
Law and Voter Turnout: A Summary

Year	Action	Significance
1870	15 th Amendment	Prohibited voter discrimination because of race
1913	17 th Amendment	Provided for popular election of US senators
1920	19 th Amendment	Prohibited voter discrimination because of sex
1944	<i>Smith v. Allwright</i>	Prohibited all white party primaries
1957	Civil Rights Act of 1957	Authorized Department of Justice to protect voting rights in the courts
1960	Civil Rights Act of 1960	Authorized courts of appoint referees to assist with voter registration
1961	23 rd Amendment	Allowed District of Columbia residents to vote in presidential elections
1964	24 th Amendment	Prohibited use of poll taxes in national elections
1965	Voting Rights Act of 1965	Suspended literacy tests; authorized federal voter registrars in 7 states
1966	<i>Harper v. Virginia State Board of Elections</i>	Prohibited poll taxes in any election
1970	Voting Rights Act of 1970	Lowered minimum voting age to 18 for federal elections; suspended state literacy tests; provided for uniform absentee voting rules
1971	26 th Amendment	Lowered minimum voting age to 18 for all elections
1972	<i>Dunn v. Blumstein</i>	Shortened duration of residency requirements for voting
1975	Voting Rights Act of 1975	Extended more provisions of the 1970 Act; sent federal voter registrars to 10 additional states; provided for use of bilingual ballots
1982	Voting Rights Act of 1982	Extended provisions of the earlier 1970 and 1975 Acts; allowed private parties to prove a voting rights violation using a “results” test
1993	National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (Motor Voter)	Required states to offer citizens the opportunity to register to vote when they apply for a driver’s license or visit other government agencies.
2001	<i>Hunt v. Cromartie</i>	Permitted majority – minority districts if race were not the “predominant factor” in drawing the district boundaries
2002	Help America Vote Act of 2002	Provided grants to states to upgrade from manual to electronic voting systems, to develop voter registration data bases, and make provisional voting possible