

# ...fostering universal justice and community action...



Volume 1, Issue 3

September 2020

*Share  
this news-  
letter  
with your  
family  
and  
friends!*

*Can you  
help with  
the last of  
the get  
out the  
vote post-  
cards?  
Contact  
Kristy  
Brooks if  
you would  
like a  
packet of  
20 or 40  
or more  
postcards!*

## News on Staying Informed and Taking Action, brought to you by the Restoring Democracy Team, prepared by Dorie Godfrey



As I write this, there are only 54 days before the November election.

### **Make sure that everyone you know is ready to vote!**

Take these steps to make sure that you are ready to vote! Share this information with your family and friends.

### **If you are planning to vote in person:**

#### **Action 1: Be Prepared:**

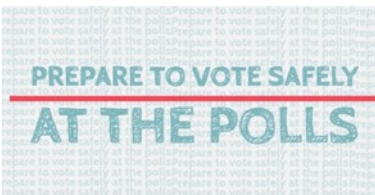
1. Check your voting location and polling hours by calling the town clerk in your town.
2. Verify that your voter registration information is up to date by going to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/myvoterregstatus.aspx>
3. If you are voting in person in Massachusetts, you may need to show ID if one of the following applies to you:

- You're voting for the first time in Massachusetts
- Your registration status is inactive because you haven't voted recently
- The poll worker has some reasonable suspicion that leads them to request ID
- You must complete a provisional or challenged ballot at the polls
- If asked to show an ID to a poll worker, you may show one of the following documents that shows your

name and address:

- A Massachusetts driver's license
  - A Massachusetts-issued ID
  - A recent utility bill
  - A signed lease
  - A rent receipt
  - A copy of a voter registration affidavit
  - Any other printed identification showing your name and address
4. Review the ballot initiatives (see Massachusetts Ballot Questions on page 2)
  5. Bring your own black pen.

#### **Action 2: Vote early in per-**



#### **son.**

As of this writing, towns have not published early voting hours for the general election. Watch the UUSMV Friday email or contact your town clerk for information. See contact numbers on page 4.

#### **Action 3: Avoid crowds.**

- Use early in-person voting.
- Vote at off-peak times, such as mid-morning.
- If driving to the polls and your schedule allows, monitor the voter line from your

car and join it when it's shorter.

- **Action 4: Protect yourself and others from COVID-19.** (Sources: CDC, Brennan Center)
- Wear a mask.
- Wash or sanitize your hands before entering the polling location.
- Maintain at least 6 feet (about 2 arms' length) of distance from others. It is important to continue physical distancing even when you and others are wearing masks.
- Avoid bringing non-voters or children with you.
- Wash your hands or sanitize your hands after using the voting equipment.
- Note: Do not disinfect or wipe down the voting equipment, which can be damaged by cleaners and disinfectants.

**Action 5: Report voting issues or voter suppression.** Call 866-OUR-VOTE.

## PREPARE TO VOTE FROM HOME

**If you are planning to vote by mail:**

**Action 1: Make the commitment.** Tell at least one person that you're committed to voting this fall.

**Action 2: Verify that your voter registration address is 100% correct.** Verify that your voter registration information is up to date by going to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/myvoterregstatus.aspx>

**Action 3: Request your mail in ballot.** You should have received your application for an absentee ballot in

the mail. If not, request an absentee ballot. You should request your ballot as far in advance of the election as possible but no later than October 20. Go to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/ele/elepdf/2020-Vote-by-Mail-Application.pdf> or contact your town clerk. See below.

**Action 4: Decide how you'll vote** for candidates and on ballot measures. See ballot information below.

**Action 5: Hand deliver your ballot.** You can hand in your ballot at your town clerk's office or the vote

drop boxes at your town hall.

**or Mail in your ballot** as soon as possible. To ensure delivery, put your ballot in the mail no later than two weeks before Election Day, October 20, 2020. State Election ballots need to be postmarked no later than November 3 and must be back at your local election office no later than November 6.

**Action 6: Report voting issues or voter suppression.** Call 866-OUR-VOTE.

## Be a Poll Worker

There are concerns that there may not be enough poll workers this year. Call your Town Clerk if you are interested in becoming a poll worker. See contact information page 4.

**BE A POLL  
WORKER**

## Massachusetts Ballot Questions 2020

Source : [https://ballotpedia.org/Ballotpedia%27s\\_Tuesday\\_Count\\_for\\_2020](https://ballotpedia.org/Ballotpedia%27s_Tuesday_Count_for_2020)

### Massachusetts Question 1, "Right to Repair Law" Vehicle Data Access Requirement Initiative (2020)

Massachusetts Question 1, the "Right to Repair Law" Vehicle Data Access Requirement Initiative is on the ballot in Massachusetts as an indirect initiated state statute on November 3, 2020.

**A "yes" vote** supports requiring manufacturers that sell vehicles with telematics systems in Massachusetts to equip them with a standardized open data platform beginning with model year 2022, so that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities may have access to retrieve mechanical data and run diagnostics through a mobile-based application.

**A "no" vote** opposes requiring vehicles beginning with model year 2022 to be equipped with a standardized open data platform that vehi-

cle owners and independent repair facilities may access to retrieve mechanical data and run diagnostics through a mobile-based application, thereby maintaining that vehicle owners and independent repair facilities may access mechanical and diagnostic data through a personal computer.

### Overview

How would Question 1 (2020) change the existing "right to repair law"? Question 1 (2020) would require manufacturers that

sell motor vehicles equipped with telematics systems to install a standardized open data platform beginning with model year 2022. Vehicle owners could then access telematics system data through a mobile device application and then give consent for independent repair facilities to access that data and send commands to the system for repair, maintenance, and diagnostic testing. Currently, the 2013 "right to repair law" exempts telematics systems from wireless accessibility by vehicle owners and independent repair facilities.

#### **Who is behind the campaigns surrounding Question 1 (2020)?**

Massachusetts Right to Repair Coalition is leading the campaign in support of Question 1 (2020). As of August 30, 2020, the campaign had raised \$5.7 million in contributions. Tommy Hickey, director of Massachusetts Right to Repair Coalition, said, "This is really a fight for Massachusetts consumers. Without this information, people may lose the choice to bring their car to an independent repair shop."

The Coalition for Safe and Secure Data is leading the No on 1 campaign in opposition to Question 1 (2020). As of December 31, 2019, the campaign had raised \$1.7 million in contributions. Alliance For Automotive Innovation contributed \$1.2 million of that total. Conor Yunits, the spokesman for the Coalition for Safe and Secure Data, said, "This ballot question will create easy opportunities for strangers, hackers and criminals to access consumer vehicles and personal driving data—including real-time location. It will put people at risk, without doing anything to improve the consumer experience." [2]

#### **Massachusetts Question 2, Ranked-Choice Voting Initiative (2020)**

Massachusetts Question 2, the Ranked-Choice Voting Initiative is on the ballot in Massachusetts as an initiated state statute on November 3, 2020.

**A "yes" vote** supports enacting ranked-choice voting (RCV) for primary and general elections for state executive officials, state legislators, fed-



eral congressional and senate seats, and certain county offices beginning in 2022.

**A "no" vote** opposes changing the existing plurality voting system to ranked-choice voting for primary and general elections for state executive officials, state legislators, federal congressional and senate seats, and county offices.

#### **How would Question 2 change the way Massachusetts votes?**

Question 2 would enact ranked-choice voting (RCV) for primary and general elections for state executive officials, state legislators, federal congressional representatives, and certain county offices. RCV is a voting method in which voters rank candidates according to their preferences. If a candidate receives greater than 50% of all first-preference votes, the candidate is declared the winner and the tabulation ends. If no candidate receives a simple majority of first-preference votes, then the candidate receiving the fewest first-preference votes is eliminated. First-preference votes cast for the eliminated candidate are eliminated, and the second-preference choices indicated on those ballots are tallied as their

first-preference in the following round. The process is continued until a candidate wins a simple majority (50%+1) of the vote. If there is a tie for last place, the candidates' support from earlier rounds would be compared to determine who should be eliminated.

Currently, statewide elections in Massachusetts use a plurality voting system. In Amherst and Easthampton, ranked-choice voting has been adopted but not implemented. Cambridge has used RCV since 1941 to elect the nine-seat city council and the six-seat school board.

Do other states or local jurisdictions use ranked-choice voting?

As of 2020, one state (Maine) had implemented RCV at the state level. Another eight states contained jurisdictions that had implemented RCV at some level. Another five states contained jurisdictions that had adopted but not yet implemented RCV in local elections.

#### **Who is behind the campaigns surrounding Question 2?**

Voter Choice Massachusetts is leading the Yes on 2 campaign in support of the ballot initiative. As of December 31, 2019, the campaign had received \$1.2 million in contributions. Shauna Hamilton, deputy campaign manager of Voter Choice for Massachusetts, said, "Ranked Choice Voting is simple, fair and easy. On your ballot, you can vote for just one candidate like you always have, or you can rank your first choice, your second choice and your third choice, just like you rank things in order in your everyday life. If your favorite candidate can't win, your vote is instantly counted for your second choice, so your vote matters more." Ballotpedia has not identified any committees registered in opposition to Question 2. If you are aware of any opponents or opposing arguments, please send an email with a link to [editor@ballotpedia.org](mailto:editor@ballotpedia.org).



## Americans OF CONSCIENCE Checklist

# Election 2020 Get Out the Vote Challenge!

## Do You Still Have Questions about Voting?

Go to <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/e/e/> for more information. For local information, call your **Town Clerk**:  
**Aquinnah:** 508-645-2304  
**Chilmark:** 508-645-2107  
**Edgartown:** 508-627-6110  
**Oak Bluffs:** 508-693-3554, ext. 120  
**Tisbury:** 508-696-4215  
**West Tisbury:** 508-696-0148

Do 9 actions from this page and you could win the respect and admiration of your friends and recognition from the Restoring Democracy Team!!! Keep track of your actions and send your results to Dorie Godfrey. These actions are suggested by the Americans with Conscience <https://americansofconscience.com/>  
**Action 1:** Ask a senior citizen if they want help checking registration.

Chances are good that you know someone who's not very computer savvy. Make their day with a surprise phone call and ask if they want you to check that their voter registration is active and 100% accurate so they can vote in November.

Check registration here: <https://www.sec.state.ma.us/voterregistrationsearch/myvoterregstatus.aspx>

**Action 2:** Send a postcard to 10 friends you think might not vote. Make it personal.

Sample Script: I want things to be better for my neighbors who are struggling with poverty, violence, and oppression. That's why I vote. Will you speak up for them too this fall?

Script: Roses are red, violets are blue, I'm casting a ballot, so how about you?

Script: Through history many Americans have struggled for their right to vote. Will you join me in honoring their lives by voting this fall?

Script: Things only change for

the better when we use our voices. Your vote is one way to speak up. Will you join me in voting this election?

**Action 3:** Follow Americans of Conscience on social media and amplify our voting messages.

If you're short on time, this is a great way to encourage people to vote.

Facebook share <https://www.facebook.com/AoCChecklist/>

Twitter retweet <https://twitter.com/AoCChecklist>

Instagram repost <https://instagram.com/AoCChecklist>

**Action 4:** Post weekly on your social media accounts to keep voting top of mind.

The closer the election, the more chaos is likely in the news and in online spaces.

Your kind, encouraging message might be the one that inspires an apathetic or overwhelmed citizen to vote.

Share about why you're choosing to vote this fall. Pro tip: avoid rancor and stay positive.

**Action 5:** Text 10 friends and use these four science-backed strategies to motivate them to vote. (Source: Lemonade)

"I talked to [names of friends], and they're all voting. Are you?"

"You're a voter, aren't you?"

"On what day are you sending your ballot?" or "How are you getting to the polls?"

"I'll text you on election day to see how voting went!"

**Action 6:** Display pro-voting messages. Make signs and display them. Draw sidewalk chalk messages. Wear VOTE t-shirts, buttons, masks. Add a car

magnet or sticker. Stick on a water bottle sticker.

**Action 7:** Reach out to local groups or organizations, asking them to encourage their members to vote.

Script: Dear [name], With an important election coming up, your advocacy for voting would make an important impact on the [members/students] of [group]. At the next opportunity, would you consider encouraging them to vote this fall? Thank you for considering my request. High schools, colleges and universities, libraries, local sports, faith communities, nonprofits, are examples of organizations you could contact.

**Action 8:** Make your own Voting Rocks.

Paint rocks with nonpartisan, pro-voting messages and leave them around your community (remember to pick them up after the election in November). Inspired by our friends at Indivisible Bellingham (WA), this would be a fun civic activity to do with kids!

**Action 9:** Post on social media that you voted. Be creative!

Show your I VOTED sticker or your grinning face. Make your own if you voted by mail! Talk about how easy it was or how empowered you feel. If it was hard, share why you persevered. Sharing your personal experience can motivate others to participate too.

**Protect the Results of the Election**

– Sign up to pledge to take action if Trump refuses to accept the results of the election. This is nonpartisan because only Trump has hinted he will not accept the results. <https://www.protecttheresults.com/>

Throughout American history, when a president has lost re-election, he has always stepped down willingly. Accepting the will of the people, and allowing a peaceful transition of power, is a hallmark of American democracy.

But today, Trump routinely ignores democratic norms and continues to chip away at democratic institutions. In 2016, Trump repeatedly threatened not to accept the election results, and Trump’s personal lawyer Michael Cohen has warned Congress that “given my experience working for Mr. Trump, I fear that if he loses the election in 2020, there will never be a peaceful transition of



power.” Most recently, Trump even threatened to “deploy the United States military” against the American people to quash peaceful protests. There is no line he won’t cross. With COVID-19 poised to wreak havoc for months to come, the threat to our democracy is particularly acute. As Congress works to expand mail-in voting and in-person early voting, we must prevent Trump from using this

moment to sow discord, confusion, and doubt on the November election results.

We cannot ignore the threat that Trump poses to our democracy and a peaceful transition. We will stand together to ensure that if Trump loses the 2020 presidential election, he will not throw our country into a constitutional crisis. We will honor the valid results of the 2020 election, ensure that every vote is counted, and show up to demand that the losing candidate put their ego aside and concede for the good of our country.

Protect the Results is a joint project of Indivisible and Stand Up America to protect the valid results of the 2020 election. All Americans—Democrats, Republicans, and Independents—must be prepared to protect and defend the valid results of the election whether their preferred candidate wins or loses.

*Stay Informed on the Issues*

**ISSUE VOTER**

There are 2 excellent resources for voter issues:

**Issue Voter** <https://issuevoter.org/misc/about>

[er.org/misc/about](https://issuevoter.org/misc/about)

When we vote, we’re hiring our elected officials. Issue Voter works to increase Voter Participation. By keeping voters informed throughout the year on issues that matter most to them, more people will see how legislation affects those issues and recognize the importance of voting and engaging with their representative year-round. Voters will have a more informed view of their representatives during election season.

You can track your rep’s activity. The website tells you how your rep voted, how often your representative agrees with you, and whether they’ve attended a vote. Encourage open discussion. You can share an issue on your favorite social network without revealing your opinion. Act on issues that don’t make headlines. Issue Voter not only tells you about what is breaking the news; they check for updates every hour to make sure you have the latest information. Become an informed voter. Using IssueVoter year-round informs you before elections and keeps money’s influence out of your opinion. Only re-elect reps who truly represented you

**Ballotpedia** You can sign up for informational emails. Ballotpedia: <https://ballotpedia.org> Ballotpedia is the digital encyclopedia of American politics and elections. Its goal is to inform people about politics by providing accurate and objective information about politics at all lev-

els of government. They are firmly committed to neutrality in our content; here’s why.

“As a nonprofit, our mission is to educate. We’re here for you when:

- You’re considering a run for office.
- You’re making decisions about how you’ll vote in an election.
- You need the latest political news and analysis from a reliable, nonpartisan source.

“Ballotpedia’s articles are 100 percent written by our professional staff of more than 50 writers and researchers. Although we have an office in Middleton, Wisconsin, the majority of our staff work from home offices across the United States.”





## Opportunity for Phone Banking to Get Out the Vote

The National UUA / UU the Vote is running National Call-in Days to Voters in Wisconsin and Florida. These are non-partisan calls. Every other week until Election Day, UU's from across the country are making calls together to

register, mobilize, and persuade voters in 2020. You can sign up here [https://secure.everyaction.com/p/YB7U\\_H5FBkuOSCOzlyC8GA2?emci=d45c38dd-78dd-ead1-8b03-](https://secure.everyaction.com/p/YB7U_H5FBkuOSCOzlyC8GA2?emci=d45c38dd-78dd-ead1-8b03-)

### Criminal Justice



#### Reform

## News from the Criminal Justice Reform Team

Prepared by Mimi Davisson and Leigh Smith

### Making Black Lives Matter Depends on Criminal Justice Reform

For the last half of 2020 UUSMV's Criminal Justice Reform team has halted its activities to work on the Restoring Democracy program. But interest is still strong, especially now that UUSMV is supporting Black Lives Matter.



Eradicating racism and ethnic bias in American society will take a massive commitment to reforming institutions and practices that reinforce white and class privilege. The criminal justice system is a foundation of this unjust

social infrastructure that must change.

To demonstrate the congregation's commitment to supporting Black Lives Matter and reforming

the social foundations that perpetuate inequality, the Criminal Justice Reform program is proposing that UUSMV donate to the Equal Justice Initiative (EJI).

### About the Equal Justice Initiative

From the Equal Justice Initiative website, [www.eji.org](http://www.eji.org)

"The Equal Justice Initiative is committed to ending mass incarceration and excessive punishment in the United States, to challenging racial and economic injustice, and to protecting basic human rights for the most vulnerable people in American society. Founded in 1989 by Bryan Stevenson, a widely acclaimed public interest lawyer and bestselling author of *Just Mercy*, EJI is a private, 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides legal representation to people who have been illegally convicted, unfairly sentenced, or abused in state jails and prisons. We challenge the death penalty and excessive punishment and we provide re-entry assistance to formerly incarcerated people.

"EJI works with communities that have been marginalized by poverty and discouraged by unequal treatment. We are committed to changing the narrative about race in America. EJI produces groundbreaking reports, an award-winning

wall calendar, and short films that explore our nation's history of racial injustice, and we recently launched an ambitious national effort to create new spaces, markers, and memorials that address the legacy of slavery, lynching, and racial segregation, which shapes many issues today.

"EJI provides research and recommendations to assist advocates and policymakers in the critically important work of criminal justice reform. We publish reports, discussion guides, and other educational materials, and our staff conduct educational tours and presentations for thousands of students, teachers, faith leaders, professional associations, community groups, and international visitors every year."

Published by the  
Unitarian  
Universalist Society  
of Martha's  
Vineyard

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