



July 27, 2023

To: Members of Congress

From: Virginia Kase Solomón, CEO, League of Women Voters of the United States

Re: Support the *Protecting Our Democracy Act*

We're at a turning point in our democracy.

We have a chance to take action now to ensure that our democracy survives. It is crucial that Congress's actions this session reflect the dire need to protect and invest in our democracy.

The *Protecting Our Democracy Act* is a package of pro-democracy reforms that would strengthen our guardrails to prevent presidential abuse of power, increase government transparency, and enhance our checks and balances between the branches of government. The League of Women Voters urges all members of Congress to support this piece of legislation as a key step in fortifying our democracy.

The League of Women Voters of the United States (LWVUS) was founded in 1920 to empower women to fully participate in our democracy. Today, we continue that work to empower voters, especially those in communities that have been historically marginalized, to create a more inclusive, equitable democracy.

LWVUS supports this pro-democracy package because it includes provisions that would address presidential abuses of power, restore our system of checks and balances, accountability, and transparency, and protect our elections from foreign interference. The *Protecting Our Democracy Act* ensures that elected officials put the public's interest above their own.

Specifically, this bill would suspend the statute of limitations for federal offenses committed by a sitting President or Vice President, implement transparency for acts of clemency, prohibit self-pardons, create tools to enforce congressional subpoenas, limit presidential declarations of emergencies, require cause for removal of inspectors general, require federal campaign reporting of foreign contacts, regulate foreign donations to political campaigns and candidates, and prohibit certain deceptive advertising prior to an election.

Without these important legislative measures, our democracy is at risk of deteriorating into a government without accountability, checks and balances, or the people's power to set the course of our nation.

The *Protecting Our Democracy Act* comprises an array of reforms, which have received broad support across the political spectrum. Although this bill is being led by the Democratic caucus, portions of the *Protecting Our Democracy Act* have a history of Republican support or even leadership. Some of the specific Republican-led policies in the bill include tools to enforce congressional subpoenas — which passed a Republican House in 2017 — and restoration of Congress's ability to block a president's declaration of a national emergency through a "legislative veto," which passed a Republican-controlled Senate committee in 2019.

We must preserve the integrity of our democracy by increasing transparency and accountability while preserving checks and balances in our government. The League of Women Voters strongly urges you to assist in the passage of the *Protecting Our Democracy Act*.