



October 6, 2020

The Honorable Laurel Lee, Secretary of State
Florida Department of State
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Honorable Ron Desantis, Governor of Florida
The Capitol
400 S. Monroe St.
Tallahassee, FL 32399

Dear Governor Desantis, and Secretary Lee,

Yesterday was supposed to be a celebration for returning citizens all across Florida, as people registered to vote. Unfortunately, returning citizens throughout Florida, including the dozens who personally informed our organization that they experienced a shut down of the Florida Online Voter Registration (“OVR”) system for hours this evening, making it impossible for prospective voters to register to vote on this final day of voter registration for the November 3, 2020 general election.

I am writing to respectfully request that you extend the deadline for voter registration for two days, until 11:59, October 7th, 2020.

The problems with the voter registration system are well known, and something that deserves attention. More important than that, however, are the people impacted by the outages. The men and women across this state who went to work and came home with the intent to register as voters in our state were denied because a website was not working properly. We can do better. Our democracy is sacred and we need to do everything possible to ensure that people’s voices are being heard. We have extended voter registration in the past when people’s ability to register was hindered. That is why FRRC is joining a chorus of others across the state and country in asking you to extend the deadline for voter registration.

I believe it is critical that voters have every opportunity to register to vote in an easy and timely manner. This is particularly important due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has made the opportunity for safe, contactless voter registration all the more important. Once again, I am respectfully requesting that your office immediately take the following steps:



- 1) Extend the book closing deadline to 11:59 p.m. on October 7, 2020 in all 67 Florida counties, permitting voters to submit registration applications online and on paper, including at Supervisors of Elections offices, driver license offices, all NVRA agencies, and any other sites that offers voter registration services.
- 2) Extend the days and hours that your office's technical support hotline for voters remains open until 11:59 p.m. on October 7, 2020, so that voters may obtain assistance with submitting a registration application or updating their registration online. Hotline operators should be available to answer questions from voters in both English and Spanish.
- 3) Communicate to voters through social media, television, and radio public service announcements (PSA's), the press, and other channels about their right to register to vote until October 7, 2020 at any public office that offers voter registration services, including those that are not in their home county. This outreach should be conducted in English and in Spanish.

Florida's voters deserve to have their voices heard. This is true for Florida's returning citizens, and voters throughout the state. To ensure their safety and that they can be certain they have a voice in this election it is vital that your office give voters across the state more time to register to vote, no matter where they live, ensuring voters in all counties have fair and equitable access to the ballot.

Sincerely,

Desmond Meade

Desmond Meade
Executive Director
Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

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About The Florida Rights Restoration Coalition

FRRC is a grassroots, membership organization run by Returning Citizens (Formerly Convicted Persons) who are dedicated to ending the disenfranchisement and discrimination against people with convictions and creating a more comprehensive and humane reentry system that will enhance successful reentry, reduce recidivism, and increase public safety. For more information, visit <https://floridarrc.com/>.