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## Compulsory voting waters the seed of Democracy

Sophene Avedissian

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The basis of democracy is that everyone's voice is heard. Your vote can change an election. Your vote matters. Your vote makes a difference.

The Presidential election between George Bush and Al Gore in 2000 proves how every citizen holds power in their vote. Al Gore won the popular vote with around 540,000 votes, while Bush had 271 electoral votes compared to Gore's 266.

However, there was a recount of votes in Florida. Bush won Florida by 537 votes. 537 votes decided an election. All Americans want their voices heard, and the only way to achieve this is by enacting compulsory voting.

Compulsory voting would lead to a greater turnout among lower-income groups and minorities, which could lead to a change in the types of politicians elected.

"The idea of compulsory voting is that it conveys the idea that each person's voice is expected and valued," Emily Chapman, a professor at Stanford, said. "It really offers this society-wide message: There is no such thing as a political class in a democracy."

If all citizens, regardless of their gender race, and social class, do not utilize their right to vote, our democracy will crumble down. America must put an end to inequality or inequality will put an end to America. Compulsory voting is essential to this equality. Or, a collapsing country there will be.

A study by Pew Research Center found that the eligible voters who most likely avoid the polls are younger, poorer, less educated and more racially diverse. As a result, those groups are less likely to have their voices heard.

Since Americans who are not part of minorities are more likely to vote, government policies are geared toward their interests. Either America takes a step towards a society where the government addresses the needs of all voters, or America allows the inequality among citizens to continue.

How will citizens communicate what is wrong with our government if they do not vote?

The Pew Research Center has reported that around 30 countries, including Belgium, Brazil and Australia, have some form of mandatory voting. Australia started issuing fines to citizens who didn't show up to vote. Turnout increased from 47% of educated voters to over 95%, according Harvard University's Department of Government in 2013. The goal of democracy is to hear a variety of opinions from citizens, and as shown in Australia, compulsory voting is needed to do so.

Voting tells us what is wrong and needs to be fixed. Nothing will change without voting, which is why mandatory voting should be considered. If compulsory voting works well for Australia, it will work well for the United States.

Many opponents of compulsory voting believe that it will increase the number of uneducated voters, according to The Cato Institute. Compulsory voting increases political involvement, and therefore, a more legitimate result to democratic elections. This increase in involvement will encourage people to be more educated about politics.

According to a New York Times editorial, when few people participate in voting the government's credibility is threatened. Compulsory voting would continue to interest people in politics.

It is important for everyone to be a part of the political process. Everybody should be involved in voting, as it affects everyone. The long-term effect of making citizens vote creates a norm that people are more inclined to become more active in learning about prominent issues and topics.

Doesn't everyone have a right to vote because some citizens may not obtain the time and resources to pursue their education?

It is only through voting that our country can progress and improve.

Some future elections will be similar to the one between Bush and Gore. 537 votes. 537 votes can dictate who becomes our next president. Your vote can most definitely be one of these 537 votes.

Democracy continues with or without you, but in order to preserve and strengthen our democracy and our country's values, we must consider compulsory voting. Compulsory voting waters the seed of democracy.