



## **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT**

BACKGROUND, PROPOSAL, PROCESS & MEASURES OF SUCCESS

LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

SAMPLE VOTER REGISTRATION INFOGRAPHIC

SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE

SOCIAL MEDIA SUGGESTIONS



## **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT**

### **BACKGROUND**

Only 45% of young adults aged 18-29 voted in the 2012 presidential election. Only 21.5% of them voted in the 2014 midterm elections. In every presidential election since 1964, the youth vote has been lower than that of all other age groups. In 2012, although young people accounted for 21% of the eligible population to vote, they were only 15% of the actual voter population. These statistics demonstrate that much more needs to be done to encourage our young people to take part in the political process and to inspire them to make their voices heard.

### **PROPOSAL**

In coordination with the start of another school year, we encourage all Members to reach out to high school seniors within your district to provide nonpartisan voter registration material and a letter encouraging civic participation, which is frankable information under House Rules.

### **PROCESS**

- Compile the voter registration information that applies to your state. You may wish to include an infographic. Please remember that all registration information must be non-partisan.
- Assign to the District Office staffer who knows the contact information of district high school principals, such as the staffer who handles the Congressional Art Competition.
- Connect with each school via letter, email, or telephone and explain that the Member would like to send information to high school seniors about voter registration.
- Ask if the high school would be interested in participating. (Please keep in mind that high schools are not obligated to do so, and you should not press.) Should the high school agree to collaborate, the Member's office should:
  - Email students directly (only if Member's office already has the students' email addresses or the school offers to share them; Member's office may not solicit such information from the school); or
  - Have the school email students or post the information electronically;
  - Have the school print the information (or just the letter) and distribute to students; or
  - Have the school post the information (or just the letter) on a school bulletin board.
- Before sending any written correspondence to either the high school administration or the high school seniors, please formally submit it to the Franking Commission for approval.
- If a high school asks for your office to print the letter and to deliver it, determine how much you would be willing to spend on printing the letters.



JAMES E. CLYBURN (SC), CHAIR

## **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT**

- Approximate printing charge is 10c/page

Note: All publicly distributed voting information must be nonpartisan and Members may NOT collect completed voter registration information.

### **MEASURES OF SUCCESS**

- The number or percent of schools that chose to disseminate the letter and voter registration information;
- The number of students to whom the letter and information was sent directly; or
- The number of students who were exposed in any capacity.



## HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT

### LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR

Dear High School Senior,

Congratulations on beginning your final year of High School! This is an exciting time, and you will have many opportunities to celebrate old friendships and explore new challenges.

At this crossroads, you will also likely come upon your 18th birthday, and inherit your American right to vote. I encourage you to exercise this right and take a brief moment to fill out the attached form and register to vote. The voter registration form should be submitted directly to your county Board of Elections. You will be glad you registered!

Thirty four years ago, the United States ratified the 26th amendment to the Constitution. This amendment was specifically designed to ensure that 18 year olds could vote. At the time, the country had a “draft”, requiring all men from the age of 18 to register to join the military. Many of these young people – your age – were thus required to serve in the Vietnam War, even though they had no right to vote on whether we should be at war at all.

Although we don’t have the draft in our country today, this example underscores the importance of voting and making your voice heard. There are serious issues affecting all of us, and it is our duty as Americans to pass on our freedoms and make this country a better place for future generations. We live in a democracy, and our success depends on the participation of the American people, which is why I encourage you to register to vote, and why I am working so hard in Washington to make the registration and voting process easier. I support the Voter Empowerment Act of 2015, H.R. 12, which would require every state to make online voter registration available, authorize automated and same-day registration, and make elections more accessible to the disabled and other underserved groups. Legislation like this would help many people across the country by increasing access to voter registration. [Your Member should have cosponsored this bill. If not, please mention some other legislative tie-in, either a different bill that relates to federal elections or some other kind of work on the issue].

Again, congratulations on embarking on this exciting journey. With hard work, sincerity, and perseverance, you can look forward to a bright future.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name Here]

\*We suggest you formally submit your letter to the Franking Commission for approval.



## HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT

### LETTER TO HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

Dear Principal XYZ,

I hope all is well with you and the [School Name] community. I trust that the school year is off to a good start. I hope to work with you on a voter engagement project I am undertaking.

In the 2012 Presidential election, only 45% of **young adults** aged 18-29 voted, and in the 2014 midterm elections, only 21.5% of this demographic voted. These are just some of the statistics that demonstrate that much more needs to be done to encourage our young people to take part in the political process and make their voices heard. For this reason, I am endeavoring to personally encourage all high school seniors in [Your District Number Here] to register to vote and would like to know if your school would like to participate in this project.

Attached is a letter and voter registration that I would love to share with the rising Seniors at [School Name]. These voter registration forms should be submitted directly to the appropriate county Board of Elections. There are several ways of facilitating this efficiently, and I look forward to discussing them with you.

When Benjamin Franklin was leaving the Constitutional Convention in Philadelphia in 1787 he was asked by a Philadelphia woman what the delegates had given to the American people, and he replied: “A Republic, if you can keep it.” We must work every day to keep it, which is why I am working so hard to encourage our young people to vote and to make the registration process easier. I support the Voter Empowerment Act of 2015, H.R. 12, which would require every state to make online voter registration available, authorize automated and same-day registration, and make elections more accessible to the disabled and other underserved groups. Legislation like this would help many people across the country by **increasing access to voter registration. [Your Member should have cosponsored this bill. If not, please mention some other legislative tie-in, either a different bill that relates to federal elections or some other kind of work on the issue].**

I believe that this undertaking will further simplify the voting process for your students. I look forward to talking soon and hopefully working with you on this effort.

Sincerely,  
[Your Name Here]

**\*We suggest you formally submit your letter to the Franking Commission for approval.**



# DEMOCRATIC OUTREACH & ENGAGEMENT TASK FORCE

BUILDING ON OUR LEGACY, EMBRACING THE FUTURE

JAMES E. CLYBURN (SC), CHAIR

## HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT

### SAMPLE VOTER REGISTRATION INFOGRAPHIC

#### REGISTER TO VOTE IN NEW YORK STATE



##### TO REGISTER, YOU MUST:

- . Be a **US Citizen**
- . Be **18 years old by December 31** of the year in which you register
- . Be **18 years old at the time of election**
- . Live at your present address at least **30 days** before an election
- . **Not be in prison or on parole for a felony conviction**
- . **Not be adjudged mentally incompetent by a court**
- . **Not claim the right to vote elsewhere**

##### HOW TO REGISTER:

★ Get a voter application. You have four options:

1. Download and print from <http://www.elections.ny.gov/VotingRegister.html>
2. Have one mailed to you by filling out form at <http://www.elections.ny.gov/VoterRegFormRequest.html>
3. At county board of elections or agency-based voter registration center
4. Call 1-800-FOR-VOTE to request a form

##### WHERE TO REGISTER:

★ Turn in the Application Form. You have two options:

1. In-Person
  - . **Deadline: October 9\***
2. By Mail: to local/county board of elections
  - . **Deadline: Postmarked by October 9 and received by October 14**
  - . Mail in all forms not filled out in person at county board of elections

★ If you have been honorably discharged from the military or become a naturalized citizen after **October 9**, you may register in-person until **October 24** ★



## **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT**

### **SAMPLE PRESS RELEASE**

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE [YOUR NAME HERE] ENCOURAGES HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS TO REGISTER TO VOTE

U.S. Representative [Your Name Here] today contacted local high school principals with voter registration information for their high school seniors.

“It is important that our youth have all the necessary information to register to vote,” said Rep. [Your Name Here]. Voting among persons aged 18-24 has historically been lower than that of any other age range. Voting is one of the most powerful actions we can take, and at the most basic level, our newly eligible voters should be aware of how they can register.”

The voter registration information was accompanied by a letter expressing the importance of civic engagement and having one’s voice heard. A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

“It is my hope that by providing this information, students who may not otherwise have considered registering to vote will be inspired to do so.”



## **HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION TOOLKIT**

### **SOCIAL MEDIA SUGGESTIONS**

Don't just study history, make history-leave your footprint in the voting booths #itsyourcivicduty #getregistered

Today (9/22) is Nat'l Voter Registration Day. Regardless of party, everyone should exercise their right to vote. #getregistered #celebrateNVRD

“Citizens – seize the power that you have. Make this democracy work. Do not succumb to cynicism.” - @POTUS #celebrateNVRD #getregistered

“Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves & the only way they could do this is by not voting.”-FDR

Democracy is not a state of being; it requires action. Our country is always changing. The need to vote never will. #getregistered #itsyourright

How many choices do you get to make that are all your own? Not many? Make this one. #getregistered #celebrateNVRD

Government of the people, by the people, and for the people relies on one thing – people's participation. #getregistered #celebrateNVRD

Young people don't matter? False. If all young people voted, they'd comprise 21% of the electorate. #getregistered #itsyourright