



Common Excuses Why People Don't Vote

My Vote Won't Make A Difference.

One vote *can* make a difference. Many voters, together deciding they will make a difference, can change an election. In fact, many elections – local, state, and even presidential – are decided by a handful of votes. By voting you are making your voice and your opinions heard. Not voting ensures that your views won't matter to elected officials. Be a patriot, take pride in being a good citizen, take part in our democracy. Encourage people who don't think their vote matters to ask a friend who *does* vote why they make that effort for our country.

The Candidates Are All Equally Bad. It's Choosing Between The Lesser Of Two Evils.

Sometimes this appears to be true, especially with all of the negative advertising about candidates. But with all of the information at our disposal these days, it is easier than ever for people to do basic research on candidates' positions. There is usually a significant difference between candidates on issues. Remind people that there are also third party or independent candidates if neither major party candidate interests them. In most elections, a voter can write-in a candidate of their choice. Voting in a democracy is not supposed to be easy – sometimes it's about making difficult choices. *Not voting* only makes things worse.

Elected Officials Are A Bunch Of Crooks.

The cliché that one bad apple spoils the bunch is often true. Political scandals sometimes leave people with the false sense that all politicians, by nature, are crooks. If people think their representative is a crook, then that is even more of a reason to vote for someone else! If more people vote and become active in politics, elected officials will be held accountable for their actions.

Elected Officials Don't Level With People. All I Want Is A Straight Answer From A Politician.

Sometimes politicians “duck” questions or otherwise avoid committing to an issue because they don't yet know how they feel about an issue or because the issue is complex and there is no easy answer. But often they just don't want to take a tough stance until voters push them to give a straight answer. If someone feels like a candidate will not address their question or issue, then they should see if other candidates have something better to say – and vote for that candidate.

Money Rules Politics Today. The Government Is Run By A Few, Big, Powerful Special Interests That Set The Agenda For Congress. There's Really No Point In The Rest Of Us Getting Involved.

Money in politics is indeed a problem. Too often, politicians are more responsive to the people and organizations that give them money for their campaigns than to their constituents. However, there is a limit to what money can buy in politics. Nothing gets a politician's attention more than votes. If people organize and hold candidates accountable, elected officials will respond to the needs of their constituents, not just special interests. Consider contributing a small amount to a candidate – it's better for candidates to receive small donations from thousands of voters than a few large donations from people seeking influence and access.

Why Should I Learn About Congress And Follow What They Do? Congress Doesn't Affect My Life.

There is not a single aspect of daily life that isn't affected by Congress and often more directly by state and local government. The roads you drive on, the air you breathe, the water you drink, the food you eat, the schools that teach your children, the parks you visit, and the freedom you enjoy – are all a function of government. We live in a democracy, with a government that is by and for the people. We are the government, as long as we vote.

I Vote For People Who I Believe Will Make This World A Better Place For My Children, But It Seems Once They Get Elected They Can't See Past The Next Election. They Don't Think Long-Term.

As in business, news, entertainment, and other areas of life, politics is often consumed by the issue of the moment, the short-term view. Many voters go into the polling booth thinking of the latest hot issue. While sometimes it appears Congress only works on the issue of the day, many bills in Congress are the product of years of research and negotiations. It is important for voters to tell their representatives that they care about the long-term, and they will vote for officials who are working for the future.

I Had High Hopes For Our New Senator. She Had Strong Values And Knew Why She Was Going To Washington. Then She Gets Into Congress And Starts Compromising. She Sold Us Out.

If you feel your representative has misrepresented his or her position, you should vote that person out of office. But, there is a difference between compromise and "selling out." In a democracy, compromise is essential; in a dictatorship, it's irrelevant. Without compromise, nothing would get done in Congress – it would simply be a debating society. Elected officials often face difficult issues that have not been resolved elsewhere. They must compromise to reach agreement on a solution to the problem. We cannot expect our exact views to prevail on every issue.

It's Distressing How Nasty Political Campaigns Have Become – Personal Attacks, Distorting Records. It's Almost As If Campaigns Were Designed To Turn People Off.

You're right, one strategy of campaigns is to ensure that only their voters go to the polls. Don't let it happen – get out and vote and prove them wrong. Ignore the negative ads or tell the campaign airing them that you don't like the ads, and won't vote for the candidate. Hold them accountable for the nature of their campaign. Negative elections alienate voters and negative ads can confuse and distort the values of candidates. Fortunately, campaign ads are not the only source of information for voters: Ask campaigns for substantive issue material and use newspapers, the Internet, TV and radio programs that report on campaigns to obtain information.

There Is Too Much Pork Barrel Spending By Congress. They Only Want Funding For An Expensive Road In Their District That No One Needs.

Pork barreling – directing funds to a specific project in a state or district regardless of its merit - is probably the most frequent criticism made of the Congress. There is no question that some federal spending is done only because a powerful Member of Congress wanted that money in their district. In fact, pork barrel spending constitutes only a tiny portion of all federal spending. If you think your representative is making bad decisions about federal spending, vote for their opponent.