



# Voter Protection Program

## Talking points on violence in the Capitol

- Today, Congress met in a joint session to count the Electoral College votes submitted by the states and confirm Joe Biden as the 46<sup>th</sup> President of the United States.
- The session was set to affirm the votes in the states and uphold the will of the American people, who voted in record numbers to choose our next President.
- Instead, extremists breached the Capitol Building and vandalized the symbol of our democracy.
- The President and his supporters have repeatedly incited violence from extremists. Those words resulted in today's violence.
- This is an active, dynamic, and dangerous situation. The first priority is public safety. Law enforcement needs our full support. Prosecutions will come later.
- With the safety of our Capitol and our lawmakers now in hand, Congress has reconvened to finish the job of counting the electoral votes.
- Now more than ever, we see how dangerous conspiracy theories are. Every member of Congress should condemn the violence and publicly reject the President's lies about the election. They fueled today's events, including when he repeated them in the middle of the rioting.
- Political stunts have costs. Sometimes those costs are dangerous. Today is clear evidence of that.
- Peaceful expression is protected by the First Amendment, but that is not what we are witnessing. What is happening is un-American, illegal, and goes against everything our country stands for.
- These acts by traitors to our country will do nothing to change the outcome of the election. These are futile acts of sedition and treachery.
- Those members of Congress who were planning to defy the will of the American people and challenge the electors to indulge President Trump's election fantasy must reverse course.
- The President and his enablers must disavow these acts of violence and commit to upholding the rule of law and our democracy by moving forward with a peaceful transition of power.

## FAQs

- **What happens with the Joint Session now?**
  - This is an active, dangerous situation. The first priority is public safety.
  - With the safety of our Capitol and our lawmakers now in hand, Congress has reconvened to finish the job of counting the electoral votes.
  - There is no constitutional requirement to finish the Electoral College votes today.
  - The Electoral College Act contemplates it taking multiple days (3 U.S.C. 16), and so Congress can deal with any immaterial timing issues that were triggered by today's events.

- **What are the criminal implications for those responsible for the violence? And the president?**
  - Prosecutions will come later and we are confident that those who engaged in acts of violence and those who incited violence will be held accountable. But first, we need to secure our Capitol and finish counting the votes.
  - The Constitution has two mechanisms for a President who cannot be trusted to hold office: the 25th Amendment and impeachment. Congress should evaluate both.
  
- **What should members of Congress be doing in response to this?**
  - These traitorous acts, while deeply dangerous, will do nothing to change the outcome of the election.
  - The President and his enablers must disavow these acts of violence and commit to upholding the rule of law and our democracy by moving forward with a peaceful transition of power.
  - Every member of Congress should condemn the violence and publicly reject the President's lies about the election that fueled today's events.
  - It's long past time to come together as Americans and address the very real health and economic crises we face.