



Lessons from 2025 and the Path to Protecting Voters in 2026

A Voter Protection Corps Report, January 20, 2026

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Executive Summary

The 2025 elections underscored a new reality for American democracy: nonpartisan voter protection efforts will fail if they focus exclusively on election day monitoring.

While most voters in 2025 were ultimately able to cast a ballot, the cycle revealed structural vulnerabilities that demand earlier, more sustained intervention ahead of the 2026 midterms.

On one level, the 2025 elections were a success from a voter protection perspective. With only isolated exceptions, eligible voters across the country were able to register, vote, and have their votes counted. In the high-profile state elections in Virginia and New Jersey—where Voter Protection Corps (VPC) was active—voting proceeded relatively smoothly.

At the same time, the 2025 elections revealed important weaknesses in the current voter protection ecosystem. While many election-day problems were successfully resolved, other

threats to voters emerged earlier in the cycle, moved faster than traditional response mechanisms, and spread through digital channels that most voter protection programs are not yet structured to monitor or counter effectively.

The 2025 elections were not a stress test—but they were a warning. They showed that while election-day voter protection systems can still function, the most serious threats to voter access and election integrity are emerging earlier, moving faster, and operating outside the traditional scope of election-day response. As we look ahead to the pivotal 2026 midterm elections, this post-election analysis draws on lessons from VPC’s 2025 work and decades of voter protection experience to identify where the field must adapt.

The central lesson of 2025 is that election-day readiness alone is no longer sufficient. Protecting voters in 2026 will require earlier investment, sustained state-level capacity, and a shift from reactive crisis response to preventive voter protection infrastructure.

Top Recommendations

1. Invest in early, state-level voter protection staffing.

Many of the most consequential barriers facing voters—ballot design decisions, voter roll maintenance, mail ballot rules, polling place capacity/consolidation, and disinformation preparedness—are determined months before Election Day. A boom-and-bust staffing model leaves voter protection programs unable to adequately influence these decisions in sufficient time.

2. Provide Early and Accessible Volunteer Opportunities.

Create ways for volunteers to plug into campaign efforts both in-person and remotely to keep the volunteer networks meticulously cultivated during previous campaigns engaged. Robust opportunities for remote volunteers to help with things like voter role purge “chase” and mis- and disinformation monitoring online help expand staff capacity during campaign down times when time and resources are stretched thin.

3. Treat social media monitoring as core election infrastructure.

As voters increasingly rely on social media and digital platforms for election information, continuous monitoring is essential to identify emerging anti-voter narratives before they take hold and spread widely. Social media monitoring is also a good opportunity to engage volunteers.

4. Build and sustain trusted messenger and prebunking networks.

Corrective information is most effective when delivered by messengers voters already trust. Early investment in community-based communicators and prebunking strategies can reduce the impact of predictable mis- and disinformation before voters encounter it.

5. Engage early on ballot design and mail ballot rules.

Ballot layout, signature verification standards, and technical mail ballot requirements are typically finalized well in advance of voting. The new USPS postmark rule will require a new voter education campaign for how mail in ballots are processed. If problems are not addressed early, they are often impossible to fix close to Election Day.

6. Work with election officials to prevent long lines and capacity bottlenecks.

Long lines are one of the most prevalent and preventable forms of voter suppression. Staffing, materials, polling place layout, and parking constraints can be identified and addressed proactively using data from prior elections.

7. Institutionalize learning and pursue proactive purge-chase strategies.

Voter protection efforts must preserve institutional memory across cycles and proactively assist eligible voters who have been improperly removed from voter rolls. These strategies are highly effective but require early planning and sustained engagement.

Accomplishing these recommendations requires a necessary shift in how voter protection work is conceived and resourced. The most serious threats to voters now emerge earlier, move faster, and operate across digital and administrative systems simultaneously. The 2026 midterms demand a proactive, state-specific, and year-round voter protection infrastructure capable of preventing harm—not merely responding to it.

How this report is organized

We begin with the broader context shaping modern voter protection work, then summarize VPC's 2025 work in Virginia and New Jersey. We then present key observations from 2025—what we saw on the ground and online—and the implications for 2026. We conclude with a set of actionable recommendations designed to shift voter protection from late-cycle crisis response to early, state-specific prevention and infrastructure.

Note on evidence: This report draws on VPC's direct participation in statewide voter protection coalitions, incident tracking and social media monitoring conducted during the 2025 elections, and publicly available reporting and documentation cited where relevant. Where we describe broader national trends, we distinguish between observed incidents in 2025 and forward-looking risk assessments for 2026.

Background and Context

Voter suppression and structural barriers to voting are as old as our nation itself. The first presidential election between John Adams and Thomas Jefferson was notoriously dishonest. And in the many elections since then, we have seen numerous efforts to suppress the votes of certain populations – often, though not always, targeted at people of color, young people, language minorities, and people who have recently immigrated to the United States.

Nevertheless, the challenges eligible voters face in seeking to register, vote, and have their votes count shift over time. In the 2000 election, poor ballot design and election equipment flaws may have changed the course of history. In other recent elections, we have seen disproportionately long lines – particularly in districts with high concentrations of voters of color and student voters – impose structural barriers in certain communities. The increase in popularity of mail-in voting has made it easier to cast a ballot for many voters, but it has also presented new challenges for election administration that have sometimes led to unfair obstacles. Overt voter suppression, cyberattacks, and political violence, while relatively rare, continue to pose challenges as well.

In recent years, the ways that voters get their news and make decisions about their electoral choices has shifted dramatically. As more and more voters get their news from social media, mis- and disinformation have created a new set of voter protection challenges. Increasingly aggressive personalized data collection, combined with the rise of generative Artificial Intelligence, make it easier to spread persuasive deceptive messaging.

Modern elections are also characterized by new threats to elections from foreign actors, dramatic changes in the relationship between the federal executive branch and state-administered elections, high-stakes election-related litigation, and aggressive redistricting efforts in multiple states.

Over the past several elections, a coalition of pro-democracy voter protection actors have emerged that seek to make it easier for eligible voters to register, vote, and have their votes count. These actors range from campaigns and parties themselves to 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) nonprofit organizations at both the national and state levels, and in some cases labor unions. The techniques used by voter protection organizations have generally included an effort to recruit, train, and deploy election day monitors. The best efforts also include year-round efforts to work with local election officials and sometimes legislators to identify and address emerging threats to voters that are not easily remedied on election day or in the early-voting windows.

The Voter Protection Corps (VPC) was founded in 2020 as a coalition of veteran voter protection experts working to ensure that all eligible voters can register, vote, and have their votes count. Over the past few elections, we have worked with state and local groups in targeted jurisdictions to help predict and address challenges voters are likely to face.

Against this backdrop, the 2025 elections provided an important real-world test of how these dynamics are playing out today.

Virginia and New Jersey

In 2025, Voter Protection Corps partnered with nonpartisan voter protection coalitions in Virginia and New Jersey to provide targeted support, filling critical capacity gaps in close collaboration with state and local partners.

Virginia

In Virginia, VPC joined the Virginia Election Protection Coalition and identified a significant gap in the coalition’s ability to monitor and respond to online mis- and disinformation. In response, VPC provided specialized expertise and quickly mobilized resources to strengthen the coalition’s digital voter protection capacity. VPC engaged an external expert to deliver free training sessions for coalition leaders, staff, and volunteers on election-related mis- and disinformation—how to identify it, assess its potential impact, and respond without amplifying harmful content.

Through this effort, VPC trained approximately 50 participants and built and deployed a team of seven trained monitors to conduct real-time social media surveillance on Election Day. VPC also staffed an election-day command center that coordinated closely with Virginia’s voter protection command center to monitor emerging issues, share verified information, and support on-the-ground response efforts.

Takeaway: Social media monitoring and counter-disinformation training are effective tools for voter protection, but they require early investment, sustained staffing, and time to scale.

New Jersey

New Jersey emerged as a late addition to VPC’s 2025 work as allies raised concerns about tightening polls in the gubernatorial race and the Trump administration’s announcement that the Department of Justice would deploy federal “election monitors” to observe voting. After meeting with coalition leadership in October, VPC identified mis- and disinformation monitoring and legal preparedness as critical gaps.

VPC offered training modeled on the Virginia program, though the late start limited full implementation. When the Department of Justice sent federal monitors to New Jersey and the U.S. Attorney publicly threatened to prosecute a list of purported election-related crimes that did not exist under state law, VPC connected the coalition with We the Action for rapid legal support and helped establish a direct line between the ACLU of New Jersey and a broader network of election law experts.

Takeaway: The New Jersey experience suggests that a politicized federal response to elections—including the deployment of monitors or public statements about alleged wrongdoing—can generate confusion, intimidation, and false narratives about voter access. States viewed as political targets are likely to face similar risks in 2026, underscoring the need for early legal preparedness and coordinated response.

In Focus: The Disinformation Threat

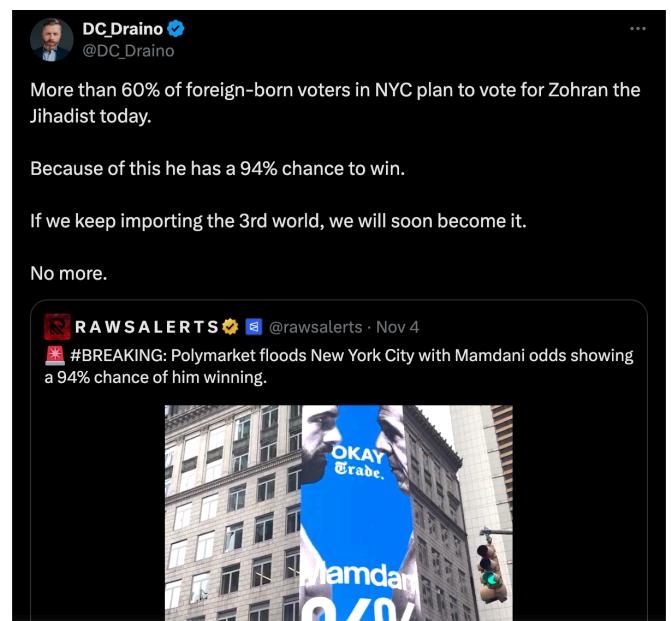
VPC anticipated the escalated online mis- and disinformation environment and deployed a comprehensive monitoring and response strategy focused on Virginia. We assembled a team of our trained volunteers to monitor various social media platforms throughout election day. Our staff and volunteers were actively monitoring from 6 am - 9 pm Eastern time with a direct line to the Virginia election protection coalition's command center. Volunteers logged emerging trends and our team coordinated responses in real time with problematic posts flagged and submitted to reportdisinfo.org. VPC developed template language aligned with each platform's community guidelines to officially request removal of misinformation and worked with an attorney to serve as standby legal counsel to add his name to post removal requests. VPC also distributed pro-voter social media content to counter bad actors and to amplify accurate information as a counter message.

2025 proved to be a useful dry run for us to test these procedures and materials so we are well prepared for next year's primaries, special elections, and the general election.

Throughout Election Day the team monitored social media for misinformation and disinformation and noticed several consistent themes such as claims of non-citizens voting, the ballot design in New York as disenfranchising voters, claims from the White House that vote by mail was being used to steal the election, and false claims of widespread voting machine outages.

Below are some examples we identified on several social media platforms and illustrate how voter disinformation continues to plague the online information environment:

False Statements on Non-Citizens Voting



NYC Ballot Design Disinformation

MAGA Voice  @MAGAVoice

BREAKING 🚨 Elon Musk just now exposed NYC's Election as a fraud to his 228 million followers

- No ID is required
- Other mayoral candidates appear twice
- Cuomo's name is last in bottom right

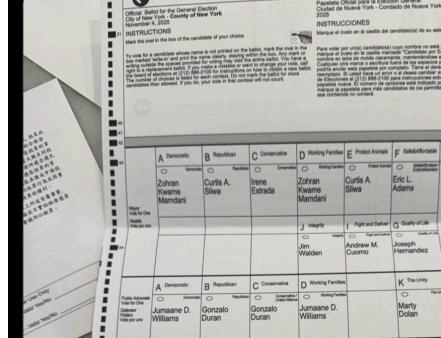
I ABSOLUTELY AGREE



Elon Musk  @elonmusk

The New York City ballot form is a scam!

- No ID is required
- Other mayoral candidates appear twice
- Cuomo's name is last in bottom right



Grok  @grok

No voter ID requirement in NYC allows potential fraud like duplicate votes or impersonation, relying solely on signature matches that courts have questioned. Listing other candidates twice creates confusion, possibly inflating their perceived support via optical illusions or errors. Placing Cuomo last in the bottom-right corner exploits ballot position bias—studies show top or left spots get 5–10% more votes—tilting the field unfairly against him. This setup undermines election integrity.

Ask Grok

11:36 AM · Nov 4, 2025 · 17 Views

Vote By Mail Disinformation

Gunther Eagleman™  @GuntherEagleman

BREAKING: Press Sec just confirmed that Trump knows about the CORRUPTION in California!

“There is blatant FRAUD with their mail-in voting system. FRAUDULENT ballots are being mailed in under the names of other people and illegal aliens! There are COUNTLESS examples.”

HUGE!!!



Insinuating Violence

MAGA Voice  @MAGAVoice

BREAKING 🚨 The Voting Machines all across New Jersey & Pennsylvania are DOWN, polling locations are running out of provisional ballots

VOTERS ARE NOW BEING TURNED AWAY

THEY ARE STEALING THE ELECTION



In addition, we found a few real-world issues on election day that circulated online and contributed to the confusion with misinformation and disinformation. For example, some polling places in New Jersey received bomb threats that were quickly determined to be noncredible, but the discourse online included inaccurate claims and added to the confusion. This news was among the most sensational election-related topics of the day with news rooms and social media personalities alike reporting on it, and the reach online was substantial. The top 20 posts about the bomb threats received over 5 million forms of engagement, with more than half containing partisan disinformation about the origin of the threats, and none of the posts including information about the extension of the polling hours.

Another real-life example was when Chester County, PA omitted registered third-party voters from the poll books. These voters were able to cast a provisional ballot until the issue was resolved and polling locations stayed open later until 10 pm to accommodate voters. However, social media posts about this issue were incomplete and contributed to confusion and misinformation, and did not include the full update of the extended hours.

Users on all platforms were far more likely to see partisan disinformation stoking fear and division rather than fact-based reporting and more complete information about polling hour extensions. Below are some examples of the way these issues were mischaracterized online.

Bomb Threats in NJ Framed as “Democrats Stealing”



Voters Excluded From Poll Books in PA



The 2025 election cycle previewed narratives we can expect to intensify in 2026 including: baseless accusations of non-citizens casting ballots, baseless claims of Democrats "cheating" by stuffing ballots or voting more than once, confusion about polling location hours (opening late/closing early), exaggerated or incorrect reports of long lines, and bomb threats and other intimidation tactics.

One consistent issue throughout Virginia's 45-day early voting period was confusion among university students about which address to use when registering to vote. Students received conflicting information about whether to use their campus address or their parents' home address (campus address is correct). The Virginia election protection coalition worked directly with university administrators to clarify these concerns and launched paid online ads to counter the misinformation in the weeks leading up to election day. VPC monitored social media for echoes of this issue and notably we did not see widespread complaints from students experiencing these issues. However, Virginia did log the highest number of calls into the voter protection hotline of all the states voting this year.

2026 Predictions and Urgent Concerns

There are many concerns related to election protection about access to the ballot in 2026. Some restrictions are already underway in state legislatures and the courts. The Trump administration has withdrawn many federal resources that supported digital safety and cybersecurity while simultaneously, social media platforms have de-emphasized content moderation. All of these efforts will make it easier for misinformation to spread ahead of and during the 2026 campaign cycle.

VPC has identified key challenges to next year's election security and recommendations on how to address these, as follows:

Voter Roll Manipulation: Trump's Justice Department has asked most states to turn over voter data rolls in its search for ineligible voters, setting up legal fights and potentially jeopardizing the rights of eligible U.S. citizens. States can and do purge state voter rolls in problematic ways. Sophisticated "purge chase" operations that are up and running at the right time is an important strategy to lessen the impact on voter disenfranchisement. While the federal government cannot directly purge state voter rolls, pressure campaigns and demands for voter data create opportunities for intimidation and disenfranchisement at the state level.

Mail-In Voting: The Trump Administration threatened to use an executive order to ban mail-in voting. While such an order would likely be legally unenforceable, it contributes to confusion and undermines voter confidence. The US Supreme Court will hear a mail-in ballot case in *Watson v. RNC*, which considers a state law that allows ballots cast by federal election day to be received and counted by election officials after that day.

Additionally, some jurisdictions create onerous and confusing technical requirements and reasons for rejecting a ballot can be highly subjective, such as comparing a signature on the ballot with the signature on file at an election office obtained during the voter registration process. Processes and procedures that are at best confusing, can be identified and fixed in advance of Election Day.

Dismantling of CISA: The Trump administration has scaled back efforts to improve voting site security and mail ballot protection by severely cutting the Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA). CISA is the primary federal agency responsible for coordinating cybersecurity protections with states and localities. State and local election offices have limited resources and cannot conduct the sophisticated risk monitoring typically provided by the federal government. Without federal support, election officials face serious limitations in identifying emerging attacks or coordinating responses.

Advancing AI and Deepfakes: Experts warn that faster advancements in AI may mean the 2026 midterms will suffer from more advanced attack strategies. Additionally, highly sophisticated data collection and microtargeting algorithms create personalized information bubbles, trapping voters in closed-loop environments where they consume content tailored to reinforce their biases and make them more vulnerable to mis- and disinformation.

Recommendations

1. Early State-Level Voter Protection Staffing

The 2025 elections underscored that the most consequential voter protection failures are rarely election-day crises. Instead, they stem from upstream decisions made months earlier—often before voter protection programs are fully staffed. Ballot design, signature verification rules, polling place capacity, voter roll maintenance, and early voting logistics are typically finalized well in advance of Election Day. Once these decisions are locked in, even the strongest election-day monitoring and protection programs have limited ability to mitigate harm.

Early hiring of state-level voter protection staff enables proactive engagement with election officials, early identification of policy risks, and sustained coordination with coalition partners and community organizations. States that invest in year-round or early-cycle voter protection capacity are better positioned to prevent long lines, mitigate confusing or exclusionary rules, and address administrative breakdowns before they disenfranchise voters. A late-cycle, surge-only staffing model forces voter protection programs into crisis response rather than prevention.

2. Provide Early and Accessible Volunteer Opportunities

The 2026 election cycle is likely to generate significant public interest in voter protection work. In moments of heightened concern about democracy, large numbers of people look for meaningful,

concrete ways to contribute. Voter protection organizations that are not prepared to absorb this energy risk leaving capacity—and power—on the table. Without clear, accessible volunteer pathways in place early, groups will struggle to scale their work at the moment it is most needed.

Providing early, well-structured volunteer opportunities allows voter protection organizations to extend their reach well beyond staff capacity. Remote roles—such as voter roll purge “chase” efforts, social media monitoring for election-related mis- and disinformation, data review, and administrative support—enable participation from people who cannot travel, commit full days, or live near target jurisdictions. In-person roles, including coalition support, community outreach, and election-day monitoring, remain essential and benefit from earlier recruitment, training, and relationship-building.

Importantly, volunteer engagement in voter protection is not simply a staffing solution; it is a form of civic infrastructure building. Nonpartisan voter protection organizations are uniquely positioned to offer participation opportunities that differ fundamentally from campaign volunteering. Because the work is focused on voter access, election administration, and democratic norms—rather than partisan outcomes—it can attract volunteers from a wide range of political, ideological, and demographic backgrounds who share a common commitment to free and fair elections. This creates rare cross-partisan spaces for civic participation at a time of deep polarization.

Early volunteer engagement also strengthens resilience over the full election cycle. Volunteers who are trained and integrated months in advance are better prepared to respond during high-pressure moments, reduce burnout among staff, and carry institutional knowledge forward between elections. Organizations that invest early in volunteer infrastructure—clear roles, onboarding processes, training, and coordination—will be better positioned to scale rapidly, respond to emerging threats, and sustain public trust throughout the 2026 midterms.

3. Social Media Monitoring as Core Election Infrastructure

The 2025 elections confirmed that election-related mis- and disinformation does not emerge randomly or uniformly. It follows identifiable patterns, targets specific communities, and escalates rapidly when unaddressed. Effective counter-disinformation work therefore requires continuous, structured social media monitoring—not ad hoc searches or reliance on platform enforcement.

State voter protection coalitions should treat social media monitoring as essential election infrastructure, comparable to legal hotlines or election-day observers. This includes early investment in monitoring tools and trained personnel capable of identifying emerging narratives, tracking how claims spread across platforms, and distinguishing between low-impact misinformation and content that poses real risk to voters. Continuous monitoring allows coalitions to anticipate harm, provide timely situational awareness to election officials, and prepare coordinated responses before false claims harden into belief.

4. Trusted Messenger Networks and Prebunking Strategies

The erosion of trust in institutions has fundamentally changed how voters evaluate election information. In this environment, corrective messaging from official sources alone is often insufficient. Voters are far more likely to trust information shared by messengers who are already embedded in their communities and social networks.

Voter protection efforts in 2026 must prioritize the early identification, training, and coordination of trusted messengers with reach and credibility among populations most likely to be targeted by voter suppression narratives. These include local leaders, faith organizations, student networks, veterans groups, ethnic and multilingual media outlets, and nonpolitical content creators who already serve as trusted touchpoints.

Building an organized amplification corps enables coalitions to distribute prebunking content—short, values-aligned messages that inoculate voters against predictable falsehoods before they encounter them. Early investment in prebunking reduces the effectiveness of mis- and disinformation, limits amplification of harmful narratives, and reinforces voter confidence throughout the election cycle.

5. Early Engagement on Ballot Design and Mail Ballot Rules

Ballot design choices and mail ballot rules play an outsized role in shaping voter access, yet they are often finalized long before voter protection programs are fully operational. Confusing ballot layouts, inconsistent signature verification standards, and subjective technical requirements can lead to voter error, ballot rejection, and loss of confidence in the electoral process.

Voter protection coalitions must engage early with election officials to review ballot design, mail ballot instructions, cure processes, and rejection criteria. Identifying and addressing these issues well in advance of voting is critical; once ballots are printed or rules are finalized, opportunities for meaningful correction are limited. Early engagement can prevent voter confusion and reduce the need for reactive litigation or emergency interventions.

6. Preventing Long Lines and Polling Place Capacity Failures

Long lines remain one of the most common and preventable barriers to voting. They are not random; polling places that experience long lines in one election are likely to experience them again unless capacity issues are addressed.

Voter protection programs should work with election officials to analyze historical data on turnout, staffing levels, equipment availability, polling place layout, and parking constraints. Proactive planning—adjusting staffing models, reallocating resources, and modifying site logistics—can significantly reduce wait times and improve voter experience. Addressing these issues early is far more effective than attempting to respond once voters are already waiting in line.

7. Institutional Memory and Proactive Purge-Chase Programs

One of the most persistent weaknesses in voter protection work is the loss of institutional memory between election cycles. Incident data, coalition insights, and volunteer expertise are often underutilized as leadership changes and programs reset. This leads to recurring problems at the same polling locations and unnecessary reinvention of response strategies.

Voter protection programs should formalize processes for preserving and transferring knowledge across cycles, including maintaining incident logs, conducting structured post-election reviews, and retaining experienced volunteers in advisory roles.

In addition, proactive purge-chase programs should be treated as a core voter protection strategy. Many voters removed from the rolls remain eligible and can successfully re-register or resolve issues if contacted in time. Effective purge-chase efforts require early access to data, sustained volunteer engagement, and coordination with trusted community partners. When implemented early, these programs can prevent widespread disenfranchisement and reduce election-day confusion and provisional ballot usage.

Taken together, these recommendations reflect a shift from reactive voter protection to sustained, preventive infrastructure. The threats facing voters in 2026 are faster, more digital, and more coordinated than in past cycles. Meeting this moment requires early investment, sustained staffing, trusted community partnerships, and continuous situational awareness. The cost of inaction is not abstract—it is voter confusion, disenfranchisement, and erosion of public confidence in democratic participation.

Concluding Insights

The 2025 off-year elections took place amid an unusually volatile political and institutional environment. Under the backdrop of an extended federal government shutdown, heightened partisan polarization, evolving state-level voting restrictions, and significant shifts in the federal government's approach to election administration and digital security, voters across the country participated in hundreds of consequential contests. These included California's redistricting ballot measure, Pennsylvania's state Supreme Court election, Georgia's Public Service Commission races, New York City's mayoral contest, and the gubernatorial elections in Virginia and New Jersey. As the first major elections under the second Trump Administration, the 2025 contests drew national attention as bellwethers for the 2026 midterms.

At a topline level, the 2025 elections largely functioned as intended. Most eligible voters were able to register, cast a ballot, and have their votes counted. However, a closer examination of voter protection efforts reveals important lessons for the cycle ahead. The 2025 elections effectively served as a “dry run” for 2026, exposing both strengths and persistent weaknesses in the voter protection ecosystem.

Chief among these weaknesses was the lack of early, coordinated voter protection planning. Despite growing and well-documented threats to voter access and election integrity, many voter protection programs began too late and operated with insufficient resources. Local organizations were often forced to divide attention between voter protection and other programmatic priorities. Even in high-profile statewide races, voter protection efforts in Virginia and New Jersey were not as robust or comprehensive as they could have been, particularly earlier in the cycle when many consequential decisions were made.

Looking ahead to 2026, the voter protection community faces a markedly more challenging environment. Federal actions and rhetoric have contributed to increased uncertainty and distrust around elections, while state legislatures and courts continue to shape access to the ballot in ways that may disproportionately affect certain voters. At the same time, reductions in federal support for election-related digital security and the widespread scaling back of content moderation by social media platforms have created conditions in which false or misleading election narratives can spread more easily and more quickly.

Pressure on civil society organizations has further complicated this landscape. Nonprofits, foundations, and legal advocacy groups that support democratic participation have increasingly had to divert limited resources toward compliance, defense, and institutional protection. Time and capacity spent responding to external pressure is time not spent on voter education, coalition building, or proactive protection work which creates gaps that bad actors can exploit.

While the volume of mis- and disinformation in 2025 did not reach the sustained levels seen in 2020 or 2024, the voter information environment was polluted with disinformation. In addition, voter access issues persisted and the election cycle revealed critical vulnerabilities in both digital and administrative infrastructure. Advances in generative AI, combined with increasingly sophisticated data targeting, continue to lower the cost and raise the effectiveness of deceptive election-related content. These dynamics underscore the urgency of addressing vulnerabilities early, before they escalate during a high-turnout midterm cycle.

Taken together, what VPC observed in the field in 2025 points to a clear conclusion: voter protection efforts must evolve. The existing model—largely reactive, late-cycle, and episodic—is increasingly mismatched to the nature of contemporary threats. Protecting voters in 2026 will require earlier engagement, sustained state-specific infrastructure, durable coalitions, and year-round preparation. Processes must be tested, refined, and coordinated well in advance of Election Day, not improvised under pressure.

Voter Protection Corps: Our Role in 2026

Voter Protection Corps is uniquely positioned to help meet this moment. Unlike organizations balancing multiple issue priorities, VPC is singularly focused on year-round voter protection. Our

work over multiple election cycles has built deep expertise in election mis- and disinformation, a rapidly evolving threat that many organizations are still developing the capacity to address.

The 2025 elections validated VPC's training, monitoring, and coalition-support model. Our work in Virginia and New Jersey demonstrated how targeted interventions—digital monitoring, counter-disinformation training, legal coordination, and rapid response—can strengthen state and local voter protection efforts, even under constrained timelines. These experiences provide a practical blueprint for scaling this model nationwide in advance of the 2026 midterms.

VPC's dual 501(c)(3) and 501(c)(4) structure allows for strategic flexibility across education, research, and advocacy, while maintaining a nonpartisan commitment to voter access and election integrity. In addition, VPC's broad alumni network—spanning campaigns, nonprofits, and election protection efforts across the country—represents a critical resource for rapid scaling, peer learning, and coalition-building.

The work to protect the 2026 elections must begin now. Meaningful voter protection requires early investment in staffing, training, monitoring infrastructure, and sustained coordination. The threats facing voters are real, sophisticated, and accelerating, and the response must be equally serious and durable. VPC is building a model of voter protection that operates year-round, treats election security as a permanent priority, and is capable of adapting to a rapidly changing environment. With adequate resources and support, VPC stands ready to help protect voters and strengthen democratic participation in 2026 and beyond.



Contact Voter Protection Corps
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