VoteRiders

2026 Impact Report

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear friends,

The morning after Election Day 2024, I posted the following note on social media:

> Even after a long night, our VoteRiders Slack channels were abuzz.
> Even this morning, would-be voters were reaching out for ID help.
> We answered each of their calls.
>
> And at VoteRiders, we'll continue to do our part in answering the call for a stronger democracy – today, tomorrow, & always.





As I reflect on the year that followed, I am inspired by the courageous ways in which the VoteRiders community showed up for democracy – and for each other. Together, we did the ongoing, essential work of strengthening democracy day by day.

This year brought profound challenges. In March, we mourned the tragic loss of our cherished team member DeVonte Yates. Our team is committed to honoring his life of service by continuing to pursue our mission.

We also confronted a wave of restrictive voter ID legislation and challenges in communities across the country. Confusion around new requirements reached new heights, with voters facing more barriers than ever before.

Our team persevered. Together, **our efforts directly reached 5 million voters with information and free ID help**. We faced rising ID barriers head-on and helped voters make their voices heard. Our research and the stories of voters harmed by restrictive ID laws played a key role in blocking federal and state-level threats to voting rights.

We looked toward a better future. Our team and broader community engaged in VoteRiders' first-ever multi-year strategic planning process, producing a clear roadmap for maximum impact in the critical years ahead. This year, we also celebrated our visionary founding Board Chair Kathleen Unger as she passed the torch to new Board Chair Eric Tapia.





This work is ongoing, even in so-called "off years." It's the essential foundation for the more inclusive and resilient democracy we all deserve.

As we turn the corner into 2026 and the midterm elections, our vision and mission are clear. As always, we remain committed to breaking down barriers to voting and strengthening our democracy through increased participation—one ID at a time.

Thank you for standing alongside us in this crucial work.

With gratitude,



Lauren Kunis

CEO and Executive Director | VoteRiders

2025 by the Numbers

5,000,000 +

voters directly reached with ID information and assistance

746,846

voters directly reached with ID information and assistance

3,730,920

text messages sent to voters facing ID barriers

66,707

handwritten letters mailed by volunteers to at-risk voters

198,020

Voters reached by partners using VoteRiders' resources

22,094

Voters assisted one-on-one with free ID help

20,904

Face-to-face community conversations about voter ID requirements

218,514

Visits to educational resources on VoteRiders.org

7,617

People from partner orgs trained on voter ID laws

3,091

Volunteer shifts completed by our nationwide community

2,600+

Historical partner organizations collaborating to expand access

Improving Voting Access Nationwide

ID barriers to voting don't take breaks, and neither do we! From Wisconsin's Supreme Court race in April to municipal elections across the country, from civic holidays to everyday one-on-one assistance, we maintained our "always-on" approach throughout the year to ensure every eligible voter has what they need to cast their ballot.

On the Ground in Seven States

Our field teams in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin reached voters year-round through strategic partnerships, community events, and direct assistance.

In Wisconsin, we mobilized for the April 1 Supreme Court election, reaching over 800,000 at-risk voters through community events, transit advertising, text-banking, letter-writing, and one-onone ID assistance. The election saw record-breaking turnout, and democracy supporters retained majority control of the court.

Pennsylvania's judicial retention elections brought us into high schools across the state, where we reached first-time voters uniquely challenged by the state's voter ID law.

Our Key States

Arizona, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas, and Wisconsin



Activations around key democracy moments throughout 2025

JOHN LEWIS DAY OF ACTION

On July 17, we joined communities across the country for John Lewis Day of Action, participating in events in six states, while coalition rallies with Black Voters Matter brought our message to the streets.

NATIONAL VOTER REGISTRATION DAY

On September 16 our teams everywhere–from the Phoenix Indian Center in Arizona, to Movimiento Resistencia Coalition's events throughout the Rio Grande Valley in Texas, and to Milwaukee Public Libraries in Wisconsin–connecting with voters and ensuring they knew what ID they'd need

NATIONAL VOTER EDUCATION WEEK

In October, we hosted a widely attended Voter ID webinar that drew over 400 attendees.

2025 ELECTION SEASON

Through Vote Early Day and up to Election Day itself, our teams maintained intensive outreach, from training canvassers for Florida's Black Constituency Canvass to partnering with UNC Chapel Hill's Campus Y.

Strategic partnerships and volunteers extended our reach into states such as Michigan, Mississippi, Ohio, Virginia, and many more.



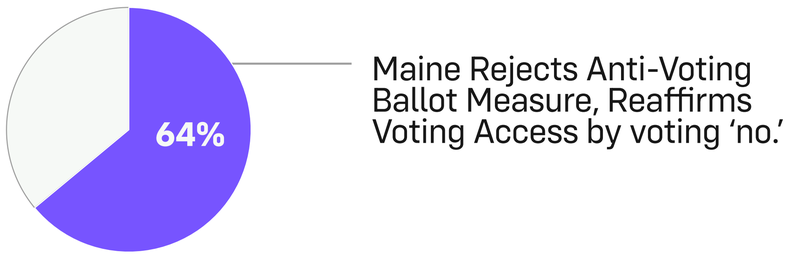
A NEW VOICE IN THE FIGHT:

Legislative Advocacy Wins

In 2025, VoteRiders launched a bold new chapter while firmly retaining its nonpartisan orientation: legislative advocacy. Building on 13+ years of on-the-ground expertise helping voters navigate ID barriers, we brought voter stories, cutting-edge research, and field-tested knowledge directly into policy debates—and delivered historic wins.

Maine: A Historic Victory

On November 4, Maine voters decisively rejected Question 1—a ballot initiative that would have imposed a photo ID requirement while also restricting absentee voting. With 64% voting no, this marked the first time a voter ID law was defeated at the ballot box in over a decade.



OUR ROLE

VoteRiders played a pivotal role in the coalition victory, providing legislative testimony, digital advocacy, and elevating the stories of voters who would be harmed by new restrictions.

"Maine voters sent a conclusive message to the state and our country: **our democracy works best when every eligible voter can participate.**

Mainers stood up for their fundamental freedom to vote and refused to create new barriers."

Lauren Kunis
CEO and Executive Director

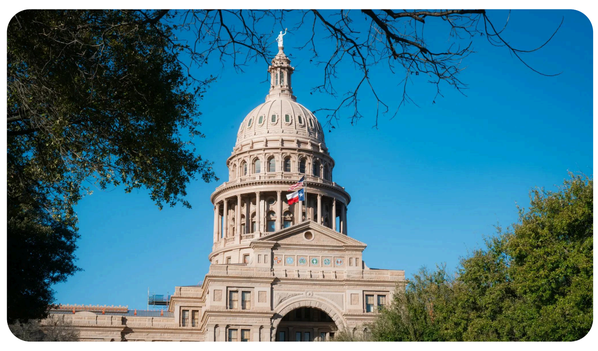
Texas: Turning Research into Results

VoteRiders helped defeat a dangerous documentary proof of citizenship (DPOC) bill in Texas. Our state-level analysis of SB 16's potential impact was credited by The New York Times as a key factor in the bill's failure.

OUR ROLE

Our team hosted webinars, participated in press conferences, and delivered legislative testimony as part of the successful advocacy campaign.

The New York Times



For the first time in years, Republicans in the Texas Legislature were not actively warring.

There Are Limits to Republican Lawmakers' Reach, Even in Texas

Republican factions united to pass most but not all of their conservative priorities in this year's legislative session, illustrating the limits of right-wing governance.

June 3, 2025 | J. David Goodman

Federal Front: Fighting the SAVE Act

When the SAVE Act—which would require proof of citizenship to register to vote, potentially disenfranchising 21.3 million Americans according to our research—was introduced in Congress. **VoteRiders mobilized comprehensive opposition:**

- Facilitated 25,000+ constituent emails to Congress
- Met with 10 Congressional offices
- Co-organized a national webinar with 400+ registrants
- Provided stories of impacted to Congressional offices
- Secured major media coverage of our research findings



VoteRiders contributing to Sen. Jon Ossoff's public opposition to the bill through providing stories of impacted Georgia voters

npr The Washington Post

Our research was covered by NPR and The Washington Post on the potential harms of the bill

The SAVE Act is currently stalled in the Senate due to strong opposition—opposition that our work helped strengthen and sustain.

Looking Ahead: The Fight Continues

Our 2025 advocacy success positions VoteRiders for expanded impact in 2026 and beyond:

CALIFORNIA

Fielding research and preparing for a likely 2026 voter ID ballot initiative

NEVADA

Supporting an in-state coalition mobilizing against a 2026 voter ID ballot initiative

NORTH CAROLINA

Working with partners on the ground to defeat a ballot initiative that would codify restrictive photo ID requirements into the state constitution

MICHIGAN

Supporting a coalition opposing a potential DPOC measure on the ballot in November

FEDERAL

Continuing to prevent passage of the SAVE Act in Congress

From launching our advocacy program to defeating ballot measures and blocking harmful bills, 2025 proved that the stories of impacted voters and rigorous research can shift policy debates—and that VoteRiders has a critical role to play in protecting voting access for all Americans.

Volunteer Power, No Off Years

> "Voting is an American right which is under attack. VoteRiders provides a meaningful way to channel energy into concrete action."
>
> QUOTE FROM A VOTERIDERS' VOLUNTEER

Our volunteer community of democracy defenders stepped up to the plate this year, shattering expectations by:

VOLUNTEER SHIFTS
Completing **3,091** volunteer shifts, providing direct support through our Helpline, writing personal letters with local election reminders, and attending trainings to deepen their expertise

HANDWRITTEN LETTERS
Sending **66,707** handwritten letters to at-risk voters—133% of our original goal

TARGETED SMS
Sending **3,730,920** text messages to targeted voters most likely to lack an ID to vote

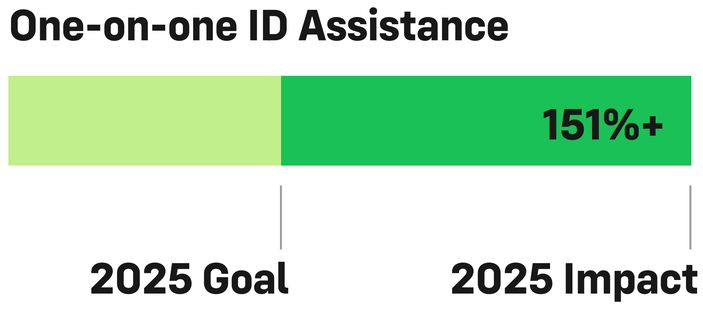
UNIQUE ASSISTANCE CASES
Handling **2,924** voter ID assistance cases, representing 24% of our yearly total



In a year when many people felt discouraged about the state of democracy, our volunteers showed up, day after day, to ensure every eligible voter could make their voice heard.

Voter ID Assistance Needs Skyrocketed

Demand for one-on-one voter ID assistance shattered all expectations this year. **We assisted 12,045 voters one-on-one with their ID needs—representing 151% of our goal and a clear signal that this work matters every single day.**



The assistance we provided went far beyond voting. Throughout 2025, we heard from voters who couldn't work without an ID, access healthcare, or secure stable housing. When we help someone get their identification documents, we're not just protecting their right to vote—we're opening doors to employment, housing, healthcare, and dignity.





Factors driving up unprecedented demand:

The growing patchwork of new and stricter ID requirements across states, meaning that more voters than ever face bureaucratic barriers to obtaining the documents they need.

The SAVE Act's passage in the House created widespread confusion, with voters mistakenly believing they needed proof of citizenship to register to vote. Our Helpline fielded anxious calls from voters worried about name mismatches, passport costs they couldn't afford, and whether their current IDs would suffice.

The May 7 REAL ID implementation date generated waves of confusion, with many voters erroneously believing that this form of ID was required to vote.

VOICES OF DEMOCRACY:

One ID at a Time

These are just three of the many thousands of voters VoteRiders helped in 2025. Each story represents a voice that nearly went unheard—and a reminder of why our work matters.

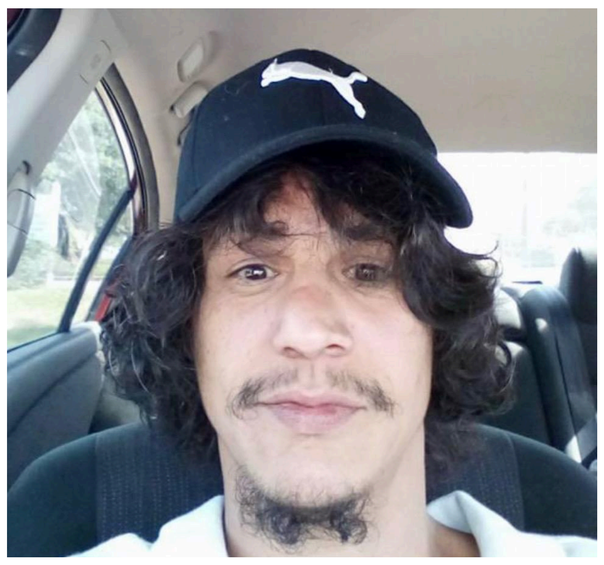
OPENING DOORS

ROBERT | OHIO

Robert needed help proving his identity. Beginning with a childhood in foster care, Robert spent much of his life navigating state systems— which is why he was so surprised when Michigan said there was no record of his birth. Without a birth certificate, he couldn't get the ID he needed to work or vote in his new home state of Ohio.

VoteRiders assigned a pro bono lawyer to his case, helping Robert finally break free from a bureaucratic maze. He now has an ID that allows him to work in Ohio and cast his ballot in future elections.

"I just needed some doors opened, and that's what VoteRiders did.



FIRST-TIME VOTER

AMANI | PENNSYLVANIA

Raised in a family of lifelong voters, eighteen-year-old Amani knew she would register to vote the moment she was eligible. As a first-time voter in Philadelphia, she needed an ID to cast her first ballot—but didn't know where to start.

During a civic education lesson, Amani's teacher handed out VoteRiders' Voter ID Information Cards. Amani contacted VoteRiders for free help and was connected to a volunteer who helped her schedule an appointment at her local Department of Transportation office, walked her through what documents she'd need, and covered the cost of her Pennsylvania state ID.

In May 2025, Amani cast her first ballot—making her voice heard on issues she's passionate about, including abortion rights, gun control, law enforcement, and education.

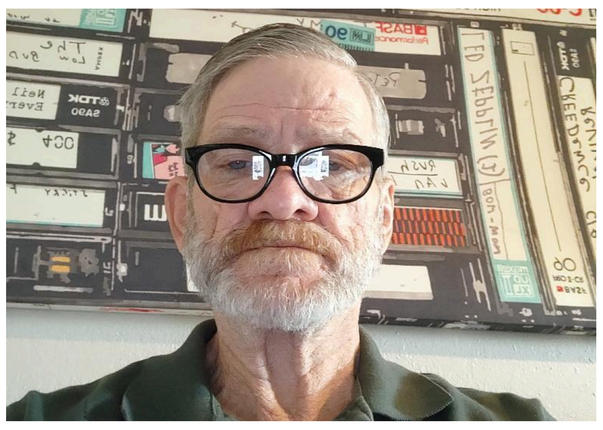
"I think voting for the first time will be exciting and a chance for me to have my voice heard, potentially making a difference in some ways. I think it's important to voice our opinions on things impacting our everyday lives."

A SECOND CHANCE

RUSSELL | TEXAS

After years of disenfranchisement due to a felony record, Russell's voting rights were finally restored in 2023. But without an ID, he couldn't exercise that right.

In 2025, Russell connected with VoteRiders. Our team worked quickly to secure his birth certificate, arrange free transportation to the Department of Public Safety, and help him obtain his Texas state ID. With his new ID, Russell successfully landed a job and gained access to healthcare and other essential services. On May 3, 2025—for the first time in decades—he cast his ballot in Texas municipal elections.



"Voting is a freedom that people who I don't even know are willing to shed blood or maybe even give their lives for. Voting is an important right to me."

LOOKING FORWARD

Hope as a Discipline



The VoteRiders community should be filled with pride in what we accomplished together in 2025. But we're also clear-eyed about the road ahead. The 2026 midterm elections will test our democracy in unprecedented ways. Voter ID laws show no signs of slowing down. Voters across America will face new threats to their freedom to vote—including ballot initiatives, proof of citizenship requirements, and widespread confusion that could disenfranchise millions of eligible voters.

One of our team members shared a powerful insight at our all-staff gathering: hope is a discipline. Hope isn't passive optimism; it's an active choice. It's the daily decision to put one foot in front of the other, to believe in change even when it feels hard, and to take action-oriented steps forward.

That discipline shows up every day in our incredible community of staff, volunteers, partners, and supporters. This work is hard. But 2025 proved that when we show up together, we can make a real difference when and where it's needed most.

Thank you for standing with VoteRiders. Together, we'll keep choosing hope and action—one ID at a time.

Acknowledgments

VoteRiders' impact is made possible by our dedicated Leadership, Staff, partners, and thousands of volunteers across the country. We are also profoundly grateful to these supporters who powered our pro-democracy mission in 2025.

Democracy Champions ($50K+)

Anonymous (2)
The Anderson-Rogers Foundation
Stephen English and Molly Munger
Austin and Lauren Fite
The Heinz Endowments
The Houston Endowment
The Jacques M. Littlefield Foundation
The Jeffrey Seller Family Foundation
Jeffrey Kampelman and Nina Bang-Jensen
Judith Libow and Carl Olson
The Newman's Own Foundation
OneArizona
The Scarlet Feather Fund of the Dayton Foundation
The Tides Foundation
Vote Your Voice
The William Penn Foundation
Laure Woods

Electoral Game Changers ($20-$49.9K)

Anonymous (1)
Laurie and Bill Benenson
Thomas Cohen
The Evolve Foundation
The Flora Family Foundation
James Gleick
Jeffrey J. Litow
Meridee Moore
Susan K. Newman
James S. Peterson
Sara Ransford
The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation
Thomas Schumacher
Robert and Anne Stevens
Jackie Thorman
Thomas and Janet Unterman
The William Talbott Hillman Foundation
The Voorhees Family
Wisconsin Civic Power Table

Voter ID Ambassadors ($10-$19.9K)

Anonymous (1)
Jarmoir and Lynn Babicka
Meridith Baer
Black Voters Matter
Linda and James Clever
Steven and Jeanne Gadol
Corky Hale and Mike Stoller
James A. Kautz
Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP
Bob and Georgia Lyon
The Mahdesian Family
Microsoft Corporation
Leslie Oelsner
Kathleen O'Grady
Susan Saltz
Carolyn Schwartz
Michael and Dale St. Lawrence
Bruce and Julie Steiner
Kathleen and Stephen Unger
Ira and Godeleine Ziering

Voting Trailblazers ($5-$9.9K)

Anonymous (3)
Jeff Atwood
Carol Blaney and John Sun
Jennifer Braun and Raymond Ryan
Barbara Carlson and Lisa Peters
Jonathan Coopersmith
Davis Wright Tremaine LLP
Julie Dorfman and Jerry Herst
Pam and Howard Erlanger
Shelley Fishkin
Judy and Arnie Fishman
Gwendolyn Fuehring
Hamilton Uptown LLC
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Joan Kerr
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Richard Kunis
Isabel Liu
The Madsen Family Foundation
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Mary McGarry
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Linda M. Nelson
Sara Nichols and Frank Arentowicz
Paramount Corporation
Debra Perry
The Radiant Fund
Simon Ru
Arlene Samek
Susan Savage
Mia and TC Schultz
Thomas Stone
Bernard and Phyllis Sussman
Eric R. Tapia
Vocal Minority
Benjamin S. Wolf
Mary S. Wright

Civic Change Makers ($1K-$4.9K)

Anonymous (12)
Brian Albert
Andrice S. Arp
Matthew Austern
Ronald Bagel
Juliana and James Bancroft
Lee Bartlett
Kimberly Bennion
Sonja Berggren
Valerie and Gary Bird
Lou Ann and Jeffrey Bode
James Boorstein
Cynthia Broten
Brown Rudnick LLP
Cory Bytof
Merrilee Caldwell
Lacy Campbell
Chris Campioni
Deborah Cantor and Vincent Valvo
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Bill Destler and Rebecca Johnson
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Barbara and David Eisenstein
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The Joe Elman Memorial Fund
James Emshoff
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Gregory Goldstein
Wendy Greuel
Susan and Richard Guilford
Myron and Barbara Gutmann
Christopher Hall
Eric Halperin
Heidi Hansen and Richard Watkins
Robert E. Haselow
Ursula Heitz
Katrien Hemelsoet
Stephen D. Henry
Elizabeth and Tony Hileman
Jeremy Hoff
Deborah Hoffman
Ann Hollister
B.J. Phillips and Kathleen Howarth
Thomas Johnson and Jane Platt
Jon Kannegaard
Chris and Beth Karlin

Civic Change Makers ($1K-$4.9K)

Douglas Scott Katzer
Meryl Unger and Henry Kaufman
Linda Kenyon
Richard and Jill Klein
Barbara Klein
Judith A. Kleiner
Linda Klimach
Ken Kobre
Tracy Forgie Koppel
Jason Kramer
Robert and Susan Kresek
Max Lagally
Ellie and Mark Lainer
Julie Landau
Heidi and Richard Landers
Debbie Lane
Dawn Lawson
Peter Layde and Angela Carollo
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Kathleen Leary
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Laurie Levy and Steve Altarescu
The Levy Family Fund
Donna Robin Lippman
Harriet Lord and Bernard Banks
Anne Lovett
Nancy Lund
Rebekah Macfie
Kathryn Manchip
Gary Martin
John A. McCann
Nancy McClure
Jackie McElroy-Edwards and William Edwards
Rob and Rachel McKaughan
Marston C. Meador
Patrick Merloe
Melissa Miller
Erin Monoceros
Karen and Daniel Moran
Roxanne Nelson
Sara Nerken
David N. Neusner
Patricia and John Nickoll
Amanda and Jake O'Brien
Deborah O'Brien and Richard Seiter
Thomas and Jane Oliver
Marjorie Pak
Diane L. Paul
Cheryl K. Peterson
The Petrichor Family
Alesha Petrov
James Pflugrath and Lou Montana
Carl A. Pforzheimer
Steve Plevin
The Prentice Foundation
Helen and Dan Quinn
Nicholas Rabinowitz
Helenann Hirsch and Philip Recht
Frances K. Reid
Linda Bytof and Mark Renner
Michelle and James Rines
Ringtail Fund
Allen and Debra C. Roach
Paul Robie and Karen Young
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CarolAnn Sawyer
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Amy and Harry Schoening
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David Schroeder
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Madeleine Schwab
Irene Searles
Cynthia Sears
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The Robin Torrence Family
Rebecca Tushnet
Robert Ullman
Frances Varga
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Robin Wendler
Caroline West
Ann K. White
David Williams
Rick Wilson
Suzanne V. Wilson
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Christine Witzel
Tina Wood
Edward and Jan Woods
Leah Bishop and Gary Yale
Margaret Yeakel

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