

Introduction: Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote 2012

The most important political office is that of the private citizen. ~ Justice Louis Brandeis

For decades, NCJW members and supporters across the country have worked to encourage civic engagement by registering voters, educating communities, and getting out the vote on Election Day. NCJW advocates have also long pursued the expansion and protection of voting rights for historically disenfranchised individuals and communities through the suffrage movement, the struggle to end poll taxes, the campaign to pass the Voting Rights Act, and the effort to change the voting age to 18, among other efforts.

In recent years, election irregularities and policies that disenfranchise whole groups of voters have increased and become more insidious. As a result, NCJW has responded by renewing our efforts to protect voting rights and ensure laws and policies that facilitate voter participation.

The *2012 Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote Resource Guide* is designed to help NCJW sections, members, and supporters continue the legacy of voter registration, education, and protection that has been the hallmark of NCJW for many decades. This year's guide includes planning tips, activity ideas, resources, and information to help you make a difference in the upcoming 2012 election. Please use this guide to promote and protect the vote in your community, and regularly visit www.ncjw.org/vote for updates, additional resources, training opportunities, and more.

As you develop and implement your plans, please remember that the NCJW Washington office is available to provide additional resources and technical assistance. **Because of our tax-exempt status, NCJW and its sections are subject to certain restrictions on election-related activities. As a result, it is critical that any Promote the Vote, Protect the Vote activities you undertake be vetted in advance with the Washington office to ensure compliance.** Contact: Sammie Moshenberg (sammie@ncjwdc.org or 202 296 2588 x 1), Elissa Froman (elissa@ncjwdc.org or 202 296 2588 x 3), or Lindsay Morris (lindsay@ncjwdc.org or 202 296 2588 x 6) to get approval for your plans and to share the work that you are doing in your community.

Together, we can ensure that, in 2012, every eligible voter is able to vote, and every vote cast is counted.