizona. If not, what changes can be made from a systemic perspective, a community-building perspective, and an individual perspective?

As an additional resource and learning tool, interested readers are encouraged to reference the 2023 SPARK report on [Strengthening Civic Health in Arizona: The Intersection of Civic Engagement and Health](#) compiled by Vitalyst Health Foundation.

APPENDIX I: INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION

Districts are the blocks of land that define an area of voters represented by a specific type of elected official. Arizona has 30 legislative districts and nine (9) congressional districts. Every ten years, after the federal government conducts the Census, every state is required to change the boundary lines of their legislative and congressional districts to ensure each district has a roughly equal number of voters.¹⁰¹ The Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its amendments provide additional guidelines for the redistricting process. Districts must protect the voting strength of minorities. Due to Arizona's history of discrimination, Arizona and eight (8) other states were required to get approval from the U.S. Department of Justice for any proposed changes to elections or voting requirements that would impact the rights and representation of minorities.¹⁰² However, in 2013, the Supreme Court struck down these preclearance requirements, though federal law still protects minority voters.¹⁰³

Federal law does not dictate the method states use when redistricting. In most states, the state legislature has control over the redistricting process. In these instances, the district lines pass like any other legislation – they are proposed by legislative committees and passed with a majority vote in each legislative chamber.¹⁰⁴ In a few states (i.e.,

Connecticut and Maine), a redistricting plan can only be approved with a supermajority (i.e., 2/3 votes). Similarly, the legislature can override other bodies with a supermajority in New York and Washington, and in Ohio, “a bipartisan supermajority takes a first shot before another commission takes over.”¹⁰⁵ In five states where redistricting is controlled by the state legislature (i.e., Connecticut, Florida, Maryland, Mississippi, and North Carolina), district lines are set by joint resolution without an opportunity for a gubernatorial veto.¹⁰⁶

Iowa, Maine, Utah, and Vermont appoint advisory commissions that help advise the legislature about where district lines should be drawn.¹⁰⁷ The commissions make recommendations, but the final decision and adoption of maps still rests with the legislature.¹⁰⁸ In Maryland, an advisory committee works with the governor to create draft maps that are submitted to the state legislature at the beginning of the legislative session.¹⁰⁹

In some states, a “backup commission” is in place to draw district lines if the state legislature cannot come to an agreement, usually by a date specified in that state's Constitution.¹¹⁰ The members of the backup commission vary by state but include the Secretary

101 “Redistricting,” *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

102 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

103 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

104 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

105 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

106 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

107 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

108 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

109 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

110 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.ils.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

of State or other statewide elected officials, members selected by legislative leadership, or a blend of both.¹¹¹

Seven states, including Arkansas, Hawaii, Missouri, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, accomplish redistricting with “politician commissions,” where a select group of elected officials draws the maps rather than the entire legislature.¹¹² In some states, the constitution specifies that certain elected officials have specific roles on the commission. In others, legislative leadership nominates commissioners, sometimes with a role for the Governor or another executive-level leader to appoint members.¹¹³

Finally, the method that Arizona uses is independent commissions. Along with eight other states, Arizona draws state and legislative districts through an independent commission that must follow regulations to limit participation by elected officials.¹¹⁴ Some states regulate/limit who can serve as commission members. This is the case in Arizona, where legislative staff are banned from being on independent commissions.¹¹⁵

Before 2001, Arizona’s legislature had control over the redistricting process. However, legislators were “reluctant to tamper with the district boundaries from which they were elected and united around the goal of protecting incumbents.”¹¹⁶ This produced oddly shaped, gerrymandered districts that heavily favored one political party or the other. As a result, only a few districts had “meaningful” voting options because legislative candidates ran unopposed in many districts.¹¹⁷

In 1999, advocates began to organize a proposal to change the redistricting process in Arizona. Arizona Common Cause, the League of Women Voters, and the Valley Citizens League joined together to form the Fair Districts Fair Elections committee to put a proposal on the November 2000 ballot.¹¹⁸ The proposal was called Proposition 106, which passed with 56% of the vote.¹¹⁹

Under the provision of Proposition 106, the Arizona Independent Redistricting Commission (AIRC) was created. AIRC is comprised of five members: Two Republican commissioners, two Democratic commissioners, and one independent commissioner.¹²⁰ Every ten years, the Commission of Appellate Court Appointments compiles a list of 25 vetted candidates (ten from each political party and five who don’t belong to a party).¹²¹ From the list of candidates, the majority and minority leaders in the legislature select four commissioners. The four members then select a fifth member, through a majority vote, who serves as the commission chair.¹²² The chair cannot belong to the same political party as any other commission member, and they must be registered as unaffiliated with a party for at least three years before being appointed.¹²³ Further, commission members cannot have been appointed or elected or run for candidacy in any public office within the prior three years.¹²⁴

111 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.lls.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

112 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.lls.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

113 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.lls.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

114 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.lls.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

115 Justin Levitt, “Redistricting 101: Who Draws the Lines?” *Loyola Law School*, 2020, accessed November 2, 2023. <https://redistricting.lls.edu/redistricting-101/who-draws-the-lines/>.

116 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

117 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

118 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

119 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

120 “Redistricting,” *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

121 “Redistricting,” *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

122 “Redistricting,” *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

123 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

124 David R. Berman, “Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process,” *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

The AIRC completed the redistricting process in 2001, 2011, and 2021.¹²⁵ In addition to following federal law to create districts roughly equal in size that protect the voting strength of minorities, Arizona state law outlines further requirements for the AIRC:¹²⁶

- Congressional districts shall have equal population to the extent practicable, and state legislative districts shall have equal population to the extent practicable;
- Districts shall comply with the United States Constitution and the United States Voting Rights Act;
- Districts shall be geographically compact and contiguous to the extent practicable;
- District boundaries shall respect communities of interest to the extent practicable;
- To the extent practicable, district lines shall use visible geographic features, city, town and county boundaries, and undivided census tracts;
- To the extent practicable, competitive districts should be favored where to do so would create no significant detriment to the other goals.

Once Census Bureau population data is released, the AIRC develops districts with equal populations in a grid format across the state – one grid map is created for congressional districts, and one is created for legislative districts.¹²⁷ The grid maps are adjusted to meet the abovementioned requirements and prepared for public consideration.¹²⁸ The public has 30 days to comment on the maps or submit draft maps of their own for consideration.¹²⁹ Although there is no official deadline to finalize the district maps, the candidate deadline to file for congressional and state legislative primary elections is often used as an unofficial deadline.¹³⁰

125 David R. Berman, "Arizona Redistricting: A Perspective on the Process," *Morrison Institute for Public Policy*, April 2022, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/publication/arizona-redistricting-perspective-process>.

126 "Redistricting," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

127 "Redistricting," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

128 "Redistricting," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

129 "Redistricting," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

130 "Redistricting," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*. 2022, Accessed November 2, 2023, <https://www.azcleelections.gov/how-government-works/redistricting>.

APPENDIX II: CAMPAIGN FINANCE REGULATIONS

In November 2022, Arizona voters approved Proposition 211, known as The Voters' Right to Know Act or "Stop Dark Money," with 72% of voters' support and a majority in all 15 counties.¹³¹ The Voters' Right to Know Act requires disclosure of the names of people who donate to large umbrella organizations called Political Action Committees (or PACs) that support or oppose candidates. Disclosure is required if an individual gave \$5,000 or more to a committee that spent at least \$50,000 on a statewide race, legislative race, or ballot proposition. For local elections, the threshold is an individual contribution of \$2,500 or more to a committee spending at least \$25,000.¹³² Previously, any individual who donated more than \$50 directly to a candidate or ballot campaign had to disclose their name, address, and employer.¹³³ However, donations to large anonymous committees had no similar requirements. As of March 2024, there are 967 PACs registered in Arizona with a wide range of cash balances reported.¹³⁴

According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, all 50 states require PACs to disclose campaign contributions and expenditures if the state's reporting threshold is met. In the 12 states that have no disclosure threshold, all contributions and expenditures must be reported. Thresholds among the remaining states range from \$100 to \$5,000, with

the exception of Georgia at \$25,000.¹³⁵

Shortly after Proposition 211 passed, challenges were filed in both state and federal courts. The federal lawsuit was filed by Americans for Prosperity and argues that Proposition 211 violates the First Amendment protection of the rights of individuals to donate to advocacy organizations without fear of their identities being disclosed.¹³⁶ The federal lawsuit is still pending and has yet to move past initial motions.¹³⁷

In June 2023, the Arizona Free Enterprise Club and the Center for Arizona Policy filed a lawsuit claiming that the disclosure requirements in Prop. 211 violate citizens' constitutional right to privacy.¹³⁸ Superior Court Judge Scott McCoy rejected this argument, pointing to the original language in the Arizona Constitution that required the first Legislature to pass an election disclosure law to publicize all sources of campaign funds for public office.¹³⁹ Related litigation can be traced back to 2010 with the US Supreme Court ruling in *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* which "upheld the reporting and disclaimer requirements for independent expenditures and electioneering communications."¹⁴⁰

131 Pitzl, Mary Jo. "Proposition 211: Ballot Measure to Require Disclosure for Political Spending Wins in Arizona." *Arizona Republic*. Updated November 11, 2022. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/11/08/arizona-proposition-211-election-results-limit-dark-money-politics/10650036002/>.

132 Pitzl, Mary Jo. "Proposition 211: Ballot Measure to Require Disclosure for Political Spending Wins in Arizona." *Arizona Republic*. Updated November 11, 2022. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/11/08/arizona-proposition-211-election-results-limit-dark-money-politics/10650036002/>.

133 Pitzl, Mary Jo. "Proposition 211: Ballot Measure to Require Disclosure for Political Spending Wins in Arizona." *Arizona Republic*. Updated November 11, 2022. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/elections/2022/11/08/arizona-proposition-211-election-results-limit-dark-money-politics/10650036002/>.

134 "See the Money: Political Action Committee," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 26, 2024, <https://seethemoney.az.gov/#|JurisdictionId=0|Page=2|startYear=2023|endYear=2024|IsLessActive=false|ShowOfficeHolder=false|View=Detail|TablePage=1|TableLength=10>.

135 "Campaign Finance Regulation: State Comparisons," *National Conference of State Legislatures*, updated October 24, 2022, accessed February 26, 2024, <https://www.ncsl.org/elections-and-campaigns/campaign-finance-regulation-state-comparisons>.

136 Riley, Kiera. "Judge Dismisses Groups' Challenge to Prop. 211." *Arizona Capitol Times*. June 22, 2023. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2023/06/22/judge-dismisses-groups-challenge-to-prop-211/>.

137 Campaign Legal Center, "Defending Transparency for Campaign Spending in Arizona – Americans for Prosperity, et al. v. Meyer, et al. (Federal-Level Challenge)," *Campaign Legal Center*, last modified May 2, 2023, accessed March 4, 2024, <https://campaignlegal.org/cases-actions/defending-transparency-campaign-spending-arizona-americans-prosperity-et-al-v-meyer>.

138 Riley, Kiera. "Judge Dismisses Groups' Challenge to Prop. 211." *Arizona Capitol Times*. June 22, 2023. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2023/06/22/judge-dismisses-groups-challenge-to-prop-211/>.

139 Riley, Kiera. "Judge Dismisses Groups' Challenge to Prop. 211." *Arizona Capitol Times*. June 22, 2023. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2023/06/22/judge-dismisses-groups-challenge-to-prop-211/>.

140 "Citizens United v. FEC," *Federal Election Commission*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.fec.gov/legal-resources/court-cases/citizens-united-v-fec/>.

In December 2023, Ben Toma and Warren Petersen (then Senate President and Speaker of the House) filed a motion to block Prop. 211, claiming that it gives the Citizens Clean Elections Commission powers not approved by the Legislature.¹⁴¹ Superior Court Judge Timothy Ryan ruled that the people have the same authority as legislators to enact laws.¹⁴² He said that, just like measures approved by the Legislature, they are presumed valid unless there is something unconstitutional about them.¹⁴³ As of January 2024, the Citizens Clean Elections Commission is moving forward with rule-making to establish implementation guidance for Prop. 211 in hopes of having clear guidelines in place for the 2024 election.¹⁴⁴

141 Hahne, Greg. "Arizona Voters Approved 2022 'Dark Money' Law. Top GOP Lawmakers Are Trying to Block It." *KJZZ*. Last modified December 15, 2023. <https://kjzz.org/content/1865658/arizona-voters-approved-2022-dark-money-law-top-gop-lawmakers-are-trying-block-it>.

142 Fischer, Howard. "Challenge to Prop 211 Fails." *Arizona Capitol Times*. January 2, 2024. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2024/01/02/challenge-to-prop-211-fails/>.

143 Fischer, Howard. "Challenge to Prop 211 Fails." *Arizona Capitol Times*. January 2, 2024. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2024/01/02/challenge-to-prop-211-fails/>.

144 "Clean Elections Adopts First Rules on Campaign Spending Law," *Citizens Clean Elections Commission*, August 24, 2023, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.azcleanelections.gov/media/rules-adopted-on-campaign-spending-law>.

APPENDIX III: INITIATIVE AND REFERENDUM IN ARIZONA

In Arizona, laws can be enacted through the initiative and/or referendum process in addition to the traditional legislative process. These powers are outlined in the Arizona Constitution. Under the power of initiative, 10% of the qualified electors in the state can propose any new law, and fifteen percent can propose any amendment to the Constitution.¹⁴⁵ In practice, this means that a group of citizens can form a committee around an issue and canvass the state to gather enough signatures to be placed on the ballot.¹⁴⁶ For the 2024 election cycle, constitutional amendments require 383,923 valid signatures and initiative measures require 255,949 valid signatures to be placed on the ballot.¹⁴⁷ Groups have until July 3, 2024 to gather signatures for their cause.¹⁴⁸ To view the list of initiatives currently in the signature-gathering process for 2024, please refer to the [Secretary of State's website](#).¹⁴⁹

In the 2020 election, two initiatives passed— Proposition 207 to legalize recreational marijuana, and Proposition 208 which created an income tax to support public education.¹⁵⁰ Prop. 208 was subsequently declared unconstitutional by the Arizona Supreme Court and thus was never enacted.¹⁵¹ Citizen initiatives have also created notable programs in Arizona. In

2006, Proposition 203 increased state tobacco taxes and used the funds to create First Things First, an early childhood development program that is still operating today.¹⁵² In 2000, voters passed Proposition 301—a 0.6-cent sales tax to support public K-12 schools. Although Prop. 301 was set to expire in mid-2021, in 2018, the Legislature voted to extend the tax for 20 more years.¹⁵³

When an initiative is passed, it is protected by Proposition 105. Approved in 1998, Prop. 105 states that the legislature cannot amend or repeal voter-approved initiatives or referendums.¹⁵⁴ Any changes to the language approved by voters must honor the original intent of the ballot language.¹⁵⁵ As seen with Prop. 208, approved language can be challenged in court, however, it cannot be changed through the legislative process.

If initiatives are granting legislative powers to the people, the referendum process grants veto power to the people. If the legislature passes a law that a group disagrees with, they are able to form a committee and gather signatures of 5% of the electorate to pause the enactment of the law.¹⁵⁶ A question will be placed on the ballot to ask voters whether or not they approve

145 AZ Const. art. 4 part 1, § 1N.

146 "Initiatives," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/initiatives>.

147 "Initiatives," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/initiatives>.

148 "Initiatives," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/initiatives>.

149 "2024 Serial Numbers Filed," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/2024-serial-numbers-filed>.

150 "Arizona 2020 General Election Publicity Pamphlet," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/node/152>.

151 Pitzl, Mary Jo. "Judge Deals Fatal Blow to Arizona's Proposition 208, Ending 2-Year Battle Over K-12 Funding." *Arizona Republic*. Last modified March 11, 2022. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona-education/2022/03/11/proposition-208-tax-increase-arizonas-k-12-schools-struck-down/9433246002/>.

152 "2006 Ballot Propositions and Judicial Performance Review: Proposition 203," *Arizona Secretary of State*, September 2006, accessed on February 29, 2024, <https://apps.azsos.gov/election/2006/info/PubPamphlet/english/Prop203.htm>.
"First Things First: Our Mission," *First Things First*, accessed on February 29, 2024, <https://www.firstthingsfirst.org/what-we-do/our-mission/>.

153 Cano, Ricardo. "Arizona Legislature Passes Education Sales Tax Plan." *Arizona Republic*. Last modified March 22, 2018. <https://www.azcentral.com/story/news/politics/arizona-education/2018/03/22/arizona-lawmakers-fast-track-proposition-301-education-sales-tax-extension/447963002/>.

154 "1998 Ballot Propositions: Proposition 105," *Arizona Secretary of State*, last modified July 21, 1998, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://apps.azsos.gov/election/1998/Info/PubPamphlet/Prop105.html>.
"State of Arizona Official Canvas: 1998 General Election – November 3, 1998," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://apps.azsos.gov/election/1998/general/ElectionInformation.htm>.

155 "1998 Ballot Propositions: Proposition 105," *Arizona Secretary of State*, last modified July 21, 1998, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://apps.azsos.gov/election/1998/Info/PubPamphlet/Prop105.html>.

156 "Referendum," *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/referendum>.

of the enactment of the law in question.¹⁵⁷ For the 2024 election, 127,975 signatures would be required to successfully file a referendum petition.¹⁵⁸ While this signature threshold is lower than for initiatives, the timing to get signatures for referendums is more challenging.

Most laws passed during the legislative session are enacted 90 days after the last day of the legislative session.¹⁵⁹ However, because the last day of session changes yearly, so does this “effective date.”¹⁶⁰ Additionally, some legislation is passed with an “emergency clause” because it is immediately necessary to preserve health and safety or for the support and maintenance of the state government.¹⁶¹ These laws must be approved by two-thirds of the legislature (compared to a simple majority) and go into effect immediately upon the governor’s signature.¹⁶²

If a bill is passed during the legislative session that a group wishes to refer to the ballot, they can form a committee with the Secretary of State and begin collecting signatures immediately. The signatures are due 90 days after the end of the legislative session, creating a tighter timeline to gather signatures for bills passed at the end of the session.¹⁶³ In recent years, Proposition 305 was a notable use of the referendum process. In 2017, the legislature passed an expansion of the Empowerment Scholarship Account (ESA) program.¹⁶⁴ At the ballot in 2018, nearly 65% of voters rejected the law, and it was not enacted.¹⁶⁵

In addition, statutes may be referred to voters for approval or rejection directly by the Legislature. Commonly this happens when “a measure is particularly controversial and the Legislature wants to allow the people to vote directly on the matter, when the matter at issue has been the subject of previous voter-initiated measures, or to bypass a Governor who might veto the measure. These measures go before the voters for approval or disapproval at the next general election.”¹⁶⁶ Moreover, if the Legislature proposes any

changes to the State Constitution, they must be voted on during the next general election or at a special election called by the Legislature for this purpose. As with initiated measures, referred measures only become law only if they are approved by a majority vote and on proclamation of the election results by the Governor.¹⁶⁷

The powers of initiative and referendum allow Arizona’s citizens to actively participate in the legislative process. Mounting these campaigns is expensive and time-consuming, and the results are far from guaranteed, but every election cycle, the ballot has a handful of proposals from dedicated citizens.

157 “Referendum,” *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/referendum>.

158 “Referendum,” *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/referendum>.

159 “Referendum,” *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/referendum>.

160 “Frequently Asked Questions: Session Laws: How Can I tell when a session law becomes effective?,” *Arizona State Legislature*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://www.azleg.gov/faq/>.

161 “Frequently Asked Questions: Session Laws: How Can I tell when a session law becomes effective?,” *Arizona State Legislature*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://www.azleg.gov/faq/>.

162 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

163 “Referendum,” *Arizona Secretary of State*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/elections/ballot-measures/initiative-referendum-recall/referendum>.

164 David Berman, “Proposition 305: ESA Program Expansion,” *Morrison Institute*, October 2018, https://morrisoninstitute.asu.edu/sites/default/files/proposition_305.pdf.

165 “Arizona Proposition 305, Expansion of Empowerment Scholarship Accounts Referendum (2018),” *Ballotpedia*, accessed February 29, 2024, <https://azsos.gov/node/149>.

166 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

167 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

APPENDIX IV: THE IMPORTANCE OF FREE PRESS

The First Amendment of the United States Constitution reads, in part, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.”¹⁶⁸

Freedom of the Press is a bedrock of the foundation of America and is fundamental to maintaining a healthy and functioning democracy. A functioning democratic government does not interfere with the press, particularly when publishing content that is critical of the government.¹⁶⁹ A free press is critical to a healthy democracy for several reasons:

Truth and context: The government often deals with issues that are complex and span many years.¹⁷⁰ The average person cannot stay up to date with details of every board and commission meeting, so journalists play a helpful role in impartially highlighting the updates and developments of government.¹⁷¹

Holding leaders accountable: A functional press serves as a bridge between regular citizens and those in power.¹⁷² Abuses of power, human rights violations, and exposure of political scandals would not be made public without a press that is free from government censorship.¹⁷³

Informing voters: Journalists report on candidates’

stances, perform fact-checks after political debates, and help voters understand issues appearing on the ballot.¹⁷⁴ While some publications are more neutral than others, it is critical for voters to hear about issues from sources other than the candidate or committee itself.¹⁷⁵ Many voters rely on social media or the opinion of friends and family when deciding what candidates or issues to support in an election. However, the role of quality and impartial journalism remains a cornerstone of our democracy.

After freedom of the press was established in the Constitution, many Supreme Court cases have clarified the scope of these protections. Freedom of the press in the U.S. covers invasion of privacy, free expression, access to government information, prior restraint (preventing publication of information), commercial speech, libel (written attacks on an individual’s reputation), and slander (spoken attacks on one’s reputation).¹⁷⁶

168 “Constitution Annotated: Analysis and Interpretation of the U.S. Constitution,” *Congress.gov*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-1/>.

169 “Free Speech: Freedom of the Press,” *American Civil Liberties Union*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.aclu.org/issues/free-speech/freedom-press>.

170 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

171 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

172 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

173 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

174 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

175 Emmaline Soken-Huberty, “Why Is Freedom of the Press Important in a Democracy?” *Human Rights Careers*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/issues/why-is-freedom-of-the-press-important-in-a-democracy/>.

176 Marie Willsey, “10 Most Important U.S. Supreme Court Cases for Journalists,” *How Stuff Works*, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://money.howstuffworks.com/10-supreme-court-cases-journalists.htm>.

Landmark Supreme Court cases that shaped freedom of the press include:

- *New York Times v. United States* (1971)
 - Known as the “Pentagon Papers” case, the federal government attempted to stop the New York Times and Washington Post from publishing classified documents related to the Vietnam War. The government claimed that publishing the documents would interfere with foreign policies and prolong the war, but the Court ruled that too speculative and allowed the publication.¹⁷⁷
- *Hustler Magazine v. Falwell* (1988)
 - In this case, the Supreme Court ruled that political cartoons and satire play a prominent role in public and political debate.¹⁷⁸
- *Simon and Schuster v. Members of New York State Crime Victims Board* (1991)
 - The Supreme Court struck down New York’s “Son of Sam” law – this law required that any proceeds from a book written by someone convicted of a crime about the crime for which they have been convicted must be turned over to the state. The Court reasoned that the law “impermissibly singled out income only from the prisoner’s expressive activity, and then only expressive activity relating to his crime, without necessarily compensating any victims of those crimes.”¹⁷⁹

177 “Notable First Amendment Court Cases,” *American Library Association*, last modified May 2017, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/courtcases>.

178 “Notable First Amendment Court Cases,” *American Library Association*, last modified May 2017, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/courtcases>.

179 “Notable First Amendment Court Cases,” *American Library Association*, last modified May 2017, accessed February 27, 2024, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/censorship/courtcases>.

APPENDIX V: THE BASICS OF THE ARIZONA LEGISLATIVE PROCESS

Arizona is divided into thirty legislative districts. Each district has one state senator and two state representatives, for a total of 90 state legislators (60 in the House and 30 in the Senate). All legislators are up for re-election every two years.¹⁸⁰ Arizona has a term limit for legislators of eight years, or four two-year terms. However, a legislator is able to serve four terms in the House, then four terms in the Senate, then back to the House, and so on.¹⁸¹ Legislators are compensated \$24,000 per year for their service.¹⁸²

The legislative session begins each year in the second week of January and is scheduled to last 100 days. However, in practice, a 100-day session is not common. Members must vote to continue the session if their work for the year is not complete.¹⁸³ The Governor and a majority of the legislature must agree on a budget before July 1, or state agencies and services will be forced to pause operations due to a lack of funding.¹⁸⁴

After an election in November, the political parties (or caucuses) in each chamber meet internally to elect their respective leadership.¹⁸⁵ The majority party elects the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House, as well as internal leadership positions.¹⁸⁶ The minority party chooses its own minority leader, whip,

etc. The majority leadership then meets to create committees and choose committee chairs. Committee chairs and vice-chairs are typically members of the majority party.¹⁸⁷ Sometimes positions are chosen based on seniority or members with experience in the subject area (an accountant might be placed on Appropriations, for example).¹⁸⁸ Once the majority party releases its committee assignments, the minority party leadership completes its own assignments. The number of legislators on a given committee varies, but there are usually more members of the majority than the minority party.¹⁸⁹

Any legislator is able to introduce a bill on any topic. However, bills must be introduced during the first few weeks of session.¹⁹⁰ After introduction, the Senate President or Speaker of the House (depending on which chamber the bill originates in) will assign the bill to be heard in a committee based on subject.¹⁹¹ If a bill concerns spending or contains an appropriation, it will be assigned to a primary committee based on its subject matter, as well as Appropriations as a second committee.¹⁹² This bill must pass both committees before it can advance in the legislative process.¹⁹³ Occasionally, a bill will be assigned to three committees

180 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

181 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

182 Sanchez, Camryn. "How much do lawmakers make for how much work?" *Arizona Capitol Times*. June 15, 2023. <https://azcapitoltimes.com/news/2023/06/15/how-much-do-lawmakers-make-for-how-much-work/>.

183 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

184 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

185 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

186 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

187 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

188 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

189 Hank Stephenson and Rachel Leingang, "How a Bill Becomes a Law: *Formally and Behind the Scenes," *Arizona Agenda*, February 10, 2022, <https://arizonaagenda.substack.com/p/how-an-arizona-bill-becomes-a-law>.

190 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

191 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

192 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

193 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

as a strategic move, as it's unlikely to be heard and approved in all three.¹⁹⁴

Most committees will only debate a few bills each session with minority members as the prime sponsor of the legislation. Amendments can only be offered by members of the committee at this time.¹⁹⁵ If the bill passes committee, it must also pass through the rules committee to ensure the proposal is constitutional before moving to Committee of the Whole, or COW.¹⁹⁶ The Speaker of the House or Senate President receives a list of all bills that have passed out of committee and are ready to be placed on the COW calendar.¹⁹⁷ This is another hurdle, and sometimes bills pass committee but die waiting to be heard in COW.¹⁹⁸ During this process, legislators debate the bill on the floor of the House or Senate, and any member of the body can propose amendments.¹⁹⁹ The final, amended piece of legislation can then be scheduled for a "third read," or final vote by the entire body.²⁰⁰

After a bill passes out of its chamber of origin, it is sent to the other chamber and the process begins all over again as a bill waiting to be assigned to a committee.²⁰¹ If a bill receives amendments in the other chamber that the prime sponsor doesn't agree with, a collection of legislators from the original committees will meet to discuss a compromise that can move forward.²⁰² This is called a conference committee, and often an amendment is drafted before the meeting that the sponsor is comfortable with.²⁰³ If the bill gets scheduled and approved in committee, COW, and third read, the legislation is sent to the Governor for a signature or veto.²⁰⁴

194 Hank Stephenson and Rachel Leingang, "How a Bill Becomes a Law: *Formally and Behind the Scenes," *Arizona Agenda*, February 10, 2022, <https://arizonaagenda.substack.com/p/how-an-arizona-bill-becomes-a-law>.

195 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alisPDFs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

196 "Arizona State Legislative Process," *Maricopa County Government Relations*, accessed March 11, 2024, <https://www.maricopa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/33995/Arizona-State-Legislative-Process>.

197 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alisPDFs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

198 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alisPDFs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

199 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alisPDFs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

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201 Randall Gnant, *From Idea to Bill to Law: The Legislative Process in Arizona*, 4th ed. (Phoenix: Arizona State Legislative Council, 2000), <https://www.azleg.gov/alisPDFs/BillToLaw.pdf>.

202 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

203 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

204 David M. Thomas, ed., *Arizona Legislative Manual* (Phoenix: Arizona Legislative Council, 2003). <https://www.azleg.gov/alispdfs/Council/legman2003.pdf>.

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