

## **Clear and Present Danger to the Vote**

**CEO Corner**

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Thank you for your support of The King Center and for sharing our vision: “The Beloved Community where injustice ceases and love prevails.” With focus on this vision, we can unite to make the Beloved Community a reality.

In the United States, one of the fundamental ways to have a voice in making the Beloved Community a reality is the vote. And the current, viable threats to free and fair voting are a blight to our body politic, to our standing as a democracy, and to our remaining hope to “save the soul of America,” with democracy as a powerful tool. Saving the soul of America was the central goal of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference when the organization was founded in 1957 and my father, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was elected as the first President. I believe that it is still a formidable, yet essential, goal that requires commitment to creating a more humane, just, equitable, peaceful and sustainable nation and world, while using coordinated and constructive means, including voting.

We must protect the vote. To do that, we must know how it is being threatened, then strategize and organize, building broad, cohesive coalitions to ensure that efforts to suppress voters and weaken votes do not prevail. In this first part of this 2-part CEO Corner about voting, I will provide information and resources for education on the most harmful iterations of voter suppression. It is critical that we are aware of and well-versed on voter suppression tactics so that we can be intentional, love-centered, and systematic in our approach. Information gathering, after all, is the 1<sup>st</sup> step in Kingian Nonviolence, which The King Center rebranded as Nonviolence365®.

To begin, [here](#) is a map of which states have restricted voter access, and which have expanded it. This map and the explanations provided reflect how voting laws

have changed since the 2020 Election. It is a stark reminder, that, along party lines, there has been an unjust response to false claims of voter fraud. Therefore, based, in part, on fear mongering rooted in lies, voter suppression persists.

As we examine changes in state voter laws, we should also explore another form of voter suppression, gerrymandering. Gerrymandering is manipulation of the boundaries of an electoral constituency in favor of one party or class. The article shared [here](#) details six things to know about partisan gerrymandering and how it impacts our democracy. Gerrymandering is currently a legitimate concern in several states, including my home state of Georgia, as we learn more about plans to redistrict in the wake of the false accusations, which reputable audits and investigations have found to be false, of voter fraud in the 2020 Election.

Finally, in this 1<sup>st</sup> part of this 2-part CEO Corner, *Clear and Present Danger to the Vote*, I want to share two clips in which my father speaks about the [filibuster](#), which I believe can be reformed so that it is not a barrier to democracy and justice and about which I'll expound on more in part 2.

[MLK on the Filibuster, Clip 1](#)

[MLK on the Filibuster, Clip 2](#)

I invite you to continue to learn with us and work to create the Beloved Community with The King Center. Stay tuned for Part 2!