

VA Governor Restores Voting Rights to Convicted Felons



Summary: Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe signed an executive order to give voting rights back to thousands of convicted felons that have successfully done their time.

With the presidential election quickly approaching, the action Virginia's Governor took is a big deal. Gov. Terry McAuliffe returned voting rights to over 200,000 convicted felons in the state.

McAuliffe said, "I believe it is time to cast off Virginia's troubled history of injustice and embrace a honest clean process of restoring the right of these men and women. And so today, I will sign an order restoring the civil and voting rights of every single individual who has completed his or her sentence as of this day."

Read [Should Incarcerated Felons be Allowed to Vote?](#) to learn more.

The order restores the voting rights to those that have served their time and completed supervised probation or parole. They will also have to right to run for office and serve on a jury.

McAuliffe believes the executive order will create greater equality. He explains this by saying, "I believe our commonwealth can not achieve its full potential until all men and women act on this fundamental right and participate in the decisions about their own children's education, about their taxes and every aspect of their lives. Unfortunately, Virginia has had a long and sad history of effectively suppressing the voices of many thousands of men and women at the ballot box."

See [When Society Gives Felons a Second Chance](#).

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 expanded voting rights to African Americans but many minorities were still ineligible to vote. "Virginia continues to enforce one of the most restricting laws in the country regarding the restoration of voting and civil rights and individuals who have been convicted of felonies but who have completed their sentences and probation or parole."

Many have called the order a political stunt but McAuliffe says that those that have paid their debts should be given a second chance to enjoy the benefits of citizenship.

Source: <http://www.cnn.com/2016/04/22/politics/felons-voting-rights-virginia-governor/>

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