Disenfranchisement of Felons

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Our Mission

There has been a decrease in voter turnout in Philadelphia. There are certain issues that correlate to this decline. Our group decided to focus on the disenfranchisement of felons because felons don’t realize their ability to vote.
Our Mission

While completing the Committee Seventy survey, we encountered a person who told us that because he was a felon, he couldn’t vote therefore couldn’t take our survey. If more people knew that they were eligible for voting, then the number of voters showing up on Election Day would definitely increase.
Current System

People who are not allowed to vote:

  Felons who are currently in jail and will not be released before Election Day
  -or-
  Someone who has broken an election law in the past 4 years
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania made a ruling on December 26, 2000:

It was unconstitutional to have felons wait 5 years after release to register to vote.

If completing an older version of Voter Registration Mail Application (VRMA), the convicted felon can just strike the felony conviction line.
Not Many People Know Felons Can Vote

Felons are sometimes ostracized in a community, therefore do not know their rights. Along with the facts that the law was changed recently and people don’t focus in municipal rulings, more people need to know they can fill their responsibility as a citizen.
Since not many people, including felons, to increase voter turnout we can raise awareness of felons’ voting rights. We propose, setting up billboards, ads, and posters in public areas such as train stations and highways that would raise awareness of the fact that felons CAN vote. The following slides are examples of the posters that can be placed for people to learn their rights.
In Pennsylvania, felons can vote, as soon as they are released from prison.
Know Your Rights
Increase Felon Voter Turnout

New Learning Workshops
Workshops are now available to learn everything to be prepared for the next Election Day

1. Learn to Fill Ballots
2. Register to Vote
3. Find Your Ward
4. Find Your Polling Place
In Pennsylvania felons can vote when released from prison.
Workshops

In addition to raising awareness through posters and ads, we would also run workshops that informed felons on key voting information. Workshops will be set up for felons in community centers around Philadelphia as well as prisons themselves for those who get released close to Election Day.
Workshops

The convicted felons will be taught:

- How to register
- How to fill a ballot
- What ward they belong to
- The polling place within their district

We would also teach felons about each office and what it entails. As Election Day approaches we will also provide them resources so they can do their own research on each candidate. We not only want voters but informed voters!
This workshop will be able to help raise voter turnout in Philadelphia by raising ex-con awareness of Pennsylvania voting policies. There are former convicts in the city that are under the impression that they cannot vote because they have served a prison sentence. With the help of this workshop ex-cons will have the tools and necessary skills to be active voters.


We used this source to find what the different voting laws in each state were. We used this information in one of our posters.

We used this source to find examples of different types of felonies.

We used this source to find rules for felon voting eligibility.