

**THE WHITE HOUSE**

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**Presidential Commission on Election Administration**

This past November, voters in many states and localities faced a variety of obstacles to casting their votes. Some had to stand in line for many hours—a serious burden on all, and for some of these voters, the reason they were in the end unable to cast their ballot. Others, including notably our overseas military, failed to receive absentee ballots in time to cast them. Still others had to wait because of inaccurate voter lists, too few or unreliable machines, or physical barriers. That is not how our democracy is supposed to work. We need to make sure that our democracy remains the model for and envy of the world by ensuring that every eligible American voter has easy access to voting and that no American voter will ever again have to wait seven hours in line to vote. The President will enlist experienced experts from both political parties to co-lead a commission to address the obstacles to efficient voting.

- **Reduce Long Voting Lines:** The Presidential Commission on Election Administration will develop recommendations for state and local election officials to reduce waiting times at the polls and improve all citizens' voting experience.
- **Commonsense, Non-Partisan Solutions:** The Commission will be co-chaired by two recognized practitioners and experts in the field, Bob Bauer and Ben Ginsberg, whose experience in this field include Bauer's role as General Counsel for the President's campaign and Ginsberg's as National Counsel for Governor Romney's campaign.

**Improving Voters' Experience**

- **Improving the experience of all voters:** Voting should not be made difficult. On November 6, 2012, we saw all too frequently that it was. Voters from Massachusetts to Texas waited too long to vote. In many places, voters had to wait outdoors in bad weather. Voting should not take hours. We can do better.
  - **End long lines at the polling place:** Long lines are not a Democratic issue or a Republican issue. Regardless of party affiliation, no voter should have to wait in line for hours to vote. Yet this past election saw long lines in "red states," "blue states," and "swing states" alike. Improving all voters' experience is an issue on which everybody can agree.
  - **Customer service orientation:** The Commission will focus on improving the experience of voting. Its membership will draw from business community leaders in the area of customer service, as well as professional election officials known for their successful administration of elections.
- **Commonsense solutions:**

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- Address the root causes of long voting lines: Long voting lines can be the result of too few polling places, too many people assigned to precincts, poorly designed voting areas, lack of training of poll workers, faulty voting machines, problems with the voter rolls, and complicated ballots, among other things.
- Assist members of the military and other voters: The Commission will also make recommendations to improve the experience of voters facing other, comparable obstacles in casting their ballots, such as members of the military, overseas voters, voters with disabilities, and voters with limited English proficiency.
- Practical Reforms: By Executive Order, the President will charge the Commission to consider such issues, and identify practical, commonsense steps that state and local election officials can take to improve the Election Day experience. The Commission will also identify the practices of voting jurisdictions where voters have the best Election Day experience.