



EVERY LAWFULLY CAST VOTE ACCURATELY COUNTED

Vote by Mail Concerns, Part 2

A 2005 Presidential Commission co-chaired by former President Jimmy Carter and former Secretary of State James Baker III, determined that vote by mail ballots do not satisfy five essential criteria for sound and honest elections. The commission found that:

- Mail-in votes do NOT assure privacy
- Mail-in votes do NOT verify that only duly registered voters cast ballots
- Mail-in votes do NOT safeguard ballots against loss or alteration
- Mail-in votes do NOT assure prompt counting (processing and verification is a lengthy process)
- Mail-in votes do NOT foster the communal aspect of citizens voting together

The first four points are rather self-explanatory, so let's spend some time and thought on the importance of the last one. Federal law requires that the presidential election be held every four years on the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November (established in 1845). Congress did not establish an election WEEK or an election MONTH, but a single day, and for a reason. As a free people, we must participate in our own freedom, and we must have a strong sense of unity and respect for one another that will carry us beyond the contentiousness of the election cycle.

If we vote in the same way we pay our bills, at a day and time of our own choosing, with a quick signature and the lick of a stamp, surrendering the most precious right ever known in the history of humankind to the whim and imperfections of "the system", what is to become of our NATIONAL IDENTITY? Voting is an invaluable privilege unique and rare in human history, and must never be relegated to the status of an afterthought, an inconvenience to be dispatched with as little time and trouble as possible.

America was founded on the respect of individual choice, individual rights, and individual responsibility. But what we MUST do TOGETHER is choose those who will govern us. It is hard to imagine that there are older voters who have forgotten, and younger voters who will never experience the gravitas, the wonder, the amazement, the thrill, and the chills running up the spine engendered by physically walking into that flimsy cardboard booth, flanked by friends and neighbors, picking up a pen, and making a mark that could change the course of the nation's future.

The lure of ease and convenience has caused us to surrender many things in today's society. We have surrendered health and well-being for fast food preparation; we have surrendered physical fitness for speedy transportation; we have surrendered privacy for mass communication; we have surrendered the responsibility of life-long learning and critical thinking for indulging in mindless big-screen entertainment; we have surrendered collective morality for laissez-faire relativism.

But what we must NEVER surrender is the understanding that there is ALWAYS a price to pay for “pushing the easy button”. Let us not lose who we are as a united people. Every two years we need briefly to interrupt the activities of one day, cross the street or go down the block, link virtual arms with our fellow Americans, cast an in-person vote, and proudly wear the “I Voted” sticker for the rest of the day - a small cost for a great reward.

We make time for what means the most to us. Let us make a covenant with one another to dedicate the time ***to protect our vote***. Let us commit to vote in person, and to SPREAD THE WORD.