



Glossary

19th Amendment: ratified August 18, 1920, the amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting women the right to vote

abridged: diminished or reduced in scope

absentee ballot: a ballot completed and cast (or mailed in) before an election by a voter who is unable to be present at the polls

absentee voting: voting by mail before election day

advocacy: public support for a cause or policy

Alpha Suffrage Club: the first black women's suffrage club in Chicago, founded in 1913 by Ida. B Wells; its goals included giving voice to African-American women (who were excluded from national suffrage organizations such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association) and promoting the election of African Americans to public office.

amendment: an addition or to the U.S. Constitution

Susan B. Anthony (1820-1906): an American social reformer and women's rights advocate who played a key role in the women's suffrage movement

ballot box: a sealed container used to store paper voting ballots before they are counted; often used as a symbolic name for voting in general

bipartisan: representing the involvement or input of more than one political party

butterfly ballot: a ballot used in Palm Beach County, Florida, during the 2000 presidential election; the space that voters pressed to mark their choices was misaligned with the row of the given candidates, causing some people to accidentally vote for a candidate other than the one they intended to vote for

census: a complete counting of a population and recording of specific information. In the United States, an official census is legally mandated by the Constitution to take place every ten years. The results determine, among other things, the apportionment of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives.

constituents: voters

contiguous: connecting without a break

cracking the vote: drawing district lines so that like-minded voters are split into multiple districts to dilute their voting power

denied: refused

direct election: an election in which people vote directly for the person, persons or political party that they want to see elected to a political position

drop box: public boxes into which voters can drop their ballots as opposed to going to a polling location to vote in person

early voting: a process to allow voters to cast their ballots before a scheduled election day

election fraud: illegal interference with the results of an election, either by artificially raising or lowering the number of votes cast for a given candidate or party

Electoral College: Established in Article II, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution, the Electoral College is the formal body which elects the President and Vice President of the United States.

faithless electors: Electoral College electors who do not vote for the candidates for whom the elector had pledged to vote and instead vote for another person

federalism: a type of government in which the nation is not simply one single unit, but a collection of state governments under the banner of one national government, each of which has important roles, responsibilities, and identities

free and fair election: an election in which voters can decide whether or not to vote and can vote freely for the candidate or party of their choice without fear or intimidation and in which all voters have an equal opportunity to register and have their votes counted

draft: mandatory enrollment of individuals into the armed forces

general election: a regularly held election for political office

geopolitical unit: a political jurisdiction or area based on location

gerrymandering: drawing the boundaries of an electoral district to favor one party or class

interstate compact: An agreement between two or more states

Kentucky General Assembly: the state legislature of Kentucky, comprised of the Kentucky Senate and Kentucky House of Representatives

Kentucky Legislative Research Commission (LRC): Created in 1948, this state agency provides support to the state legislature. It is co-chaired by the President of the Kentucky Senate and the Speaker of the Kentucky House of Representatives. Sixteen members are selected from the leadership of the Senate and the House of Representatives. The LRC provides staff and research support, produces educational materials, and maintains a reference library and website.

Lyndon B. Johnson (1908-1973): the 36th President of the United States; among his achievements was signing into law the 1965 Voting Rights Act, which prohibits racial discrimination in access to voting

municipality: a city or town that has corporate status and local government

National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA): an organization founded in 1869 by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton that worked for women's right to vote

National Popular Vote plan: A plan that has been enacted into law in 15 states that will, if and when it takes effect, award all the Electoral College votes belonging to those states to the winner of the national popular vote rather than to the winner of the state popular vote

National Woman's Party: an American political organization formed in 1911 to work for women's suffrage; its main leader was Alice Paul.

nonpartisan: not biased toward any particular political party

packing the vote: drawing district lines so that like-minded voters are packed into as few districts as possible

partisan: representing the involvement or input of a single political party

Alice Paul (1885-1977): an American suffragist and women's rights advocate who was a primary strategist in the work to pass the 19th amendment

polarization: division into two sharply contrasting groups

political machine: in U.S. politics, a party organization, often headed by a single boss or small group, that controls the votes of supporters to maintain political and administrative control of a city, county, or state

political platform: a candidate or political party's statement of principles, goals and stands on issues

poll tax: tax of a fixed sum on every liable individual regardless of income or resources. Prior to 1965, payment of a poll tax was required in order to register to vote in a number of states.

popular vote: in the U.S. presidential election, the vote made directly by qualified voters as opposed to the Electoral College

primary election: an election to determine which candidates will represent political parties in the general election

ranked choice voting: A system of voting that allows voters to rank candidates in order of preference rather than simply voting for one candidate

ratification: formal confirmation

redistricting: the redrawing of political district lines following the U.S. Census to reflect population representation

regulatory safeguards: laws or regulatory measures put into place to help ensure that elections are fair and free

Shelby County v. Holder: a landmark 2013 U.S. Supreme Court decision that struck down the constitutionality of a provision of the 1965 Voting Rights Act; had important ramifications for modern voting rights

suffrage: the legal right to vote in elections

turnout: the percentage of eligible voters who cast ballots in an election

urban-county government: one unified jurisdiction that includes one or more cities and their surrounding county

vote by mail: Every state allows mail-in voting, but many restrict eligibility for mail-in voting by certain criteria. In 2020, due to the coronavirus pandemic, many states gave all voters an excuse to vote in the General Election.

voter fraud: an intentional corruption of the election process in which an individual voter or voters engage in activities such as duplicate voting, impersonation of another voter in order to vote twice, vote selling, or voting where or when not eligible to vote

voter suppression: activities intended to influence the outcome of an election by discouraging or preventing specific groups of people from voting; strategies (usually laws) that seek to influence the outcome of elections by preventing or discouraging certain citizens or groups of citizens from casting their votes; common voter suppression techniques include things that make it difficult for voters to exercise their constitutional right to vote, for example, shortening the hours when polling places are open

voting bloc: a group of voters whose common concern or concerns around certain issues are so strong that it tends to dominate their voting decisions, causing them to vote together in elections

Ida. B. Wells (1862-1931): An African American journalist, educator and leader in the early civil rights and women's suffrage movements; she was a co-founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People in 1909.

"winner takes all": an Electoral College approach in which the winner of the most popular votes receives all of that state's electors; every state with the exception of Maine and Nebraska use this system

women's suffrage: the right of women by law to vote