

# RESTORE THE VOTE

America was founded on the principle of “no taxation without representation.” Our ability to choose our government without unnecessary restriction is fundamental to our democracy. But today, due to the greatly expanded scope of government through the criminal justice system, there are more than 47,000 Minnesotan citizens who live in the community but are barred from voting due to a felony conviction. This policy unnecessarily limits positive behavior and inclusion, which makes our communities less safe. Minnesota statutes should be changed so that, like in many other states, once someone is no longer incarcerated, they are eligible to vote.

When Minnesota was founded there were fewer than 75 felony crimes in statute. Just over 30 people were in prison, which amounts to about .02 percent of the voting population at that time. Today, there are 368 felony crimes in statute.

## HISTORY

Our country has an “over-criminalization” problem — and it’s getting worse. Prison and parole populations have skyrocketed in Minnesota, moving away from what our founders intended. When the Minnesota Constitution was written there was no system of probation or parole, which meant if a Minnesotan wasn’t in prison they could vote.

## WHO IS IMPACTED?

More than 47,000 Minnesotans and their families, of whom:

- An estimated 64% live in Greater Minnesota.
- 32,827 are White, 9,045 are African American, 2,822 are Hispanic and 2,765 are Native American.
- African American Minnesotans are seven times more likely to be disenfranchised than white Minnesotans.

## WHY CHANGE?

- We need to remove barriers to offenders re-integrating themselves into the community and living productive, crime-free lives. Voting is an indicator of one’s stake in the community. Public safety organizations like the Minnesota County Attorneys Association support this. They ensure people are held accountable, but once released from custody they want people to be positively engaging in their community.
- A broad cross-section of faith groups, valuing compassion and forgiveness, believe that our criminal justice system should be about not only about punishment, but also about justice. Once offenders have taken responsibility and are rehabilitated they should be restored to family and community, therefore able to be positive examples for their children.

**RESTORE**

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**VOTE MN**

For more information visit [www.restorethevotemn.org](http://www.restorethevotemn.org)

# RESTORE THE VOTE COALITION MEMBERS

## Public Safety/Legal/Government

Association of Minnesota Counties  
Conflict Resolution Center of Minnesota  
Legal Rights Center  
Minnesota Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers  
Minnesota Community Corrections Association  
Minnesota Corrections Association  
Minnesota County Attorneys Association  
State Public Defender

## Faith Based Organizations

CHUM Duluth  
ISIAIAH  
Jewish Community Action  
Jewish Community Relations Council of MN & Dakotas  
Joint Religious Legislative Coalition  
Metropolitan Interfaith Council on Affordable Housing  
Minnesota Catholic Conference  
Minnesota Council of Churches  
Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Social Justice Alliance  
Muslim American Society of Minnesota  
Transform Minnesota - The Evangelical Network  
Westminster Presbyterian Social Justice Ministry Team

## Direct Service Organizations

A Place at the Table  
African Immigrant Services  
American Indian OIC  
Amicus Services of Volunteers of America MN  
Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis  
EMERGE Community Development  
Goodwill/Easter Seals MN  
L.I.F.E. In Recovery  
Loaves and Fishes Community of Duluth  
Mad Dads Minneapolis  
MN Adult and Teen Challenge  
MN Community Action Partnership  
Minnesota Recovery Connection  
The Neighborhood Hub  
Northside Achievement Zone  
Open Access Connections  
SOAR Career Solutions  
St. Stephen's Human Services  
Summit OIC  
Twin Cities Rise!

## Civic Engagement and Advocacy Organizations

Advocates for Human Rights  
African American Leadership Forum  
ACLU of Minnesota  
Asian American Organizing Project  
Blue Republican Minnesota  
Children's Defense Fund-Minnesota  
Citizens for Election Integrity Minnesota  
Common Cause MN  
Council on Crime and Justice  
Growth & Justice  
Integrated Community Solutions, Inc.  
Land Stewardship Project  
League of Women Voters Minnesota  
Liberty Minnesota  
Minneapolis Urban League  
Minnesota AFL-CIO  
Minnesota Association of Professional Employees  
Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless  
Minnesota Council of Nonprofits  
Minnesota Council on Foundations  
Minnesota Innocence Project  
MN Neighborhoods Organizing for Change (NOC)  
MN Second Chance Coalition  
Minnesotans Standing Together to End Poverty  
MPIRG  
NAACP Minneapolis Branch  
NAACP St. Paul Branch  
People for the American Way  
Prison Policy Initiative  
R3 Collaborative  
Republican Liberty Caucus Minnesota  
Richfield Human Rights Commission  
SEIU Local 26  
SEIU Minnesota  
TakeAction Minnesota  
Ten25Fifty  
Voices for Racial Justice  
World Without Genocide

For more information, to get updates on voting restoration work, or to have your organization added to this list, contact Mark Haase, 612-819-0738, or [contact@restorethevotemn.org](mailto:contact@restorethevotemn.org)