NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

A Partner Communications Toolkit for Traditional and Social Media

www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org
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This document provides partners with the assets they need to promote their participation in National Voter Registration Day through traditional media and social media. The assets featured in this toolkit should be deployed at different stages throughout the campaign leading up to September 25, 2018. Additionally, it should be noted that this document features suggested copy. Partners are encouraged to tailor it for their target audience(s).
Introduction and Overview
Our democracy works best when more citizens show up and participate, which makes our election results more representative of what we, the people, want. Put simply, we’re all better off when our elections reflect everyone in our community. One of the best ways to do that is to ensure that every eligible American is registered to vote, regardless of party affiliation or other views – because if we let democracy itself get thrown under the bus of partisan politics, we all lose.

That’s the motivation behind the organizers of National Voter Registration Day – a single day of coordinated media and field actions across the country to raise awareness of voter registration opportunities and register as many eligible voters as possible. National Voter Registration Day, held on the fourth Tuesday of September – September 25 in 2018, is supported by election officials from both sides of the aisle along with every major association of election officials in the country.

“The right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties, and we will not see its luster diminished.”
– Ronald Reagan

The problem is simple. Every year, millions of eligible voters are unable to cast a ballot because of a missed registration deadline, outdated registration information, or other problems with their voter registration. The number of unregistered voters in the 2016 elections was 60 million – or one in four eligible voters in the country. These unregistered voters are largely ignored by campaigns and political parties. In examining the 2016 General Election, we found that a shocking 60% of unregistered voters were never ASKED for their votes by political campaigns.

And worse, for communities already underrepresented in the electorate the numbers were abysmal. Those in the Latino, Asian and Black communities saw lagging participation with high numbers of unregistered voters at 30%, 27% and 17% respectively. These citizens are caught in a vicious cycle that sees unregistered citizens become non-voters. These non-voters are then ignored by political campaigns which, in turn, leaves them uninterested in the electoral process.

“If you give up on the idea that your voice makes a difference, then other voices will fill the void”
– Barack Obama
To paraphrase an old adage, the solution for reaching the unregistered is simple – Contact, Contact, Contact. Research shows those who are personally contacted about registering to vote and voting are far more likely to show up on Election Day.

- Celebrated on the fourth Tuesday of every September – September 25 in 2018 – by thousands of volunteers, organizations, businesses, schools, and election officials from all over the country.
- With 3,000 community and online partners, and over 10,000 volunteers working in a massive, single-day event, National Voter Registration Day seeks to reach voters who haven’t yet registered or updated their registration in the final weeks before the deadlines.

Since 2012, over 1.6 million voters have registered or updated their registration as a result of National Voter Registration Day events since 2012. In 2018, we aim to build on that success and help over 300,000 eligible voters get registered for the first time or update their existing registration.

Why 2018?
This year, decisions will be made that determine who runs your state, legislatures, governorships, city elections, and more, and how your state is represented in Congress.

By all accounts, this year’s midterms are on the minds of the American people in a way that seems wholly different than 2014’s elections. In a year already filled with record turnout for primaries across the country, a June report from Pew Research shows that voter enthusiasm toward this November’s election is up 10% over the last midterm four years prior.

Many nonprofits have felt the energy in the streets and online. This year just seems to feel different. And maybe that’s because Americans are coming to understand that midterms, while not as flashy as the general election, have MAJOR consequences on how they live their life day-to-day. At a state level, there are dozens of governors races that have direct influence on everyday concerns – how much money will be spent on education, the environment, defense? That decision is in their hands and they know it.

At the national level, hundreds of seats in the House and Senate are at the whim of the electorate who want to have a say in how their state is represented in the Federal government, what and how laws will be applied to their daily lives.

In short, citizens will determine who runs their state and how their state is represented in Congress.

To that end, we want to meet the electorate where they are! And their minds are on the midterm elections.

So this year’s message, the one we’d like everyone to support in social media, face-to-face discussions, websites and more is: In 2018, it’s “Midterms on My Terms.”
For a better picture, here’s what registered American citizens will be deciding IF they are registered to vote:

- 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives
- 35 seats in the United States Senate
- 39 state and territorial governorships
- Various other state and local elections

Key Data Points
Reasons people need to register or update registration (moved, naturalized, turned 18, changed name, re-entry, if haven’t voted in a while, etc.). See Nonprofit VOTE blog

- When you’ll turn 18 by Election Day – or prior to that if your state allows 16 and 17-year-olds to pre-register.
- When you’re a newly naturalized citizen.
- When you move, even if just across town.
- When you change your name.
- When you haven’t voted in a while, in which case your registration may have been removed due to inactivity even though you’re still at the same address.

Numbers of people impacted (mostly movers, but big #s for naturalized, turn 18, etc.)

- According to Census data, there are 23 million people who move across state lines every four years. During those same four years, 19 million people will turn 18 according to the Census, and another 3 million will become new naturalized US Citizens according to DHS. That means at least 45 million people must update their registration every four years. The actual number would be significantly higher if cross-town and intra-state movers were included.

Voter confusion - many people unaware they need to register when they move, or are unaware of online registration, etc.

- 41% didn’t correctly know they had to register if moved across town, 20% didn’t know when moving to another state... many in states with online registration didn’t know they had it.
- About 12 million records with incorrect addresses, indicating that either the voters have moved, or that errors in the information on file make it unlikely the Postal Service can reach them.
- Between now and 2020, roughly 27 million people could move, meaning they may not have updated their registration.
- 3.7 million people who moved within less than a year had registration problems.

Register. Vote. Be Heard.

www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org
All partners are encouraged to use the official National Voter Registration Day hashtag – #NationalVoterRegistrationDay – across their social media accounts.

Tweets and Instagram photos with #NationalVoterRegistrationDay will appear on www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org in one of two feeds. Keep posts nonpartisan and pro-democracy please. Additionally, National Voter Registration Day operates branded accounts on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and Reddit.

Website
At www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org, individuals and organizations can leverage a voter registration tool, a field toolkit to plan National Voter Registration Day events, communications and promotional materials, and an event registry that will list hundreds of National Voter Registration Day events taking place around the country.

National Voter Registration Day will also use a short URL created through Google – http://goo.gl/e07Li3 – to develop tweets within the 280-character Twitter limit.

Facebook
The National Voter Registration Day Facebook page engages users by making them aware of resources and activities surrounding National Voter Registration Day. Make sure to promote National Voter Registration Day’s Facebook event page and ask your supporters to join. To ensure consistency, the National Voter Registration Day Facebook handle is:
https://www.facebook.com/NatlVoterRegDay

Twitter
The National Voter Registration Day Twitter handle engages partner organizations in conversations about National Voter Registration Day, promoting increased social media activity on behalf of our partners. We also engage individual users tweeting about voter registration to push them towards the National Voter Registration Day website to take action. The National Voter Registration Day Twitter handle is:
@NatlVoterRegDay
http://www.twitter.com/NatlVoterRegDay

Instagram
An Instagram account will be maintained for National Voter Registration Day 2018. Photos that will be featured on the account will be reposted from our partners and people who participate in National Voter Registration Day that use #NationalVoterRegistrationDay in their Instagram posts. The National Voter Registration Day Instagram account is:
@NatlVoterRegDay
http://www.instagram.com/natlvoterregday
Announce Participation

Partners can announce and promote their participation in National Voter Registration Day by taking the following actions:

- **Create and promote your National Voter Registration Day events.** Create a National Voter Registration Day event on the website’s event registry (www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org/events), then promote the link through your organization’s communications channels.

- **Send an email to your membership lists.** Announcing your participation in National Voter Registration Day or sending out tools for your affiliates or chapters to use for promotion. You can find a sample email in the “Resource” section of this packet.

- **Promote your participation.** We’ve included materials on the website you can print to rally support on the ground. It is also a good time for your first press release and to begin social media promotion. A sample press release and social media posts can be found in the “Resources” section of this packet.

- **Contact influencers.** Utilizing the #NationalVoterRegistrationDay hashtag, reach out to influencers with the “influencer ask letter” and invite them to participate using the hashtag on September 25.

Promote Your National Voter Registration Day Event

National Voter Registration Day partners can create or find event listings on the National Voter Registration Day website. Here’s how:

To find an event or to create an event for National Voter Registration Day, visit www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.com/events

Using the National Voter Registration Day events directory has many benefits, among them being:

- Potential voters can easily find an event in their community to register to vote.
- Potential volunteers can find an event and contact the person(s) planning it to offer a few hours of community service.
- Partners can promote their event(s) directly from the events directory.
Two Weeks Out – September 11, 2018

Promote Your National Voter Registration Day Event & Registering to Vote

Messages in this period will begin to dramatically increase in frequency and the sense of urgency around upcoming National Voter Registration Day events. At this point, a direct call to register to vote will be more prominently featured than at previous points in this communications timeline.

- **Remind your membership lists.** Send another email to remind people about events you are hosting. This is a good time for you to recruit volunteers and make sure everyone knows all the specifics about your activities. A sample email is provided in the “Resources” section of this packet.

- **Continue your social media push.** Keep your followers informed of upcoming events through social media. It is important for them to hear about your activities over time leading up to National Voter Registration Day. By reminding them, they become more likely to participate.

- **Follow up with influencers.** Remind them that the event is just two weeks away, and ensure the date is on their social media calendars for September 25. Share new press and updates that have come out to get them excited about supporting.

One Week Out – September 18, 2018

The Final Push

The final push towards September 25 should consist of frequent, daily postings to social media and repeated calls to register to vote.

- **Alert the media again.** Send another press release or media alert similar to the one from the previous week. Including new information is not necessary, but you want to make sure they have the details they need. Many times, these documents can be overlooked the first time, so think of this as a friendly reminder to these outlets.

- **Increase social media posts.** As you near your event, it is important for your audience to be aware of what you are planning. Review our sample social media posts for ideas of how you can keep your followers engaged on Facebook and Twitter. Remember to promote your specific events and voter registration in general.

- **Follow up with influencers.** Remind them that the event is just two weeks away, and ensure the date is on their social media calendars for September 25. Share new press and updates that have come out to get them excited about supporting.
September 25, 2018

Flood social and traditional media and your communities with everything about National Voter Registration Day.

- **Spread the word about National Voter Registration Day.** Last year our hashtag trended on Twitter due to the high number of social media posts. Let's make #NationalVoterRegistrationDay trend this year. We have provided sample posts for both Facebook and Twitter in order to provide a consistent message the day of and to allow for greater exposure.

- **Invite your membership lists to your event.** This is your last chance to let people know about your event and get them to come out for it. It is also important to make sure they register to vote today, so be sure to share the link to the voter registration tool on the website. A sample email is available in the “Resources” section.

- **Push your event to the public.** Send out a final media alert to ensure that your event is getting the coverage it needs. This is the best way to reach out to the general public beyond your regular distribution lists. A sample media alert can be found in the “Resources” section.

- **Know your stuff.** Review the talking points included in the introduction of the packet. It is likely that you will be asked questions by the media and general public at your event, so make sure you are well versed about National Voter Registration Day.
Resources

Social Media Posts

The following are sample social media posts to share leading up to the campaign. Posts can be modified and customized to fit your organization’s needs, but we recommend that you always provide a link to our website and include the hashtag #NationalVoterRegistrationDay. Under “Resources” and “Partner Toolkit” on the website, we have also provided graphics you can share.

Sample Facebook Posts

• Celebrate democracy in America by registering to #vote on September 25. www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

• Have you moved since the last Election Day? Make sure you’re registered to #vote with your new address! www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

• National Voter Registration Day is in just [insert amount of time]! Show your support. Sign up as a partner. www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org/partners/partner-sign-up/ #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

• Register in September to #vote in November! Get registered now at www.nationalvoterregistrationday.org #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

• Did you know [ORGANIZATION NAME] is helping register voters in our community? We’re part of www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org #NationalVoterRegistrationDay
Sample Tweets

• Join us in celebrating democracy in America! #NationalVoterRegistrationDay 9/25. http://goo.gl/e07Li3

• What’s #NationalVoterRegistrationDay all about? Learn more at http://goo.gl/e07Li3

• Moved recently? Make sure you’re registered to #vote at your new address! http://goo.gl/e07Li3 #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

• We are [insert amount of time] away from #NationalVoterRegistrationDay 2018! Join us! http://goo.gl/e07Li3

• We’re a proud partner of #NationalVoterRegistrationDay. Get involved & register to #vote at http://goo.gl/e07Li3

• Register in September to #vote in November. #NationalVoterRegistrationDay is 9/25! http://goo.gl/e07Li3

Sample Social Media Posts for September 25

Facebook: It’s National Voter Registration Day. Take 30 seconds to register to vote or update your registration online at www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org #NationalVoterRegistrationDay

Twitter: It’s #NationalVoterRegistrationDay! Register to #vote or update your registration online now at http://goo.gl/e07Li3
Sample Email for Supporters and Affiliates to be sent on or around August 30

Sender:
[NAME, ORGANIZATION NAME] (Should read “Samantha, Organization.com,” for example)

Suggested Subject lines:
• Mark your calendar: September 25 is National Voter Registration Day!
• Celebrating Democracy in America – Register to Vote!
• [ORGANIZATION NAME] and National Voter Registration Day

Dear [ORGANIZATION NAME] supporter,

We’re excited to once again be part of a national effort to strengthen our community by registering hundreds of voters on September 25, 2018, also known as National Voter Registration Day.

First started for the 2012 presidential election, National Voter Registration Day has become a 50-state holiday where thousands of organizations and volunteers organize to ensure our family, friends, and neighbors are registered to vote.

Why register in 2018, you may ask? Because between the House, the Senate and governor races across the country, voters have the opportunity to decide the fate of over 500 elected officials. As a nonpartisan coalition of organizations, National Voter Registration Day is the perfect opportunity to get involved no matter what party you support or which issues matter most to you.

I invite you to register to vote and learn more at www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org and use #NationalVoterRegistrationDay on social media to spread the word!

Once you’re registered to vote, there’s a lot of other ways you can get involved:

• Join [ORGANIZATION NAME] at one of our National Voter Registration Day events.
• Step up to host your own local event with your family, friends, and neighbors to make sure everyone you know is registered.
• Get reminders via email or text message so you don’t forget September 25 is the big day!

We’re really excited to be able to join hundreds of groups across America for this important national holiday. Thanks so much for your support!

Sincerely,
[NAME]
[ORGANIZATION]
Sample Email to be sent on or around September 12

**Sender:**
[NAME, ORGANIZATION NAME] (Should read “Samantha, Organization.com,” for example)

**Suggested Subject lines:**
- Where will you be on September 25?
- Our National Voter Registration Day events near you
- [ORGANIZATION NAME] in your town
- Celebrate #NationalVoterRegistrationDay!

Dear [NAME],

We’re committed to strengthening our community by getting voters registered for National Voter Registration Day. It’s not just important, it’s also fun and you can join us! On September 25, come out to one of the many voter registration events we’re hosting near you: www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org/Events

We all know voting is important, period. No, it’s not a presidential year, but it is the midterms, where the House, the Senate and governor races all over the country are decided by voters!

**RSVP now to an event in your area, then ask a friend to join you:**

- **[EVENT NAME 1]**
  - [EVENT LOCATION]
  - [Time]
  - [LINK TO NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY EVENT RSVP PAGE]

- **[EVENT NAME 2]**
  - [EVENT LOCATION]
  - [Time]
  - [LINK TO NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY EVENT RSVP PAGE]

- **[EVENT NAME 3]**
  - [EVENT LOCATION]
  - [Time]
  - [LINK TO NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY EVENT RSVP PAGE]

These events will be staffed by members of [ORGANIZATION] and by committed volunteers like you – people who value civic participation and are willing to take a few hours for one day to help make the bonds of our communities stronger.

Visit www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org/events to RSVP and invite a friend!

See you on September 25!

- **[NAME]**
- **[ORGANIZATION]**

P.S. If events aren’t your thing, no big deal. Just don’t miss out on the most important part of National Voter Registration Day – take 30 seconds to make sure you’re registered to vote at your current address.
Sample Email to be sent on or around September 25

Sender:
[ORGANIZATION NAME]

Suggested Subject lines: TODAY is National Voter Registration Day! Join us!

Dear [FIRST NAME] / Supporter,

Voting is one way we express ourselves as a community, as voters and Americans, but to exercise this basic right, we must be registered to vote!

That’s why [ORGANIZATION NAME] is a proud partner and supporter of National Voter Registration Day, which happens to be today.

And you can be part of this amazing day!

Register to Vote Online: It’s simple, it’s free, and it’s secure.
Attend a National Voter Registration Day event: Find one near you.
Spread the word: Once you make sure you’re registered, forward this email to a friend, ask them to join you and use #NationalVoterRegistrationDay throughout social media.

Thanks for taking a few moments to strengthen your community – and our country – with your voice.

Sincerely,

[ORGANIZATION NAME]
Sample Press Release – Distributed during the week right after Labor Day or September 4

Headline:
September 25 is National Voter Registration Day 2018

Subheadline:
[ORGANIZATION NAME] plans to register voters in [CITY] to celebrate the national holiday.

[CITY, ST] – September 4, 2018 – On September 25, 2018, Americans will celebrate National Voter Registration Day with a massive 50-state effort to register voters before Election Day this November.

With midterms and governor races happening in a few weeks, every eligible American voter should exercise his or her right to be heard at the ballot box this year and next. National Voter Registration Day is the right place to start by getting registered.

That is why communities across the country are planning to use National Voter Registration Day to increase voter participation.

Thousands of national, state, and local organizations and volunteers will be the driving force behind National Voter Registration Day 2018. Partner organizations will coordinate hundreds of National Voter Registration Day events nationwide and leverage #NationalVoterRegistrationDay on all social media platforms to drive attention to voter registration and the midterm elections.

[ORGANIZATION NAME] is proud to be a National Voter Registration Day partner. On September 25, [ORGANIZATION NAME] will engage its constituency and community and register voters at the following events:

[Event 1, time, location]
[Event 2, time, location]
[Event 3, time, location]

The effort’s website, www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org, provides a listing of National Voter Registration Day events across the country.

Founded in 2012, National Voter Registration Day is designed to create an annual moment when the entire nation focuses on registering Americans to exercise their most basic right – the right to vote. More than two million Americans have registered to vote on this day since the inaugural National Voter Registration Day.

For inquiries about National Voter Registration Day, please contact: [MEDIA CONTACT].
Sample Media Alert – Distributed on September 18 & 25

Headline:
September 25 is National Voter Registration Day 2018

Subheadline:
[ORGANIZATION NAME] plans event(s) to register voters in time for the (state, county or city) election.

WHAT:
At [00:00 p.m. EST / CST / PST], Tuesday, September 25, 2018, [ORGANIZATION NAME] will host a National Voter Registration Day 2018 event at [LOCATION NAME] as part of a massive 50-state effort to register thousands of voters.

WHY:
The goal for the 2018 National Voter Registration Day is to increase participation by encouraging Americans to register to vote and come out to the polls this November.

[“Insert quote here from organization representative/president/executive director.”]

As a nonpartisan unofficial national holiday, National Voter Registration Day counts on thousands of partners and volunteers across the political spectrum. Started in 2012 for the presidential election, National Voter Registration Day is designed to create an annual moment when the entire nation focuses on registering Americans to exercise their most basic right – the right to vote.

Americans can register at hundreds of events across the nation and online at www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org. Supporters can also follow National Voter Registration Day activities through social media on September 25 by searching #NationalVoterRegistrationDay.

WHEN:
National Voter Registration Day
[00:00 p.m. EST / CST / PST]
Tuesday, September 25, 2018

WHERE:
[LOCATION NAME]
[Address]
[City, State Zip Code]

MEDIA CONTACT:
[First Last]
[(555) 555-5555]
[firstlast@organization.org]
Sample Media Alert – Distributed the morning of September 18 & 25 before 9 a.m.

**Headline:**
September 25 is National Voter Registration Day 2018

**Subheadline:**
[ORGANIZATION NAME] plans event(s) to register voters and encourage participation in future elections.

**WHAT:**
At [00:00 p.m. EST / CST / PST], Tuesday, September 25, 2018, [ORGANIZATION NAME] will host a National Voter Registration Day 2018 event at [LOCATION NAME] as part of a massive 50-state effort to register thousands of voters.

**WHY:**
The goal for the 2018 National Voter Registration Day is to increase participation by encouraging Americans to register to vote and come out to the polls this November.

[“Insert quote here from organization representative/president/executive director.”]

As a nonpartisan “holiday” for democracy, National Voter Registration Day counts on thousands of partners and volunteers across the political spectrum. Started in 2012 for the presidential election, National Voter Registration Day is designed to create an annual moment when the entire nation focuses on registering Americans to exercise their most basic right – the right to vote.

Americans can register at hundreds of events across the nation and online at www.NationalVoterRegistrationDay.org. Supporters can also follow National Voter Registration Day activities through social media on September 25 by searching #NationalVoterRegistrationDay.

**WHEN:**
National Voter Registration Day
[00:00 p.m. EST / CST / PST]
Tuesday, September 25, 2018

**WHERE:**
[LOCATION NAME]
[Address]
[City, State Zip Code]

**MEDIA CONTACT:**
[First Last]
[(555) 555-5555]
[firstlast@organization.org]