

# Proposal for a MassDems Commission on Healthy Democracy

**THE OPPORTUNITY:** MassDems is at a position of historic strength. This provides us with an excellent opportunity to advance the health of democracy in Massachusetts, as standard setters for the nation in a time of crisis for democracy. We should seek to advance three principles:

*full inclusion* of BIPOC populations in democratic participation;  
*increased engagement* of voters in the Democratic party;  
*more competitive* elections.

**THE CHALLENGE:** Healthy democracy in Massachusetts needs attention on all three fronts:

***full inclusion***

- *BIPOC participation— in 2020 and 2022 US census data, voting registration rates for African American, Hispanic & Asian American voters came in below the national average;*
- *Our candidate ballot access process for statewide and federal offices is the most restrictive in the country.*

***increased engagement***

- *61% of MA voters are no longer in a party and only 29% of voters are currently enrolled in the Democratic party.*

***more competitive***

- *Massachusetts ranks near or at the bottom across the country with regard to our number of contested elections, and 68% of voters in a recent survey agreed with the statement: “Democracy would be stronger in Massachusetts if elections here were more competitive, with more candidates running at all levels, and more incumbents facing challenges.”*

**THE ACTION STEP:** MassDems can be a champion for democracy by establishing a [Commission for Healthy Democracy](#) to find solutions for inclusion, engagement, and competitiveness. This Commission will study the challenges; run focus groups, listening sessions, and conduct survey research; study best practices around the country; and source, explore, and develop solutions and shared targets and KPIs that would determine success on inclusion, engagement, and competition. The Commission would answer questions like:

- How do we increase registration for communities that have been marginalized?
- How do we take down barriers and roadblocks to people running for office while protecting candidate quality?
- How do we get more people to register as Democrats? What causes some people to choose unenrolled? What encourages people to or drives them away from the Democratic party?
- Should we be focusing on youth voters? If so, how?

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## *How Can You Help?*

1. Either individually or as a committee, please Sign-up via the Supporters Google Form: <https://tinyurl.com/SupportMassDemsCommission>
2. Please send an email message of support to:
  - a. MassDems Chair Steve Kerrigan; Executive Director, Joe Sherlock; and Senior Political Director, Nigel Simon at [contact@massdems.org](mailto:contact@massdems.org)
3. Please leave a voicemail of support at party headquarters: 617-939-0800
4. Please contact your representatives on the MassDems State Committee to share a message of support for the Proposal for a Commission on Healthy Democracy.
5. After you have completed these steps, please return to the Google form to record whom you contacted and when.

The key message to share is as follows:

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**For further information, please feel free to be in touch with Danielle Allen at [danielle@americatheindivisible.org](mailto:danielle@americatheindivisible.org) or 617 335 0169. Other committee members are Former Treasurer Steve Grossman and Mayor Nicole LaChapelle (Easthampton).**