

COMMENTARY

ELECTION 2020

## 8 must-haves for new vote-integrity laws in 2021

**Laura Hollis urges Republican-controlled state legislatures to get to work**



By **Laura Hollis**

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The execution and aftermath of the 2020 election are nothing short of shameful. At this writing – nearly two months after the election on Nov. 3 – the public still does not have satisfactory answers about what took place during the counting of ballots on election night and the days immediately following. We clearly do not *really* know why counting suddenly stopped or paused in multiple battleground states on election night (unprecedented in the history of the country), or why the excuses that were offered at the time (for example, that a pipe had burst at the State Farm Center in Atlanta) were subsequently proven false.

Hundreds of witnesses have given sworn statements and testimony under oath, and the public has seen videos of behavior that is suspicious, to say the least. There are statistical anomalies – some say impossibilities – for example, that 100% of the votes that magically appeared in the middle of the night in Michigan and Wisconsin, after official vote counting had allegedly stopped, went for Joe Biden. Or how Biden managed to get more than 81 million votes despite losing Florida, Texas and Ohio, and taking only 527 of 3,113 counties, while former President Barack Obama won Florida and Ohio and took 875 counties.

We are in a bad place. Half the country does not believe – and will probably never believe – that Joe Biden was elected president of the United States. On Jan. 5, there are runoff elections for two U.S. Senate seats in Georgia, which will decide the composition of Congress. They are being administered just as the November election was. That does not inspire confidence.

Assuming that Democratic candidates Jon Ossoff and Raphael Warnock win the Georgia elections, and that Joe Biden is inaugurated on Jan. 20, Democrats will

take control of both houses of Congress and the White House.

What should conservative Americans work toward if that happens?

The No. 1 priority must be passing legislation at the state level that ensures the integrity of elections in 2022 and thereafter.

States, not Congress, have control over election procedures. And a 6-3 conservative majority in the Supreme Court will likely uphold state election-integrity laws. Republicans control the House and Senate in 29 states including Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Texas and Wisconsin. These are all battleground states, and several are at the epicenter of the current election-fraud claims. In other words, sensible rules protecting the integrity of the vote would have eliminated most of the problems we're facing now.

Republican-controlled state legislatures should pass laws that include the following:

No. 1: Require state- or federal-issued identification to vote, and put in place efforts to provide every citizen who does not already have an ID with one. No one who is not a citizen of the United States and of any given state should be able to vote. Objections to this most basic election-integrity rule are meritless; you cannot drive a car, travel by plane, purchase a firearm or walk into a liquor store without identification.

No. 2: Purge voter rolls of people who have died or moved, and duplicate registrations removed.

No. 3: Strictly enforce residency requirements, and eliminate or ban same-day registration.

No. 4: Ban ballot harvesting. More than half of the states allow it in some form or another, but this procedure is ripe for fraud, and the investigative work done

by Project Veritas this year reveals just a few methods, including showing up at senior or assisted-living facilities and manipulating them into voting the way the "harvester" wants them to. Federal legislation to ban the practice has bipartisan sponsors Reps. Rodney Davis, R-Ill., and Tulsi Gabbard, D-Hawaii, but it is unlikely to pass, so states must take the lead on this.

No. 5: Forbid ballot drop boxes, which present tampering and chain-of-custody concerns, as well as concerns about whether all votes deposited will even be counted. California was called only moments after the polls closed, but cellphone videos appear to show some drop boxes in the state being emptied days after the election.

No. 6: Ban mail-in ballots, and preserve absentee ballots. Absentee ballots are only mailed to voters upon request, but mail-in ballots are sent to everyone on the voter rolls. 2020 was the best proof of how fraught this practice is with potential for fraud. There have been countless examples of multiple ballots sent to the same address, to the wrong address, even to pets – not to mention last-minute rule changes made by courts allowing ballots to arrive after Election Day, without postmarks or matching signatures. COVID or not, there is no reason why any voter concerned for his or her safety cannot vote early in person or request an absentee ballot.

No. 7: Mandate the presence of bipartisan poll watchers at a distance close enough to observe the vote counting. Forbid ballot deliveries or vote counting unless poll watchers are present.

No. 8: Congress should pass legislation making Election Day a federal holiday. Whether or not it does so, state legislatures should pass laws making Election Day a state holiday – and, in appropriate cases, extending the hours at polling places (Indiana's polls close too early, at 6 p.m.) – so that people can vote in person and have fewer work-related conflicts.

There has never been a more propitious time for Republican-controlled state legislatures to pass election-integrity legislation. Democrats will challenge these laws in court. Let them. The public – especially the 74 million-plus people who

voted for Donald Trump – is outraged about the sloppy and careless practices that created an environment ripe for fraud. And court challenges will provide opportunities to present the evidence of fraud (actual and potential) from the 2020 election.

Common-sense election-integrity laws should have been passed decades ago. Our cavalier and cowardly attitude about election laws threatens the survival of the United States as a republic. Millions of Americans believe that the 2020 presidential election was stolen and fear that we will never again have a free or fair election. Without adequate rules to protect the integrity of our votes, those Americans are quite likely correct.

Anyone who derides such concerns should look to history to see what happens when half the population decides it has been permanently disenfranchised.

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