



# VOTERIDERS 2023 Impact Report

## THE TIME IS NOW

Dear friends,

Democracy doesn't have off years, and neither does VoteRiders.

**Throughout 2023, an unprecedented wave of restrictive voter ID laws continued to sweep the country.** Hundreds of thousands of Americans found themselves disenfranchised, and voter confusion spiked in the face of complicated and ever-changing ID requirements.

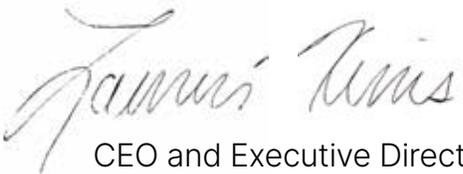
To respond to these challenges, our growing team across the country was active year-round – **fighting back and doing everything in our power to help Americans exercise their freedom to vote.** Day in and day out, we helped voters engage around key state and local elections that decided important issues for their communities.

By year's end, **our efforts directly reached 6.1 million voters** with crucial voter ID information and free help. Our resources and programs helped millions of voters cast a ballot with confidence – many for the first time. For many, the IDs we helped them obtain changed their lives, expanding access to more stable housing and employment opportunities – as well as the ballot box.

The magnitude of our reach is a testament to the power of our partnerships, the scalability of this work, and the dedication of our ever-growing VoteRiders community.

As we head quickly into this major election year, we can't wait to see what we accomplish together in service of our democracy.

With gratitude,



CEO and Executive Director | VoteRiders



**“We do not have a government by the majority.  
We have a government by the majority who participate.”**

– Thomas Jefferson

## VOTER ID IN 2023

Throughout 2023, voter ID laws continued to pass at an unprecedented rate. **By year's end, 17 states had passed new or stricter ID laws in the 2022-2023 period.**

Nebraska and North Carolina added brand-new ID requirements for voting. Ohio and Idaho dramatically tightened pre-existing requirements and limited the forms of ID accepted for casting a ballot at the polls. In Arizona, new and onerous ID requirements for voter registration are still being litigated, leading to extreme voter confusion. The list goes on.

By year's end, 38 states had voter ID laws in place. During the critical 2024 election year, more Americans than ever before will live in a state with a voter ID law.

We saw evidence of voter disenfranchisement and confusion first-hand: **Calls and texts to our Helpline increased by 287%** relative to 2021, the last year without national elections.



# 2023 BY THE NUMBERS



**6.1 million voters** directly reached

**38** states with voter ID laws



**287%**

Increase in Helpline calls and texts

**10,000**

Volunteers helping power our work



**4.5 million**

Voters contacted by letter, call, or text

**11,065**

Voters assisted at Voter ID Clinics or via Helpline/Chatbot



**598,204**

Voter ID info Cards distributed



**798,874**

Partner voter contacts with our ID resources

**148,478**

Visitors to educational pages on our website



**11,805**

Tabling and outreach conversations

## EVERY YEAR IS AN ELECTION YEAR

At VoteRiders, **our team is on the ground and organizing in communities year-round**. Our work is most effective when we can continuously offer our free ID help to the voters who need it most.

Throughout 2023, voters went to the polls to have a say on important local issues that impact their families and communities in a profound way. VoteRiders was proud to support broad, diverse, and equitable participation in these elections.



### Here are just a few examples of how our team supported local voters where they live:



**Jake Spence, Wisconsin State Coordinator:** In April, Wisconsinites went to the polls to elect a new justice to the State Supreme Court. The court plays a decisive role in issues such as gerrymandering and abortion rights.

Ahead of these elections, we ramped up our outreach to young and student voters, held onsite Voter ID Clinics at Milwaukee-area shelters and the Milwaukee County Jail, and worked in coalition with dozens of groups to ensure accurate and updated ID information reached at-risk voters. Our volunteers wrote 9,000 handwritten letters and sent 312,000 text messages to voters. We ran radio ads and targeted digital ads on Instagram and Snapchat that reached tens of thousands of young people. Even after polls closed, we partnered with the League of Women Voters and the Milwaukee Election Commission to contact voters who cast a provisional ballot due to lack of ID, helping them “cure” their ballots and make them count.

We saw record-setting turnout in the spring elections—particularly among youth. We’re pleased to have played a part in that success!



**Vashitta Johnson, Ohio State Coordinator:** In Ohio, we had TWO huge elections in 2023 – an August special election to decide the process for amending the state constitution, and November ballot referendums on abortion rights and marijuana legalization.

VoteRiders was new to Ohio in 2023, since Ohio had only recently implemented a new and much stricter voter ID law. Many forms of ID that Ohioans were used to showing at the polls suddenly were no longer accepted, and we saw a lot of confusion across the state.

We held Voter ID Clinics at the Bethel AME Church and tabled at campus and community events with partners like the Cincinnati Public Library, Ohio Student Activist Alliance, and Dayton Black Pride. We partnered with 100+ Ohio-based organizations to distribute hundreds of thousands of bilingual Ohio Voter ID Information Cards. Our volunteers sent over 13,000 letters to targeted Ohio voters, and our textbanks reached over 1.3 million young voters of color with election and ID reminders.

At the end of the day, our outreach efforts reached upwards of 2 million at-risk Ohio voters ahead of these two elections!



**Krystle M. Knight, Pennsylvania State Coordinator:** Pennsylvania was a flurry of electoral activity all year. Our voter ID law applies only to first-time voters in their precincts, so there's a lot of confusion around who must present ID at the polls. In Pittsburgh, where I live, we voted in a special election in February that determined control of the PA State House of Representatives. In November, Pennsylvanians participated in critical races from the municipal level all the way up to the State Supreme Court.

VoteRiders volunteers texted 40,000+ Pittsburgh-area voters, held Voter ID Clinics in partnership with employment- and housing-focused organizations, and joined forces with the League

of Women Voters to ensure our ID-focused resources and services were part of their community outreach. Our Voter ID Information Cards were distributed by dozens of student-focused organizations, such as the Community College of Philadelphia, as well as at places like the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley and the Allegheny County Jail.

All eyes will be on Pennsylvania in 2024, and we know that far-reaching voter ID education and assistance could make all the difference in helping voters make their voices heard.



## Voter Stories

It's important that everyone understands the harm caused by voter ID laws. By sharing voter stories, we build empathy and a deeper understanding of how and why voter ID laws create powerful barriers to the ballot box. These stories illustrate the many ways in which getting an ID can truly change people's lives, allowing them to secure a job, housing, health care, and so much more.

It can be costly, confusing, and feel nearly impossible to get an ID. No one should have to undergo this ordeal alone. At VoteRiders, we're honored to stand beside and support thousands of voters each year to help them through the process.



**Willie in Ohio:** After years in prison, Willie Florence needed an Ohio ID so he could vote, apply for a job, secure housing, and begin to rebuild his life. Our team assisted him unravel what he called a "bureaucratic nightmare."

He told us that his new ID was "like my freedom papers." Change is on the horizon for Willie, who can now start a new chapter and use his voice to shape the political process.



**Rebecca in Arizona:** Rebecca, a student at Arizona State University, was repeatedly asked by poll workers if her out-of-state ID was fake when she tried to use it at the polls. She had tried to obtain an Arizona driver's license before, but found the process overwhelming and "incredibly confusing."

After meeting a VoteRiders staff member at a campus event, Rebecca received the logistical support she needed to obtain an Arizona state ID. We even met her at the DMV and paid for all associated costs. She's now able to vote with confidence in every election.



**Julie in Oklahoma:** Julie had nearly given up hope on obtaining an ID after years of trying. Without an ID, she was blocked from voting – and from obtaining critical medical care for her damaged liver.

Julie stumbled across VoteRiders on TikTok, and contacted our Helpline right away. With the help of a virtual volunteer, Julie finally has her ID. In addition to having access to life-saving medical care, Julie will also be able to vote again.



**Fandrea in Texas:** Fandrea lost her Social Security card and birth certificate when they were thrown away at a shelter. She told us that trying to replace her ID felt like being stuck in a "crazy circle."

It took several months, but with help from VoteRiders, Fandrea secured a driver's license. She's now able to access stable housing and is completing her degree. Fandrea also registered to vote and told us how excited she was to cast a ballot alongside her voting-age children.

## Media Coverage

VoteRiders was increasingly recognized this year as a go-to source for accurate and up-to-date information on voter ID laws, as well as a trusted source for explaining the far-reaching impact of voter ID laws on voters across the country. We spoke to outlets such as [Newsweek](#), [Forbes](#), and others about our work and its impact.

**Newsweek 90**

### Election Warning Issued Over Voter ID

Nov 13, 2023 at 8:23 AM EST

**Forbes**

LEADERSHIP

### Young People Are Fighting Back Against Voter ID Restrictions



Lauren Kunis Brand Contributor  
Civic Nation BRANDVOICE | Paid Program

We're particularly proud of our state-based staff members who lifted their voices and authored compelling op-eds on the impact of voter ID laws where they live – while also raising local awareness of our free services for voters for outlets such as the [Houston Chronicle](#), [Dayton Daily News](#), [Arizona Capitol Times](#), and more.

**HOUSTON CHRONICLE** **Dayton Daily News** **ARIZONA CAPITOL TIMES**

We launched our presence on TikTok this year ([give us a follow!](#)), pursued digital partnerships with Vote Save America, the League of Conservation Voters, and more, and partnered with diverse content creators to help spread the word.



## VOLUNTEERS FOR DEMOCRACY

Our ever-growing community of 10,000+ volunteers powered our work throughout the year, filling nearly 5,000 volunteer shifts and supporting our engagement around key state and local elections.

This year alone, VoteRiders volunteers sent 4.4 million text messages and wrote 40,000 letters to at-risk voters, delivering voter ID information and help offers where they were most needed. [Pro bono legal volunteers](#) made crucial contributions towards keeping our resources up-to-date; other volunteers protected the right to vote with [some extra-sweet treats](#); Florida college students [joined in a week of action](#) to encourage their peers to vote; and voter ID assistance volunteers like Shelly told us that there was simply [“no more rewarding work for me.”](#)

Whether it was through joining virtual textbanks, answering voter questions on our ID Helpline, walking voters through the process to order documents, or representing VoteRiders in the community – we are incredibly proud of the ways in which our volunteers made a difference.



## SPECIAL PROJECTS

Going into 2024, it's critical that VoteRiders continuously improves our resources and sharpens our understanding of the voter ID landscape.

We [conducted an impact analysis](#) of our work, reviewing the rates at which the voters we reached voted in the midterm elections. We uncovered exciting evidence of how VoteRiders' work was making a difference—for example, **92% of the Texas voters we contacted via letter-writing, and 87% of those we contacted via text, successfully participated in the midterms** after having their primary ballots rejected in March. We also uncovered areas where we can refine our approaches, and are already implementing new strategies for even more impact.

Working with The Center for Civic Design (CCD), we updated VoteRiders' state-specific and multilingual Voter ID Information Cards to make them more accessible, user-friendly, and informative. Cards were rolled out in 10 states on a pilot basis in the fall and will be available for all states and in D.C. in English and Spanish in early 2024.

Alongside the Center for Democracy and Civic Engagement (CDCE) at the University of Maryland, the Brennan Center for Justice, and Public Wise, VoteRiders completed the first phase of a research project that provided the public with crucial information on voter ID, which has not been updated in nearly 20 years. This research is already helping VoteRiders, democracy organizations, the media, policy-makers, and others better understand the state of play with respect to the voters who lack ID and voters' knowledge of ID laws where they live.



## Onwards to 2024

2023 was meaningful in its own right, with hundreds of state and local elections taking place. At the same time, for VoteRiders, it was a key foundational year as we prepare for 2024.

With voter ID laws sweeping across the country, 2024 will present immense challenges and urgency for our work. At the same time, with a high-profile election and surging public interest in voting, the year will offer an exciting opportunity to activate millions of new voters and support them to make their voices heard with confidence.

In this consequential election year, it's no exaggeration to say that **effective voter ID education and assistance could make all the difference** in tight elections nationwide.

With this in mind, we're preparing for unprecedented outreach and have set the ambitious goal of directly reaching **10,000,000+ voters this election cycle** with free voter ID information and help.

Thank you for standing alongside us in our fight for a more equitable, inclusive, and representative democracy.

We know that together, we can both protect and expand our democracy. And we know that this moment demands nothing less from all of us.

Onwards!

**[VoteRiders.org](https://VoteRiders.org) / [@VoteRiders](https://@VoteRiders) / [866.ID.2.VOTE](https://866.ID.2.VOTE)**

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