

HR 12

Voter Empowerment Act of 2015

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: House

Policy Area: Government Operations and Politics

Introduced: Mar 19, 2015

Current Status: Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.

Latest Action: Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training. (Apr 29, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/12>

Sponsor

Name: Rep. Lewis, John [D-GA-5]

Party: Democratic • **State:** GA • **Chamber:** House

Cosponsors (187 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Del. Bordallo, Madeleine Z. [D-GU-At Large]	D · GU		Mar 19, 2015
Del. Norton, Eleanor Holmes [D-DC-At Large]	D · DC		Mar 19, 2015
Del. Plaskett, Stacey E. [D-VI-At Large]	D · VI		Mar 19, 2015
Del. Sablan, Gregorio Kilili Camacho [D-MP-At Large]	D · MP		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Adams, Alma S. [D-NC-12]	D · NC		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Aguilar, Pete [D-CA-31]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Ashford, Brad [D-NE-2]	D · NE		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Bass, Karen [D-CA-37]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Beatty, Joyce [D-OH-3]	D · OH		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Becerra, Xavier [D-CA-34]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Beyer, Donald S., Jr. [D-VA-8]	D · VA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Bishop, Sanford D., Jr. [D-GA-2]	D · GA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [D-OR-3]	D · OR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Bonamici, Suzanne [D-OR-1]	D · OR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Boyle, Brendan F. [D-PA-13]	D · PA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Brady, Robert A. [D-PA-1]	D · PA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Brown, Corrine [D-FL-5]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Brownley, Julia [D-CA-26]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Bustos, Cheri [D-IL-17]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Butterfield, G. K. [D-NC-1]	D · NC		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Capps, Lois [D-CA-24]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cárdenas, Tony [D-CA-29]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Carney, John C., Jr. [D-DE-At Large]	D · DE		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Carson, Andre [D-IN-7]	D · IN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cartwright, Matt [D-PA-17]	D · PA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Castor, Kathy [D-FL-14]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Castro, Joaquin [D-TX-20]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Chu, Judy [D-CA-27]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cicilline, David N. [D-RI-1]	D · RI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Clark, Katherine M. [D-MA-5]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Clarke, Yvette D. [D-NY-9]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Clay, Wm. Lacy [D-MO-1]	D · MO		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cleaver, Emanuel [D-MO-5]	D · MO		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Clyburn, James E. [D-SC-6]	D · SC		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cohen, Steve [D-TN-9]	D · TN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Connolly, Gerald E. [D-VA-11]	D · VA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Conyers, John, Jr. [D-MI-13]	D · MI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Costa, Jim [D-CA-16]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Courtney, Joe [D-CT-2]	D · CT		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Crowley, Joseph [D-NY-14]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Cuellar, Henry [D-TX-28]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Cummings, Elijah E. [D-MD-7]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Davis, Danny K. [D-IL-7]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DeFazio, Peter A. [D-OR-4]	D · OR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DeGette, Diana [D-CO-1]	D · CO		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DeLauro, Rosa L. [D-CT-3]	D · CT		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DelBene, Suzan K. [D-WA-1]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. DeSaulnier, Mark [D-CA-11]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Deutch, Theodore E. [D-FL-21]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Dingell, Debbie [D-MI-12]	D · MI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Doggett, Lloyd [D-TX-35]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Doyle, Michael F. [D-PA-14]	D · PA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Duckworth, Tammy [D-IL-8]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Edwards, Donna F. [D-MD-4]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Ellison, Keith [D-MN-5]	D · MN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Esty, Elizabeth H. [D-CT-5]	D · CT		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Fattah, Chaka [D-PA-2]	D · PA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Foster, Bill [D-IL-11]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Frankel, Lois [D-FL-22]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Fudge, Marcia L. [D-OH-11]	D · OH		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Gallego, Ruben [D-AZ-7]	D · AZ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Garamendi, John [D-CA-3]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Grayson, Alan [D-FL-9]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Green, Al [D-TX-9]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Green, Gene [D-TX-29]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Grijalva, Raúl M. [D-AZ-3]	D · AZ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Gutierrez, Luis V. [D-IL-4]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Hahn, Janice [D-CA-44]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Hastings, Alcee L. [D-FL-20]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Heck, Denny [D-WA-10]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Higgins, Brian [D-NY-26]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Honda, Michael M. [D-CA-17]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Hoyer, Steny H. [D-MD-5]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Huffman, Jared [D-CA-2]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Jackson Lee, Sheila [D-TX-18]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Jeffries, Hakeem S. [D-NY-8]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Johnson, Eddie Bernice [D-TX-30]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Johnson, Henry C. "Hank," Jr. [D-GA-4]	D · GA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kaptur, Marcy [D-OH-9]	D · OH		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Keating, William R. [D-MA-9]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kelly, Robin L. [D-IL-2]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kennedy, Joseph P., III [D-MA-4]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kildee, Daniel T. [D-MI-5]	D · MI		Mar 19, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Kilmer, Derek [D-WA-6]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kind, Ron [D-WI-3]	D · WI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Kirkpatrick, Ann [D-AZ-1]	D · AZ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Langevin, James R. [D-RI-2]	D · RI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Larsen, Rick [D-WA-2]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Larson, John B. [D-CT-1]	D · CT		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lawrence, Brenda L. [D-MI-14]	D · MI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lee, Barbara [D-CA-13]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lieu, Ted [D-CA-33]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Loebsack, David [D-IA-2]	D · IA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lofgren, Zoe [D-CA-19]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lowenthal, Alan S. [D-CA-47]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lowey, Nita M. [D-NY-17]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lujan Grisham, Michelle [D-NM-1]	D · NM		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lujan, Ben Ray [D-NM-3]	D · NM		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Lynch, Stephen F. [D-MA-8]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Maloney, Carolyn B. [D-NY-12]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Maloney, Sean Patrick [D-NY-18]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Matsui, Doris O. [D-CA-6]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. McCollum, Betty [D-MN-4]	D · MN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. McDermott, Jim [D-WA-7]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. McGovern, James P. [D-MA-2]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. McNerney, Jerry [D-CA-9]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Meeks, Gregory W. [D-NY-5]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Meng, Grace [D-NY-6]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Moore, Gwen [D-WI-4]	D · WI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Moulton, Seth [D-MA-6]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Murphy, Patrick [D-FL-18]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Nadler, Jerrold [D-NY-10]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [D-CA-32]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Neal, Richard E. [D-MA-1]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Nolan, Richard M. [D-MN-8]	D · MN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Norcross, Donald [D-NJ-1]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. O'Rourke, Beto [D-TX-16]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Pallone, Frank, Jr. [D-NJ-6]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Pascrell, Bill, Jr. [D-NJ-9]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Payne, Donald M., Jr. [D-NJ-10]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Pelosi, Nancy [D-CA-12]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Perlmutter, Ed [D-CO-7]	D · CO		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Peters, Scott H. [D-CA-52]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Pingree, Chellie [D-ME-1]	D · ME		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Pocan, Mark [D-WI-2]	D · WI		Mar 19, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Polis, Jared [D-CO-2]	D · CO		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Price, David E. [D-NC-4]	D · NC		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Quigley, Mike [D-IL-5]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Rangel, Charles B. [D-NY-13]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Rice, Kathleen M. [D-NY-4]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Richmond, Cedric L. [D-LA-2]	D · LA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Roybal-Allard, Lucille [D-CA-40]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Ruiz, Raul [D-CA-36]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Ruppersberger, C. A. Dutch [D-MD-2]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Rush, Bobby L. [D-IL-1]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sánchez, Linda T. [D-CA-38]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sanchez, Loretta [D-CA-46]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sarbanes, John P. [D-MD-3]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Schakowsky, Janice D. [D-IL-9]	D · IL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [D-CA-28]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Schrader, Kurt [D-OR-5]	D · OR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Scott, David [D-GA-13]	D · GA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Scott, Robert C. "Bobby" [D-VA-3]	D · VA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Serrano, Jose E. [D-NY-15]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sewell, Terri A. [D-AL-7]	D · AL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sherman, Brad [D-CA-30]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Sires, Albio [D-NJ-8]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Slaughter, Louise McIntosh [D-NY-25]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Smith, Adam [D-WA-9]	D · WA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Speier, Jackie [D-CA-14]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Swalwell, Eric [D-CA-15]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Takai, Mark [D-HI-1]	D · HI		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Thompson, Bennie G. [D-MS-2]	D · MS		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Thompson, Mike [D-CA-5]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Titus, Dina [D-NV-1]	D · NV		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Tonko, Paul [D-NY-20]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Torres, Norma J. [D-CA-35]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Tsongas, Niki [D-MA-3]	D · MA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Van Hollen, Chris [D-MD-8]	D · MD		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Vargas, Juan [D-CA-51]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Veasey, Marc A. [D-TX-33]	D · TX		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Velazquez, Nydia M. [D-NY-7]	D · NY		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Visclosky, Peter J. [D-IN-1]	D · IN		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Wasserman Schultz, Debbie [D-FL-23]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Waters, Maxine [D-CA-43]	D · CA		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Watson Coleman, Bonnie [D-NJ-12]	D · NJ		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Welch, Peter [D-VT-At Large]	D · VT		Mar 19, 2015

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Rep. Wilson, Frederica S. [D-FL-24]	D · FL		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Yarmuth, John A. [D-KY-3]	D · KY		Mar 19, 2015
Resident Commissioner Pierluisi, Pedro R. [D-PR-At Large]	D · PR		Mar 19, 2015
Rep. Davis, Susan A. [D-CA-53]	D · CA		Mar 25, 2015
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [D-NY-16]	D · NY		Mar 25, 2015
Rep. Gabbard, Tulsi [D-HI-2]	D · HI		Mar 25, 2015
Rep. Vela, Filemon [D-TX-34]	D · TX		Mar 25, 2015
Rep. Walz, Timothy J. [D-MN-1]	D · MN		Mar 25, 2015
Rep. Farr, Sam [D-CA-20]	D · CA		Apr 16, 2015
Rep. Graham, Gwen [D-FL-2]	D · FL		Apr 16, 2015
Rep. Bera, Ami [D-CA-7]	D · CA		May 21, 2015
Rep. Levin, Sander M. [D-MI-9]	D · MI		Jun 23, 2015
Rep. Takano, Mark [D-CA-41]	D · CA		Apr 12, 2016
Rep. Capuano, Michael E. [D-MA-7]	D · MA		Apr 26, 2016
Rep. Delaney, John K. [D-MD-6]	D · MD		Apr 26, 2016
Rep. Himes, James A. [D-CT-4]	D · CT		May 27, 2016
Rep. Ryan, Tim [D-OH-13]	D · OH		May 27, 2016
Rep. Eshoo, Anna G. [D-CA-18]	D · CA		Jun 14, 2016
Rep. Israel, Steve [D-NY-3]	D · NY		Jun 14, 2016
Rep. Hinojosa, Ruben [D-TX-15]	D · TX		Jul 14, 2016

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Committee on House Administration	House	Referred To	Mar 19, 2015
Education and Workforce Committee	House	Referred to	Apr 29, 2015
Judiciary Committee	House	Referred to	Apr 21, 2015
Oversight and Government Reform Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 19, 2015
Science, Space, and Technology Committee	House	Referred To	Mar 19, 2015
Veterans' Affairs Committee	House	Referred to	Mar 27, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Government Operations and Politics

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 S 3309	Related bill	Sep 12, 2016: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration.
114 S 1139	Related bill	Apr 30, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration.
114 S 1088	Related bill	Apr 27, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on Rules and Administration.
114 HR 1556	Related bill	Apr 21, 2015: Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice.
114 HR 1617	Related bill	Mar 25, 2015: Referred to the House Committee on House Administration.
114 S 457	Related bill	Feb 11, 2015: Read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary.
114 HR 411	Related bill	Jan 20, 2015: Referred to the House Committee on House Administration.

Voter Empowerment Act of 2015

Voter Registration Modernization Act of 2015

Amends the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (NVRA) to require states to make available websites for online voter registration.

Authorizes automated voter registration of certain individuals and establishes other initiatives to promote voter registration, such as same-day registration and voter registration of individuals under 18 years of age.

Amends the federal criminal code to prohibit hindering, interfering with, or preventing voter registration.

Amends the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) to establish requirements for states to promote access to voter registration and voting for individuals with disabilities, including a single office for providing related information.

Directs the Election Assistance Commission (EAC) to make grants for pilot programs enabling individuals with disabilities to register to vote and vote privately and independently at their own residences.

Reauthorizes the program of grants to state and local governments to assure voting access for individuals with disabilities.

Prohibits state or local election officials from preventing an individual from registering or voting in any federal election (voter caging), or from permitting a formal challenge under state law to an individual's registration status or eligibility to vote.

Prohibits a person from knowingly and willfully attempting to or depriving or defrauding the residents of a state of the right to vote by the communication of election-related information that is known to be materially false, fictitious, or fraudulent. Increases the penalty for voter intimidation.

Declares that the right of a U.S. citizen to vote in any federal election shall not be denied or abridged because of a criminal conviction unless he or she is serving a felony sentence in a correctional institution at the time of the election.

Requires each state to notify an individual convicted of a criminal offense under state law, upon release from state custody or upon sentence to probation, of the right to vote in a federal election.

Voter Confidence and Increased Accessibility Act of 2015

Revises requirements for the audit capacity of voting systems, particularly those for a permanent paper record.

Requires the voting system to require the use of an individual, durable, voter-verified paper ballot of the voter's vote that shall be marked and made available for inspection by the voter before the vote is cast and counted, and which shall be counted by hand or read by an optical character recognition device or other counting device. Requires the system to provide an opportunity to correct any system-made error in the voter-verified paper ballot before it is permanently preserved.

Requires the National Science Foundation to make grants for the study and development of accessible ballot voting, verification, and casting mechanisms and devices and best practices to enhance the accessibility of paper ballot voting

and verification mechanisms for individuals with disabilities, those whose primary language is not English, and those with difficulties in literacy.

Requires each state, except when the winning candidate had no opponent or received 80% or more of the votes, to administer audits of federal election results, without advance notice, consisting of random hand counts of the voter-verified paper ballots.

Prohibits certification of election results until completion of audits.

Adds requirements for counting provisional ballots. Requires each state to allow early voting and facilitate voting by mail.

Amends the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act to extend the guarantee of voting residency to family members of absent military personnel.

Revises absentee ballot procedures concerning applications, transmission, and overseas voters.

Entitles to leave a federal employee who serves as a poll worker.

Directs the EAC to make grants for poll-worker recruitment and training and develop materials for a model program.

Makes available to any person aggrieved by a violation of uniform and nondiscriminatory election technology and administration requirements the option to file a complaint with the Department of Justice (DOJ) or pursue a private right of action.

Amends the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 to make it unlawful for a chief state election administration official, unless he or she or a family member is a candidate, to take an active part in political management or in a political campaign for federal office over which such official has supervisory authority.

Treats universities as voter registration agencies.

Establishes minimum notification requirements regarding voters affected by polling place changes.

Directs DOJ to: (1) coordinate the establishment of a state-based response system for responding to questions and complaints from individuals voting or seeking to vote, or registering to vote or seeking to, in federal elections; (2) establish and operate a toll-free telephone service to connect directly to such response system; and (3) appoint a Voter Hotline Task Force.

Makes NVRA and HAVA requirements applicable to the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Reauthorizes and extends the EAC and repeals its exemption from certain contracting requirements.

Actions Timeline

- **Apr 29, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.
- **Apr 21, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on the Constitution and Civil Justice.
- **Mar 27, 2015:** Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.
- **Mar 19, 2015:** Introduced in House
- **Mar 19, 2015:** Referred to the Committee on House Administration, and in addition to the Committees on the Judiciary, Science, Space, and Technology, Veterans' Affairs, Oversight and Government Reform, and Education and the Workforce, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned.