



July 20, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer:

We, the undersigned 149 Jewish nonprofits, charitable organizations, and religious institutions, urge you to support the election provisions of the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (“HEROES”) Act, which passed in the U.S. House of Representatives on May 15, 2020. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to surge, this legislation would provide important voting rights protections and \$3.6 billion in emergency federal funding to help states increase ballot access, which is critical to executing the November 2020 elections fairly and safely during the ongoing COVID-19 public health crisis.

The right and ability to have a political voice has been crucial to the journey of Jews in this country, and we have always worked to ensure that every eligible voter is able to cast their ballot and have it counted. We are gravely concerned about states’ ability to ensure safe, fair, and accessible elections in the midst of this global pandemic, which is what prompts us to join together to urge the Senate to provide states with the resources they need to execute safe and effective elections.

Combined with the \$400 million for state election assistance the CARES Act allocated in March, the \$3.6 billion and voter protection provisions in the HEROES Act would help states avoid many of the issues that arose during the primary season: unfulfilled absentee ballot requests, long lines, too few trained poll workers, unsanitary voting machines, etc. The HEROES Act would also ensure that voters have more and safer voting options, including no-excuse absentee ballots with prepaid postage and expanded early voting in federal elections. The Act would also help states expand voter registration opportunities and defray the costs of public education campaigns.

Unless Congress provides emergency election assistance and additional voter protections, the decision our communities and so many voters will face about whether or not to wait in crowded lines and rooms to vote may literally be a matter of life or death. This is especially true for

members of marginalized communities already more likely to contract and die from the virus.

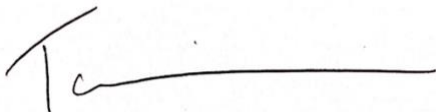
Voters must not have to choose between their right to vote and their health and safety. Since states do not currently have the resources they need to assure that all voters have access to safe voting, it is incumbent upon Congress to provide those resources.

In the Jewish tradition, one of the most basic principles is that human life comes first. Saving a life, or *pikuach nefesh* in Hebrew, is the principle in Jewish law that the preservation of life overrides virtually any other religious rule. It is in that spirit that we urge you to support legislation that – to the maximum extent possible – enables Americans to vote without exposing themselves to unnecessary risks to their health or their lives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Max Sevillia', written over a horizontal line.

Max Sevillia  
Vice President, Government Relations, Advocacy, and Community Engagement  
Anti-Defamation League

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tammy Gilden', written over a horizontal line.

Tammy Gilden  
Associate Director, Policy, Advocacy, and Communications  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Cc: All U.S. Senators

## **National Organizations and Institutions**

Anti-Defamation League  
Jewish Council for Public Affairs  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Union for Reform Judaism  
J Street  
Jewish Labor Committee  
KAVOD  
Uri L'Tzedek  
T'ruah: The Rabbinic Call for Human Rights  
Bend the Arc Jewish Action  
Jewish Women International (JWI)  
Rabbinical Assembly

## **State and Local Organizations and Institutions**

### **Alabama**

Levite Jewish Community Center

### **Alaska**

Congregation Beth Shalom  
Congregation Sukkat Shalom - Juneau Alaska

### **Arizona**

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Phoenix  
National Council of Jewish Women  
Women's Leadership Institute  
Jewish Federation of Greater Phoenix

### **California**

Jewish Community Relations Council of San Francisco  
Temple Israel Long Beach  
Congregation B'nai Tzedek  
Temple Beth El of South Orange County

Orange County California Jewish Genealogy Society  
Temple Beth El of South Orange County  
Shir Hadash Organizing Committee, Congregation Shir Hadash  
Temple Emanu-El  
Congregation Emeth  
Congregation Beth Shalom-East Valley Jewish Community Center  
University Synagogue  
Jewish Center for Justice  
Jewish Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of  
Greater Santa Barbara  
Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley

### **Colorado**

Temple Sinai  
Temple Emanuel  
Colorado Jewish Community Relations Council  
Jewish Family Service of Colorado  
Congregation Har Hashem  
Kabbalah Experience  
Congregation B'nai Chaim  
Staenberg Loup Jewish Community Center  
Shalom Park

### **Connecticut**

Jewish Federation & JCRC of Greater New Haven  
Jewish Community Relations Council and Jewish Federation of Greater  
New Haven  
Jewish Federation of Eastern Connecticut  
United Jewish Federation of Greater Stamford, New Canaan and  
Darien  
Temple Sinai - Stamford  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of  
Greater Hartford

### **Florida**

Aventura Turnberry Jewish Center  
Keys Jewish Community Center

## **Georgia**

Temple Kol Emeth  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Atlanta

## **Illinois**

Chicago Jewish Labor Committee  
Congregation Beth Am  
Chicago Jewish Community Relations Council  
Am Yisrael  
Congregation Kneseth Israel

## **Indiana**

Jewish Community Relations Council, Indianapolis  
Jewish Federation of Greater indianapolis  
Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation  
Congregation Beth-El Zedeck  
Brit Olam Committee of Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation

## **Kansas**

Temple Israel of Greater Kansas City  
Jewish Community Relations Bureau|AJC

## **Kentucky**

Jewish Community Relations Council of Louisville

## **Maine**

Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine

## **Maryland**

Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington  
Shaare Tefila Congregation  
Kehilat Shalom

Baltimore Jewish Council  
Tikvat Israel  
Temple Beth Ami  
Tikvat Israel  
Chizuk Amuno Congregation & Schools  
Oseh Shalom of Laurel Maryland

### **Massachusetts**

Congregation Shirat Hayam  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Boston  
Temple Etz Chaim  
Hillel Council of New England  
The Anti-Defamation League

### **Michigan**

Jewish Community Relations Council/AJC Detroit  
Michigan Democratic Jewish Caucus  
Jewish Federation of Greater Ann Arbor

### **Minnesota**

Adath Jeshurun Congregation  
Bet Shalom Congregation  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas  
Bet Shalom Congregation

### **Missouri**

Congregation b'nai amoona  
National Council of Jewish Women St. Louis  
Congregation Temple Israel  
Jewish Community Relations Council of St. Louis  
Shir Hadash Reconstructionist Community  
Jewish Vocational Service of Kansas City

### **New Jersey**

Jewish Community Relations Council of Southern New Jersey

Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of Greater  
MetroWest, NJ  
**New York**

Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of  
Greater Rochester  
Temple Israel of Great Neck  
Buffalo Jewish Community Relations Council  
Kehillat Tikvah: A Jewish Community of Hope

### **North Carolina**

Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte  
Carolina Jews for Justice - Greater Charlotte

### **Ohio**

Community Relations Council, Jewish Community Board of Akron  
Temple Emanu El - Orange Village, Ohio  
Youngstown Area Jewish Federation  
Jewish Community Relations Council of Cincinnati  
Community Relations Committee of the Jewish Federation of  
Cleveland

### **Oregon**

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland  
Jewish Community of Central Oregon  
Greater Portland Hillel

### **Pennsylvania**

Reform Congregation Oheb Sholom  
Jewish Federation of Greater Harrisburg  
Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel  
Congregation Brothers of Israel  
Old York Road Temple-Beth Am  
Congregation Keneseth Israel  
Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh  
Valley  
Congregation Or Ami, Lafayette Hill, PA  
Mishkan Shalom

Temple Shirat Shalom  
Community Relations Council, Jewish Federation of Greater Pittsburgh  
Congregation Brith Sholom  
Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of the Lehigh  
Valley  
Jewish Community Alliance of Northeastern Pennsylvania  
Jewish Federation of Reading/Berks

### **South Carolina**

Beth Shalom  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Columbia Jewish  
Federation

### **Tennessee**

Congregation B'nai Israel  
Jewish Federation and Jewish Foundation of Nashville and Middle  
Tennessee

### **Texas**

Temple Beth Shalom  
Congregation Agudas Achim  
Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of San Antonio

### **Virginia**

Agudas Achim Congregation  
Pozez JCC of Northern Virginia  
Community Relations Council of the United Jewish Federation of  
Tidewater

### **Washington**

Healing the Divide: Using Biblical Text to Unite Conflicted  
Communities  
ADL - Pacific Northwest

### **Washington, D.C.**



MInyan Oneg Shabbat  
Adas Israel Congregation

**Wisconsin**

Wisconsin Jewish Conference  
The Spark Wisconsin  
Congregation Sinai  
Congregation Emanu-El B'ne Jeshurun  
Temple Beth El  
Jewish Federation of Madison  
National Council of Jewish Women-Milwaukee  
Jewish Community Relations Council of the Milwaukee Jewish  
Federation  
Tikkun Ha-Ir of Milwaukee