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,

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

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 Sholom
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.**
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