

# In Mail Ballots, We Trust!

## Policy Evaluation of Mail Voting Systems

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### Policy Context

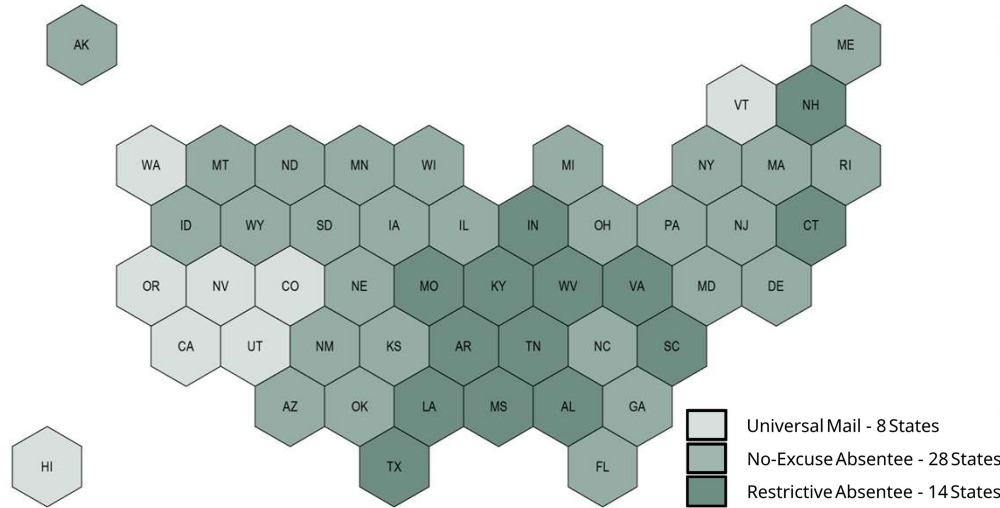
**COVID and 2020 Elections:** Sharp increase in mail-voting; renewed concerns about election integrity and equity.

**President Trump's Executive Order:** Trump orders to tighten mail-ballot rules citing election integrity and security

**Watson v RNC:** Supreme Court weighs how federal laws affect state ballot counting.

**SAVE Act:** In debate, absentee voters must submit a photo ID with their request and ballot.

### Map of States with Mail Ballot Systems



### Policy Recommendations

**Michigan should adopt Universal Mail Ballots instead of No-Excuse Absentee.**

**Give counties authority to send ballots automatically to all registered voters.**

**Offer secure alternative verification like SSN, ID cards to reduce ballot rejection and errors.**

**Expand statewide ballot tracking and voter notification system to alert voters to issues and status in real time.**

**Enable the Secretary of State to expand on voter awareness of mail-ballots, to inform voters of how to fill, send, and notified about tracked ballots.**

**Universal Mail:** All eligible voters automatically receive a ballot.

**No-Excuse Absentee:** Any registered voter may request a mail-ballot but must complete a multistep application process.

**Restrictive Absentee:** Voters are required to provide a valid excuse to receive a mail-ballot.

### Comparative Policy Analysis of Democratic Norms

Democratic Values	Universal Mail	No-Excuse Absentee	Restrictive Absentee
<b>Election Integrity</b> "Secure and free from interference or manipulation."	✓	✓	✓
<b>Confidence in Outcomes</b> "Voters trust results as fair, transparent, and trustworthy"	✓	✓	✓
<b>Equity</b> "No group faces greater burdens in registering, voting, or be counted."	✓	✓	✗
<b>Access</b> "All eligible voters can participate without unnecessary barriers."	✓	—	✗
<b>Engagement</b> "The act of casting a ballot."	✓	✓	✓

### Access and Integrity in the Numbers

	Universal Mail	No-Excuse Absentee	Restrictive Absentee
Turnout Rate	<b>62%</b>	60%	55%
Rejection Rate	<b>1.1%</b>	1.4%	2.5%

### Research

**Question:** How well do mail-voting systems promote democratic participation in the United States?

I analyzed 38 academic and policy sources on normative values in mail-voting systems.

I measured turnout, rejection, and error rate in the 2024 election. I examine public opinion on confidence.

### Confidence in Mail Ballot Counting

