

November 4, 2024

**STATEMENT ABOUT THE ELECTION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING FROM
KIMBERLÉ CRENSHAW, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND CO-FOUNDER, AFRICAN
AMERICAN POLICY FORUM**

Entering the final 24-hours before election day, it is clear we must be all engaged in our democratic process. Be prepared and informed about the issues and utilize the AAPF website to educate yourself on the issues that you care about: democracy, economic opportunity, women's reproductive health, racial equity in employment, schooling, and the justice system, and the future of the planet itself.

As voters prepare to cast their ballots, they are being subjected to a barrage of racist, sexist, xenophobic, and transphobic attacks, lies about voter fraud, and attempts to intimidate entire communities to keep them from participating fully in this election. But our ancestors fought too hard for the right to vote – too many people died for that right – to allow those who would take us back to turn us around.

We know what disenfranchisement looks like because we've been here before. We've seen what so-called redeemers seek to redeem when rebelling against multiracial democracy. After the election of 1876 and the death of Reconstruction we watched the dream of true democracy become the nightmare of Jim Crow—eight ensuing decades of segregation, dehumanization, and violence, both personal and structural. We know what happens when our power is taken away, so we certainly must not give it away willingly or take it for granted by standing aside..

I know that in every election for the past several cycles we've heard someone say, "this is the most consequential election of our lifetimes—and maybe in American history." But just because it might sound like cliché, that doesn't mean it isn't true. And while some might feel that their votes don't really matter, we have to ask: if voting didn't matter, why are some people so dedicated to preventing millions of people – especially people of color – from doing it? People don't try to steal things that don't matter. Our votes matter! For our lives and for our children's futures we have to not only make our individual voices heard but create a chorus of everyone we know.

So on Tuesday, November 5th, vote like your rights and even lives depend on it. Because they do. Show up early. Stay in line. Make your voice heard! Go to <https://whenweallvote.org/> to find your polling place and if you need any assistance call 1-866-OUR-VOTE.