

July 16, 2021

**Re: Center for American Progress Written Comment on FR DOC # 2021-12619**

Submitted via <https://www.regulations.gov/>.

To Whom It May Concern:

We write to submit a comment in response to the Request for Information (RFI) from the National Institute of Standards and Technology, Department of Commerce (NIST) regarding Executive Order 14019, *Executive Order On Promoting Access to Voting*, (EO 14019). EO 14019 charges NIST, in consultation with the Department of Justice, the Election Assistance Commission, and other agencies, with analyzing barriers to private and independent voting for people with disabilities, including access to voter registration, voting technology, voting by mail, polling locations, and poll worker training.

The [Center for American Progress](#) (CAP) is an independent non-partisan think tank committed to improving the lives of all Americans through bold, progressive ideas as well as strong leadership and concerted action. We conduct valuable research and engage in meaningful advocacy to identify and redress the myriad and intersecting ways that historic and current laws and policies perpetuate racial injustice and impede equitable opportunities for other underserved communities, including religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; women and girls; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.

Our comments (enclosed and linked below) arise from a new CAP report that urges improvements to voter accessibility. Specifically, the report describes numerous election-related hurdles that hinder or prevent disabled voters from participating fully in the democratic process. It examines barriers to registration and voting, including inaccessible polling places and voter registration offices; inadequate registration and voting accommodations; guardianship and anti-voting policies; and election information that is unreadable for some. Vote by mail poses problems for some disabled voters, as do insufficient accessible voting machines at in-person voting locations. Ultimately, CAP's report offers several recommendations for lawmakers at all levels of government that would substantially improve election accessibility for disabled voters.

The report urges policymakers to:

- Provide more federal funding for election administration.
- Conduct comprehensive accessibility audits on election systems with reform mandates.

- Adopt pro-voter policies and meaningful accessibility standards for elections.
- Rescind anti-voting rules and reform guardianship laws.
- Develop safe and accessible election technology.
- Crowdsource low- and no-cost accessible voting solutions.
- Enhance enforcement of federal voting laws.

The new report from the Center for American Progress can be found at [here](#).

Please do not hesitate to contact Danielle Root, [droot@americanprogress.org](mailto:droot@americanprogress.org), or Mia Ives-Ruble, [mivesruble@americanprogress.org](mailto:mivesruble@americanprogress.org), if you have any questions about this report or would like any additional information. Thank you for your time, and we look forward to continuing this discussion with you.

Sincerely,

Danielle Root  
Director of Voting Rights and Access to Justice  
Center for American Progress

Mia Ives-Ruble  
Director for Disability Justice Initiative  
Center for American Progress