

# ELECTION PROTECTION YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO VOTE

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## Talking Points

- Election Protection is the nation's largest, non-partisan voter protection coalition. The coalition has run two highly successful national programs in 2004 and 2006.
- On Election Day, the campaign will have trained volunteers answering Election Protection's 1-866-OUR-VOTE (1-866-687-8683) hotline, with leadership from the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law, from 6:00am until 8:30pm EST. The hotline provides instant, free voting assistance, and volunteers will be prepared to assist voters from all states voting on March 4<sup>th</sup> – Ohio, Texas, Rhode Island, and Vermont.
- The hotline can answer simple calls such as “where is my polling place,” as well as complex issues dealing with machine malfunctions, late opening polling places, eligible voters who are turned away, and instances of voter intimidation and deception.
- In addition to the hotline, Election Protection will have attorneys monitoring polling places and stationed at election officials offices in select counties.
- Election Protection also works with election officials to identify and prevent potential problems, and will be in contact with election officials across the state on Primary Day to help rectify issues as they arise.
- Election Protection seeks to ensure that every eligible voter casts a ballot that counts on Election Day and protects this most fundamental of rights. Election Protection partner organizations conduct aggressive voter registration and education programs to reach people who haven't been voting, safeguarding voter rights, educating voters with state-specific voters' rights information, and taking legal action to prevent instances of voter intimidation.
- While we anticipate that most voters will not experience problems on Election Day, Election Protection is a valuable resource available to those who do experience problems on and before Election Day.
- During the 2004 election cycle, Election Protection mobilized 25,000 trained volunteers, including 8,000 legal volunteers, to monitor polling places, educate voters, facilitate a dialogue with local and state election officials, provide legal support to poll monitors, and answer the 1-866-OUR-VOTE voter services hotline. The Hotline received over 200,000 calls from voters in all 50 states.

- Although the program was smaller in 2006, it was more efficient. By incorporating new strategies and new partners, EP evolved into a year-round, one stop shop for voter support, information, and assistance. The hotline received more than 26,000 calls in October and November from voters in 48 states and the District of Columbia, including 17,964 on Election Day.
- Election Protection is needed now more than ever. New federal requirements for state election officials under the Help America Vote Act and the increasing use of new electronic voting machines is increasing the demand on the voting system to perform at the highest possible standards.