Executive Override Faith Companion Action Guide 2026

A Faith-Centered Framework to Protect Our Elections By Sojourners and Protect Democracy

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OVERVIEW

Many people of faith and conscience share the conviction that, while far from perfect, representative democracy is the political system best equipped to safeguard universal rights, protect human dignity, and advance the common good. This potential is rooted in holding free and fair elections, which give every citizen a voice in shaping and influencing the issues and decisions that impact their lives. The freedom to vote, which has been highly contested throughout our nation's history, underpins almost all the other rights we hold dear in the United States.

Maintaining our democracy through accessible and fair elections is also a moral and religious issue, representing one of the most important ways we can honor the divine image or Imago Dei (Genesis 1:26-27) in every person. Elections also provide an essential way for us to restrain evil, combat injustice, and advance the common good by replacing and holding leaders accountable. As Reinhold Niebuhr famously said, "[Human] capacity for justice makes democracy possible, but [human] inclination to injustice makes democracy necessary."

Efforts to restrict or suppress voters or to subvert election outcomes constitute an assault on that very image and on democracy itself. That's why, as we approach this year's pivotal midterm elections, it's vitally important that we work together to protect every eligible voter's right to cast a ballot. However, ensuring that every qualified voter can vote is not sufficient to ensure that elections are conducted in a free, fair, and secure manner. Votes must also be accurately tabulated, reported, and certified before an election result is considered official.

Election Subversion

It's in this post-election day period that the threat of election subversion looms largest. In fact, pro-democracy advocates see election subversion as one of the greatest dangers to the 2026 midterms. Compared to past elections, the machinery of the federal government is being turned against our elections through lies of election fraud and law enforcement agencies being deployed to intimidate election officials and lay the groundwork for contesting results.

For those with religious beliefs, taking steps to prepare for, prevent, and stand against attempts to undermine elections is becoming a moral and spiritual duty. In Executive Override, Protect Democracy names three major ways in which election subversion is already occurring. Each of these strategies violates the moral teachings of many of our faiths and threatens our democracy.

Moral Rebuttal of Election Subversion

As a Christian organization, Sojourners offers moral rebuttals to election subversion rooted in multi-faith sacred principles and commitments.

- First,the Trump administration is spreading false narratives about widespread noncitizen voting to potentially justify overturning unfavorable election results.Psalm 34:13-14 teaches: "Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it." The Psalmist is not alone in this insight. Across religious traditions, from Islamic teachings on guarding the tongue to Hindu commitments to truthful speech (*Satya*), our words are understood as gateways to either life or harm.

- Second, the Trump administration is undermining democracy by suppressing political activity it doesn't like, manipulating election rules, and undoing civil rights protections. The Hebrew prophets have harsh words for rulers who use their power unjustly, like the prophet Isaiah says in Chapter 10: "Woe to those who make unjust laws, to those who issue oppressive decrees, to deprive the poor of their rights and withhold justice from the oppressed of my people, making widows their prey and robbing the fatherless." (v. 1-2) What Isaiah names, many other faith traditions also reject: the use of law as a tool of theft, exclusion, and control rather than as a shield for the vulnerable.

- Third, the administration is laying the groundwork to deny unfavorable election results by intervening to contest and reverse these outcomes. Christian scripture teaches the importance of respecting the rules and, by extension, abiding by the results when 2 Timothy 2:5 explains: "Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules." Christians are not alone in this conviction. Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, and other faith traditions also teach that power gained by breaking the rules that sustain communal life lacks true legitimacy. In these traditions, honor and authority rest on fidelity to just processes, even when those processes produce outcomes we do not prefer.

Protecting the Vote

Given this disturbing picture, what can people of faith do to defend not just the right to vote in this midterm election, but the election itself from the threat of subversion?

At Sojourners, we've asked ourselves that question, particularly through the lens of our nonpartisan election protection partnership with the Skinner Leadership Institute and the Georgetown Center on Faith and Justice called Faiths United to Save Democracy (FUSD). In 2022 and 2024, FUSD had three phases of work:

- A "Know Your Rights" and "What's at Stake" voter education phase to empower faith leaders and their congregations.
- A "We Are Watching" phase involving meetings with senior election officials to ensure they know we're monitoring developments and will hold them accountable for conducting free, fair, and safe elections.
- A poll chaplain/peacekeeper phase with hundreds of volunteers at vulnerable polling places across nine key states, providing a moral presence to de-escalate conflict and ensure voters can cast their ballots free of intimidation or interference.

The Post-Election Period

Now, in response to the escalating threat of election subversion in 2026, we've added a fourth phase focused on the post-election period, in which faith leaders will help ensure that every vote is counted and election results are respected.

This includes mobilizing and organizing with other key local leaders if local or state election officials refuse to count votes or certify election results, and being prepared to participate in noncooperation and mass mobilization activities to ensure a peaceful, lawful, and orderly transfer of power at all levels of government.

We know that people of faith can play a critical role in securing and defending the right to vote. Without abandoning that profoundly important work, we need the same kind of faithful response to evolving threats to our democracy through election subversion. I'm confident that people of faith and conscience working together can effectively counter election subversion in all its forms and ensure that in a year in which our nation commemorates its 250th birthday, the will of "we the people" prevails in our midterm elections and beyond.

–Rev. Adam Russell Taylor, President, Sojourners

Fight, Win, Prove, Enforce

A Faith-Focused Framework for Protecting the Midterm Election

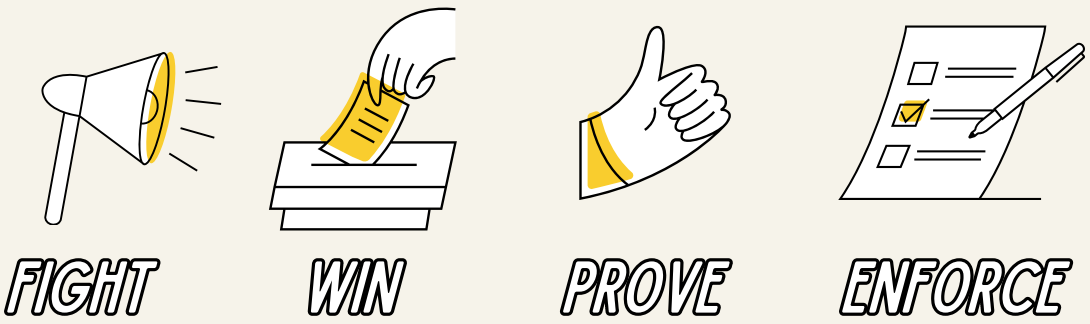
The faith community and its leadership have a unique opportunity to help civil society to be prepared for unprecedented federal interference. As trusted messengers, faith leaders will be relied upon to engage in truth-telling and to advocate for election integrity. Success will hinge in part on engaging cross-partisan and cross-pillar constituencies in society as essential partners in election protection. This work begins now.

This moment is different.

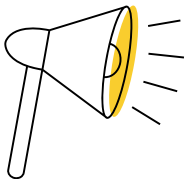
The need for election protection is not new. The right to vote was a central goal of the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. There have been initiatives that have protected people's right to vote in the 21st century. Each context has been different. In 2020, while the White House worked to overturn results, most of the federal government was still protecting elections. This year, every lever of federal power is poised to attempt to undermine a free and fair election through voter suppression and election subversion tactics and efforts. Faith communities can lead the fight to stop them, starting now.

> **"Faith communities can lead the fight to protect our civil rights and the integrity of our elections."**

We cannot ignore our current reality, nor can we afford to be consumed by the chaos. Our faith compels us to do the work of election protection grounded in the values and morals that honor all creation. Sojourners has created this tool for faith leaders looking for ways to join this essential pro-democracy work. What follows is a faith-rooted framework that provides concrete ways to protect everyone's right to vote and to ensure that those who are counted properly and respected.



The Faith-Rooted Fight, Win, Prove, Enforce Framework



FIGHT: The work to stop voter suppression and to protect our locally-controlled elections starts now.

Supporting those who are vulnerable and marginalized is a fundamental commitment shared across many faith and ethical traditions. In Islam, justice is a sacred duty: the Qur'an commands believers to "stand firmly for justice, as witnesses to God, even if it be against yourselves or your kin," and to reject oppression in all its forms. In Jewish and Christian Scriptures, we hear a similar call. The prophet Micah teaches that God requires us "to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8, NRSVUE), and Nehemiah urges communities facing threats and intimidation not to be afraid but to stand together and "fight for your kin, your sons, your daughters, your wives, and your homes" (Nehemiah 4:14, NRSVUE). Across these traditions, casting a ballot is not simply a personal choice; it is one concrete way of living out a shared mandate to protect the vulnerable, confront oppression, and work together for a just and compassionate society.

Ways to do this:

- Register to vote. Once you are registered to vote you can participate in voter registration drives. Teach people how to check their registration status and make any updates.

- Orient your leaders and communities to the immediate threat to our elections and the existential threat to our democracy.

- Work with local officials and other leaders and use your trusted voices in the community to combat supercharged conspiracy theories coming from the White House and its local enablers.

- Establish or strengthen relationships with election officials and other key actors who run elections. Offer support and encouragement early and often.
  - Attend election office open houses
  - Invite election officials to community spaces for Q&A sessions
  - Press election officials to develop contingency plans for federal interference

- Prepare to de-escalate political violence
  - For those who are able, sign up and train to participate in the Poll Chaplain/Peacekeeper program (turnoutsunday.com)
  - Provide or advertise nonviolence and de-escalation training for community members
  - Identify and train community leaders who can help de-escalate in the face of political violence
  - Prepare community response protocols

- More ways to do this continued on page 6...

More Ways to do this:

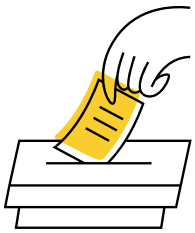
- Participate in scenario planning with other leaders in your community, such as labor unions, small business owners, and/or veterans organizations.

- Develop cross-partisan relationships, particularly in communities prone to election-related violence, to display shared commitment to democratic values.

- Stand in solidarity by participating in national and local mobilization activities.
- Help those who lack the proper identification to vote by connecting them with VoteRiders, a nonprofit organization that meets voters where they are and reduces barriers created by ID laws.

The Faith-Rooted Fight, Win, Prove, Enforce Framework

WIN: We all have a responsibility to Get Out the Vote, regardless of party or who's on the ballot.



This is not simply a political task; it is an act of resistance and an expression of faith and conscience. Across many traditions, strength and perseverance are given not for self-protection but for the care of others, especially in times of fear and division. In Islam, Judaism, Christianity, and beyond, people of faith are called to show up for their neighbors, to resist injustice, and to cultivate communities marked by peace, joy, and welcome. Christian Scripture joins this chorus when Paul writes that "we who are strong ought to put up with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves … for the good purpose of building up the neighbor," and when Galatians urges us not to "grow weary in doing what is right," trusting that a shared harvest will come if we do not give up. The harvest belongs to the whole community. We keep going.

Ways to do this:

Uphold the standard functioning of society, emphasizing participation as empowerment, joy as resistance, and trust in the community members who exercise local control on our elections.

- Ensure that everyone in your community knows about alternatives to in-person voting and the relevant deadlines (early voting, drop boxes, absentee ballots).
- Design or participate in accompaniment programs for people worried about going to the polls alone.
- Encourage people to become volunteer poll workers.
- Inform everyone in your community on how to get help and report election disputes through 1-800-866-VOTE.
- Train community leaders to understand the rules around:
  - Law enforcement at the polls;
  - Administrative issues at the polls;
  - Provisional ballots.

The Faith-Rooted Fight, Win, Prove, Enforce Framework

PROVE: Make the results of the election unquestionable. Together with other parts of civil society, communities of faith should support their local election officials as they count the vote and protect the results.

The integrity of election officers has historically been a bulwark of our democracy. Historically, the overwhelming majority of election officials of both major parties have proven to be trusted caretakers of this sacred task. Therefore, the work of protecting our elections does not end when the polls close. Communities of faith have a responsibility to stand alongside local election officials as they count every vote and certify every result, ensuring that the will of the people is honored. This is sacred work, requiring us to be anchored in truth.

Across Judaism, Islam, Christianity, and other traditions, truthfulness is not an abstract ideal but a communal responsibility: lies that distort public life are understood to harm the vulnerable first and most. Christian Scripture participates in this wider concern when Paul warns Timothy about people who "turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths," preferring teachers who tell them what they want to hear instead of what is right. In an age of disinformation, the calling of faith communities is to be a steady, truth-telling presence in the public square, refusing propaganda and conspiracy while holding fast to what is careful, verifiable, and just. We do not wander. We bear witness.

Ways to do this:

- Support ballot curing and other rapid response efforts to support proper election administration and ensure every eligible voter who casts a ballot is represented in the final count in the face of challenges to certification.
- Use your status as trusted leaders in the community to ensure that voters and community members receive trustworthy information about the election certification process.
- Be prepared to mobilize and organize with other key local leaders (such as neighborhood and community leaders, local business leaders, labor unions, and former elected officials) if local or state election officials refuse to certify the election.
- Add your voice where relationships with election officials and other "key actors" exist, urging adherence to established roles and rules to ensure the election is free and fair.

The Faith-Rooted Fight, Win, Prove, Enforce Framework

ENFORCE: Faith leaders and communities will play an important role in ensuring a peaceful transfer of power.

When the votes are counted and the results are certified, the work of the faith community is not finished. Many religious traditions call their people to help safeguard a peaceful transfer of power, standing as witnesses and guardians of the processes that protect human dignity and the common good. In Judaism, *shalom* is the absence of conflict and the wholeness that comes when relationships, communities, and systems are rightly ordered, while *mishpat*, or justice, is the concrete work of setting things right so that this deep peace can take root.

In Hindu traditions, the principle of *ahimsa*, or non-violence, calls practitioners to actively cultivate peace in thought, word, and deed, seeing true peace as the fruit of compassion and restraint rather than domination. In Islam and Christianity, teachings on salaam and peacemaking likewise insist that peace is an active, courageous presence in moments when the temptation toward disorder or violence is greatest. Drawing on this shared well of wisdom, we are called to show up as present, peaceable people who bear witness to a just and peaceful transfer of power.

Ways to do this:

- Engage privately and/or publicly with key decision-makers, elected officials, and other leaders to ensure they fulfill their roles in accordance with our democratic values.
- Use your trusted voice to support leaders who show courage and conviction in carrying out their duties, particularly those facing pressure to undermine our democratic process.
- Participate in non-cooperation and mass mobilization activities to ensure a peaceful, lawful, orderly transfer of power at all levels of government.

Conclusion

The Faith-Based Fight, Win, Prove, and Enforce Framework serves as a strategic resource that religious leaders can tailor to suit their specific circumstances. Throughout history, faith communities have been most faithful when they have stepped up to advocate for those who are pushed to the margins of society. Given the Supreme Court's recent decisions that continue to undermine the achievements of the 1965 Voting Rights Act, the need for immediate action has never been more pressing.

We hope that this framework will give leaders the courage and capacity to engage faithfully in the midterm elections and beyond, providing the moral witness needed to build the kind of communities God intends for us to live in.

To find out more about the Poll Chaplain/Peacekeeper initiative and other activities through FUSD, go to
www.turnoutsunday.com
For SojoAction's work, go to www.sojo.net/sojoaction
Email any questions to sojoaction@sojo.net

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