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Nonprofits, Democracy, and Voting: They Go Together So Well

Thanks to the great work of many nonprofits, including many among our readers, our nation is headed to [potentially the largest voter turnout rate](#) in the modern era. We celebrate the turnout as a nonprofit advocacy success story. That is, nonprofits promoting democracy is the very essence of nonprofit advocacy. So who is doing what? Here are a few (of very many) impressive examples.

Nonpartisan get-out-the-vote efforts led by nonprofits have paved the way to get nonprofit staff, board members, volunteers, and the communities they serve to register, provide time off to vote, and to have their voices heard. The [Nonprofit Staff Vote](#) campaign from **Nonprofit VOTE** gives resources and tools to provide time off to vote so employees don't have to choose between voting and their paycheck. Nonprofits have been encouraged to join the movement, publicize their policies to their employees, provide voter plan information, and then get out to vote. As they say, "Tick tock, it's vote o'clock!"

Other groups focused on specific demographics have provided voter guides and state by state resources specific to their constituents. [AARP](#), for example, has made the elections real for their members by "urging older Americans to ask the candidates 5 key questions" about social issues affecting them like social security, Medicare, economic recovery, prescription drug prices, and long-term care. The [She](#)

[Votes](#) initiative by **Girls Inc.** teaches girls about the importance of democracy, representation by women and people of color, history of suffrage, how to become a voter, evaluating candidates and confronting gender stereotypes, and looking critically at campaign advertising.

State associations of nonprofits have done their part to bring their members together on the importance of civic engagement. Nearly all are active participants in the efforts of Nonprofit VOTE. Beyond that, they promote voting in different ways. The **Foraker Group** in Alaska posts a guide on its website, "[We're Alaska's Nonprofit Sector & We Vote!](#)" **Colorado Nonprofit Association** recently explained how its members can "Wield Your Power to Vote on Colorado's Issues." **Forefront** in Illinois dedicated [semi-monthly statewide Forum](#) discussions to "voter engagement and voter registration." **Nonprofit New York**, along with other nonprofit partners in New York City, launched the NYC Nonprofits Turnout: A Voter Empowerment Project to "activate all corners of the sector - clients and families, staff and leadership, board members and funding partners - to create a new power dynamic that puts the needs of nonprofits and the communities we serve first...." The [North Carolina Center for Nonprofits](#) included a "Voting Tip of the Week" in its weekly newsletter because it believes "it is important for all 501(c)(3) nonprofits to participate in nonpartisan voter registration, voter education and get-out-the-vote activities to strengthen the voices of their communities and the people they serve."

The message from nonprofits is clear: it's time to vote. Get your plan ready and have your voice heard now.