

# PRESS RELEASE

## CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT INTRODUCED TO CLOSE NONCITIZEN VOTING LOOPHOLE

*USCVA WOULD REQUIRE CITIZENSHIP FOR VOTING IN FEDERAL ELECTIONS*

**For Immediate Release:**

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**Contact:**

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Washington, D.C. - Congresswoman Laurel Lee (R-FL) introduced the United States Citizens Vote Amendment (USCVA) today. USCVA would amend the U.S. Constitution to require that voters in federal elections be citizens of the United States.

“We applaud Congresswoman Lee’s leadership,” said Avi Fortenberry, president of Americans for Citizen Voting, which has spearheaded the passage of 15 state constitutional amendments for citizen-only voting. “Americans for Citizen Voting enthusiastically endorses this amendment.

“Most people don’t realize that the Constitution has never required that voters be citizens of the United States,” said Avi Fortenberry, a naturalized citizen. “The Constitution says that the states decide who is eligible to vote in federal elections by whom they let vote in state legislative elections.”

Article 1, Section 2 and the 17th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution state that “Electors (for House and Senate) in each State shall have the Qualifications requisite for Electors of the most numerous Branch of the State Legislature.”

Fortenberry continued, “If a state were to allow legal non-citizen voting for their state legislature, then those non-citizens would automatically be eligible to vote in Congressional elections. The federal statute that prohibits non-citizens from voting in federal elections would be meaningless in this situation because the Constitution allows for this very thing.

“Non-citizen voting in federal elections was a common practice until the early 20th century. So, clearly the Constitution allows it.”

Article 2, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution also gives the states the power to let non-citizens vote in Presidential elections but the eligibility is not tied to state legislative election eligibility.

“An amendment to the Constitution is the only way to close this loophole,” said Fortenberry.

“This issue has 90% support - we hope Congress passes this amendment quickly and gets it out to the voters to ratify state by state.”

Unlike most constitutional amendments, USCVA would be ratified by a popular vote of the people. If voters in 38 states vote in the majority for the amendment, it will become part of the U.S. Constitution. This method of ratification has only been used once before with the ratification of the 21st Amendment in 1933.

“This is not the SAVE Act 3.0, this is something completely different. This might be the only issue that, here in the 250th year since the founding of our democracy, we can all agree on. If Congress does its job, each of us will get to cast a vote to amend the Constitution. Apple pie notwithstanding, I can’t think of anything more American than that,” concluded Fortenberry.

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## Americans for Citizen Voting & U.S. Citizens Vote Amendment

# About Us



### Mission Statement:

Our mission is to partner with legislators and grassroots advocates to amend state constitutions, affirming that voting rights are reserved exclusively for United States citizens.

### Founding:

Americans for Citizen Voting was founded by ballot measure expert and political thought leader and activist Paul Jacob in 2018 when he and his colleagues discovered a movement growing across the country that allows noncitizens to vote in municipal and school board elections.

The U.S. Citizens Vote Amendment project started in 2025 when the ACV team realized a similar gap between federal law, the U.S. Constitution, and the commonly held expectation that noncitizens are not allowed to vote in federal elections.

### State Citizen Only Voting Amendment Successes:

2018	North Dakota
2020	Ohio
2020	Louisiana
2024	Idaho
2024	Iowa
2024	Kentucky
2024	Missouri
2024	North Carolina
2024	Oklahoma
2024	South Carolina
2024	Wisconsin
2025	Texas

### On the Ballot in 2026:

Alaska (statute)  
Arkansas  
Kansas  
South Dakota  
West Virginia

### Social Media

[facebook.com/americansforcitizenvoting](https://facebook.com/americansforcitizenvoting)  
[x.com/foracv](https://x.com/foracv)  
[instagram.com/americans4citizenvoting/](https://instagram.com/americans4citizenvoting/)





## Frequently Asked Questions

### What does this amendment do?

Reserves voting in federal elections (President, Senate, House) exclusively for only U.S. citizens and assigns enforcement to the states.

### Isn't it already illegal for non-citizens to vote in federal elections?

Federal law prohibits non-citizen voting in federal elections. However, the Constitution ties federal voter eligibility to state rules for legislative elections, creating a loophole.

### What is the constitutional loophole?

If a state allows non-citizens to vote in state legislative elections, current constitutional language would allow them to vote in federal elections as well.

### Why is a constitutional amendment necessary?

A constitutional amendment would preserve our uniform system and prevent some states from allowing non-citizen voting in federal elections while others do not.

### Wouldn't federal laws like the SAVE Act solve this?

No. The SAVE Act seeks to prevent illegal non-citizen voting in federal elections. USCVA would prevent the legalization of non-citizen voting in federal elections. Without USCVA the citizenship verification measures of the SAVE Act would be meaningless if a state legalizes non-citizen voting in federal elections.

### What elections does this apply to?

Federal elections only: President, Vice President, U.S. Senate, and House of Representatives.

### Does this affect state or local elections?

No. States retain full authority over their own elections.

### Does this change who can vote today?

No. It clarifies and reinforces what most Americans already believe—that only U.S. citizens vote in federal elections.

### Will this create barriers for eligible voters?

No. The amendment does not impose new voter ID or documentation requirements.

### How would this be enforced?

States would enforce the requirement through their own election laws, with Congress retaining authority where applicable.

### Are non-citizens currently allowed to vote anywhere in the U.S.?

Yes. Approximately 20+ municipalities allow non-citizens to vote in local elections.

### Why address this now?

As more jurisdictions consider expanding non-citizen voting locally, the constitutional loophole becomes more relevant.

### What problem does this solve?

It prevents a state from automatically making non-citizens eligible to vote in federal elections if that state chooses to let non-citizens vote in state legislative elections.

### Is this a partisan issue?

No. This is a nonpartisan effort supported by 90% of Americans focused on constitutional clarity and election integrity.





**Americans for Citizen Voting & U.S. Citizens Vote Amendment**

## **LEADERSHIP**



**Avi Fortenberry – President, Americans for Citizen voting**

Avi Fortenberry was born in Brazil, a country rich in culture and tradition. When she was just 3 years old, her life took a remarkable turn. Her mother met an American man who was visiting Brazil on business. They met at work, and that encounter grew into a love that transcended borders. For three years, they exchanged heartfelt letters, bridging the distance between them.

In October 1988, her mother made the life-changing decision to move with Avi to the United States, where she married the man who has been a devoted father to Avi for the past 35 years.

Through this marriage, Avi and her mother received green cards, allowing them to live and work in the United States permanently. Avi grew up attending American schools and later built her career with American companies. She enjoyed a full and meaningful life—but there was one thing she could not do: vote.

The ability to participate in the democratic process—something many take for granted—was not available to her without formally pledging allegiance to the country she had come to love. During this time, Avi began to fully understand the significance of becoming a U.S. citizen.

At the age of 20, she began the journey toward American citizenship. The process was rigorous, requiring her to study the nation's history, values, and principles, as well as invest significant time and money. It also required her to renounce her citizenship from her country of birth and formally give her allegiance to the United States. Avi will never forget the pride she felt in making that commitment to this country.

At 21, Avi celebrated her naturalization surrounded by friends and loved ones. It was a moment of deep joy and gratitude—not only for the right to vote, but for the sense of duty and responsibility that came with it.





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## **LEADERSHIP**



**Avi Fortenberry – President, Americans for Citizen voting**

(~100 wds)

Avi Fortenberry was born in Brazil and came to the United States at age 3 when her mother married an American. Raised in the U.S., she built her life and career here but was unable to vote. That absence left a lasting impression, shaping her understanding of what citizenship truly means. At 20, she began the demanding naturalization process—studying American history, embracing its values, and renouncing her birth citizenship. At 21, she became a U.S. citizen. Avi carries a deep respect for citizenship, a principle that continues to guide her in her work.







## **Americans for Citizen Voting      &      U.S. Citizens Vote Amendment**

### **Citations**

Article I, Section 2 of the U.S. Constitution

Article I, Section 4 of the U.S. Constitution

Article 2, Section 1 of the U.S. Constitution

17th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

18 U.S. Code § 611

### **Quotes**

“Ensuring Americans have confidence in our election system is a top priority of mine, and one of the most effective ways we can do that is by guaranteeing that...only citizens are voting in federal elections because the vast majority of Americans believe that only U.S. citizens should vote in our elections ”

(Press release, following YEA vote on the SAVE Act in 2025)

**Laurel Lee (R) FL-15**

“The right to vote in American elections should be exclusive to American citizens. Requiring people to prove citizenship when registering to vote is a simple way to ensure that’s happening across the country,”

(Press release, following YEA vote on the SAVE Act in 2025)

**Jared Golden (D) ME-2**

“American elections should be for American citizens only.”

(Press release, following YEA vote on the SAVE Act in 2025)

**Bryan Steil (R) WI-1**

“I supported this bill because I believe in something simple: only American citizens should vote in American elections. That’s how we keep our democracy strong and ensure every vote counts how it should.”

(Statement given after YEA vote on the SAVE Act in 2025)

**Henry Cuellar (D) TX-28**

“Voting in this country is a sacred right that must solely be limited to American citizens.”

(Press release given after reintroducing the Citizen Ballot Protection Act in 2025)

**Katie Britt (R) U.S. Senate, AL**

“I believe that voting is a privilege that comes with being a U.S. citizen. As such, I do not think non citizens should vote in elections.”

(Press release given after YEA vote on HR882 (to eliminate noncitizen voting in Washington D.C.)in 2025)

**Jahana Hayes (D) CT-5**

“The right to vote, which is a cornerstone of our democracy, is a distinct honor and privilege granted to American citizens.”

(Press release given after reintroducing the Citizen Ballot Protection Act in 2025)

**Shelly Moore Capito (R) U.S. Senate, WV**

“I do not support noncitizens voting in American elections – and that’s common sense to folks in Southwest Washington. Voting in our nation’s elections is a sacred right belonging only to American citizens, and my vote for the SAVE Act reflects that principle.”

(Statement given after YEA vote on the SAVE Act in 2025)

**Marie Gluesenkamp Perez (D) WA-8**





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## **OFFICIAL PRESS CONTACT**



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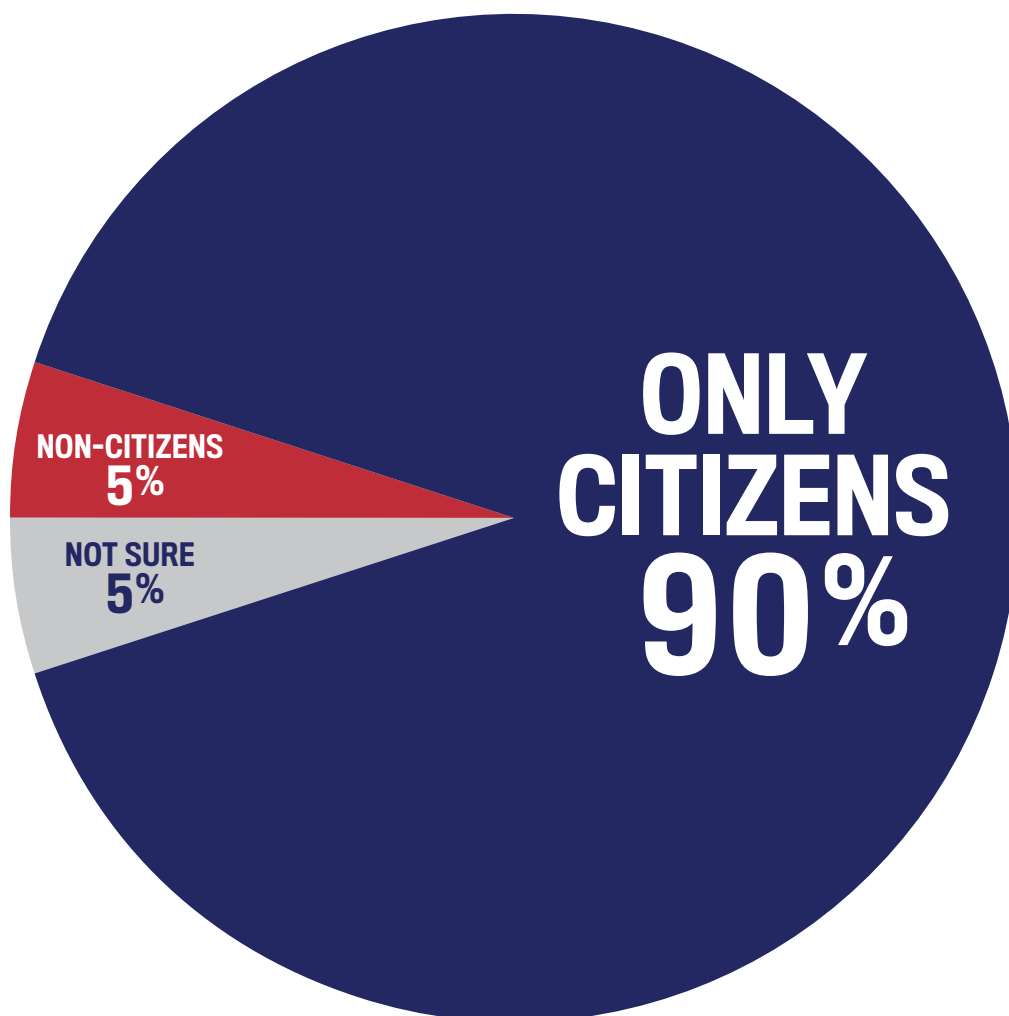
EMAIL: [jack@onlycitizens.vote](mailto:jack@onlycitizens.vote)

Contact Mr. Tomczak with informational inquiries, and with requests for interview with ACV President, **Avi Fortenberry** or ACV Chairman, **Paul Jacob**.

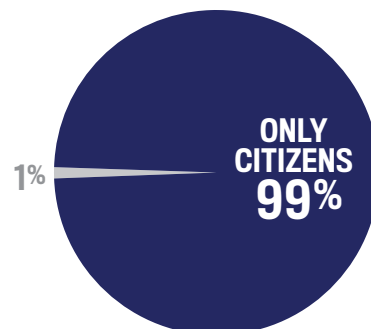


# POLLING: CITIZEN ONLY VOTING NATIONWIDE

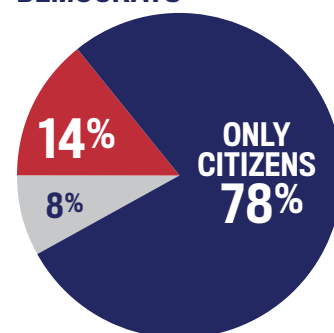
Do you believe that only U.S. citizens should be able to vote in elections for Congress and the President? Or do you believe that non-citizens should also have the right to vote in these national elections?



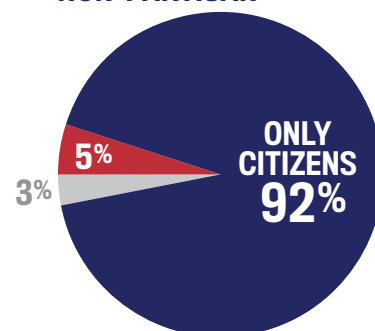
REPUBLICANS



DEMOCRATS



NON-PARTISAN



Survey conducted July 15–17, 2025. 1,011 likely voters participated in the survey. Survey weighted to match national turnout demographics. Margin of Error is  $\pm 3\%$  with a 95% level of confidence. Totals do not always equal 100% due to rounding.

Learn more about Citizen-Only Voting at:

# ONLYCITIZENS.VOTE

