

Rock the Vote's Statement on the January 6th Attack on the United States of America

Rock the Vote issued the following statement by its president and executive director, Carolyn DeWitt, responding to the January 6th attack on the United States of America and how we, as a nation, move forward:

"Terrorists attacked the United States. These self-identified militia, white supremacists, and conspiracy theorists—inspired and beckoned to Washington, D.C. by Donald Trump and other GOP leaders—levied war on America attacking Congress, the first branch of the federal government.

They assaulted Capitol Police, and broke down doors and windows in an effort to violently impose their will on the heart of the United States democracy. The terrorists suspended active debate as Congress fulfilled its obligation under the Constitution. They took down the United States flag, flew the confederate battle flag—an enemy—in the Capitol, broke into and ransacked offices. They forced members of Congress and staffers to seek emergency refuge, evacuate, or hide under furniture or in barricaded offices. Their attack resulted in five deaths, dozens of hospitalizations and untold psychological trauma.

They waged war on Congress—its ability to function and its members. This attack was an act of treason, and those who participated are traitors to the United States of America.

We are grateful to the members of Congress and their staffs—public servants and our friends—who reassembled in the twilight hours to fulfill their Constitutional duty to certify election results and confirm the country's next President.

In a year of relentless tragedy and uncertainty, the American electorate, particularly marginalized, young voters, overcame barrier after barrier to use the most powerful nonviolent instrument to create change and country's future and overwhelmingly voted for President-elect Joe Biden, who won both the electoral and the popular vote by significant margins.

Despite definitive election results that were certified by state officials representing both major political parties, President Trump and several GOP elected officials created and fueled dangerous conspiracy theories and hate, and intimidated a need for belligerence that culminated in this attack. These elected officials must be held accountable. This is not partisan, this is patriotism.

Rock the Vote calls for the employment of Section 4 of the 25th Amendment to protect the United States of America from President Trump in his final days in office and the impeachment of President Trump to prevent Donald Trump from ever serving in public office in the future.

Rock the Vote calls on elected leaders and appointed officials who contributed to this violence through their rhetoric, actions, and inaction to resign or to be removed. Those who contributed to the sickening and perverted rhetoric that undermined the integrity of our elections are as guilty as the traitors who sought to overrun our government. Spineless officials with the power to tell the truth, but who acted as silent enablers, were complicit in this violent attack on America.

Rock the Vote calls for an investigation into the failed security that enabled a rebellious mob to engage in this insurrection when they marauded through the U.S. Capitol Building and assaulted the members of Congress, staff, and press inside. After the supporters of President Trump engaged in racial and ethnic violence in Charlottesville and armed occupation of the Michigan Capitol, the intention and threat posed by those asked to "stand back and stand by" was clear. Those with any direct or indirect power to have prevented this attack remain culpable for their roles in this insurrection and the real and present threat and danger it posed to the United States.

Rock the Vote reiterates its call for immediate justice and police reform. The response to this assault clearly laid bare the truth that there are two Americas—one that protects and gives aid or comfort to a violent mob of white vigilantes fueled by conspiracy theories and one that brutalizes and kills Black nonviolent marchers calling for justice in the murders of community members.

This shameful moment comes at the end of a dark chapter in a longer story of America's hypocrisy. A truth that we must confront and resolve, or risk further extremism and fractures by those who seek to divide us.

We must make America a democracy where we are with and for one another. Since our founding, anti-democracy elected officials have resented that power is held with The People—all people. They have manipulated our democracy suppressing marginalized voices, denying justice, and blocking reform that would strengthen democracy and better reflect The People's will. And, they have undermined the integrity of our elections. We witnessed the dangerous and heartbreaking consequences.

While imperfect, our democracy remains resilient. In the same week that a mob attacked the U.S. Capitol, voters in Georgia elected the state's first Black Senator and its first Jewish Senator in a runoff election that was implemented to protect white power. This election signaled a shift toward a new kind of power in a state marred by a long, ugly history of civil and voting rights abuses so recent that its state flag carried the confederate flag until 2004 and blatant voter suppression made national headlines in 2018. A coalition of organizations, predominantly led by Black women, carried on the tireless work of the civil and voting rights leaders before them to empower and organize underrepresented voices in the state to create a more true democracy.

Where leadership has failed us, everyday citizens have been forced to step in, whether marching in the streets demanding accountability for murders or organizing voters in states with suppressive tactics. But, creating a more true democracy should be the core responsibility of elected officials, just as calls for justice and truth should be led by those in power, even when it is not politically convenient. There is a higher standard for elected officials who have taken an oath and whose sacred duty is to uphold our Constitution and its democratic values.

If our elected leaders cannot uphold that oath and duty, we, the young people of this country, will demand they resign, be removed or we will vote them out with the power our Constitution bestowed to us—the vote. We will be here to empower and stand with this diverse generation who have inherited a broken country and will ultimately be responsible for the long, delicate road forward."

Our democracy depends on you.

Donate to Rock the Vote to help build young people's political power and increase their participation in our democracy.

Your support will help:

- Fight for the voting rights of young people
- Mobilize first-time voters using cutting-edge technology
- Educate young people about civics and the democratic process

Your support has never been more critical. Donate to Rock the Vote today.

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Rock the Vote is a nonpartisan nonprofit dedicated to building the political power of young people.

For 30 years, Rock the Vote has revolutionized the way we use pop culture, music, art, and technology to engage young people in politics and build our collective power.

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