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## How Voting Was Made Easier

In 1864, the United States was in a civil war between the Union and the Confederacy. In 2020, America faces the challenges of COVID-19. What these two events have in common is that during these years, voting was made easier for the people of America because there were many challenges during both of these elections. During these challenging times, people used absentee ballots, which allow people to mail their vote in. Absentee ballots were used in 1864 because soldiers couldn't cast their votes and were used in 2020 because many American citizens were in fear of getting COVID-19.

In 1864, absentee ballots were introduced for the first time because America was in a civil war. Due to the fact that soldiers couldn't leave where they were stationed and come home to vote, absentee ballots were created in order for soldiers to still cast their vote. In an article produced by History.com, the article says, "In order to pull off the 1864 election,

the Union needed a way for soldiers stationed far from their homes to vote. To this end, most northern states passed new laws allowing soldiers to cast absentee votes from military camps.” This explains why absentee ballots were created to make voting easier because they allowed soldiers to cast their votes through mail instead of having to have soldiers leave their bases to come home and vote. If absentee ballots were not implemented, there could have been a different outcome for the Civil War. If soldiers were forced to leave their bases to vote, many bases would be left understaffed and would be very vulnerable to an attack from the other side. For example, if Union bases were understaffed from people leaving to vote, the bases would have been vulnerable and could be taken over by Confederates. If this had happened, Confederates would have gained more territory and would have won the Civil War. With this being said, if absentee ballots were not used, the face of America could have been completely different than it is today.

In 2020, America and the world were hit with a virus that will forever leave an impact and change the way people across the world

think about sanitation. With COVID-19 changing the whole dynamic of America and the world, it is only fair that the government made it easier for American citizens (especially Hoosiers) to vote in the upcoming 2020 election.

One reason that voting should be made easier for Hoosiers and Americans is because of the increase in reported COVID virus cases. In a chart presented by the New York Times, it shows that COVID cases have been increasing by each month from March with 47 cases in Indiana to November with around 2,890 COVID cases reported. This explains why voting should be made easier for Hoosiers because with absentee ballots, this would prevent COVID cases from increasing and would allow people to be safer while still getting their votes casted.

Another reason why voting should be made easier for Hoosiers is because the amount of deaths from COVID-19 in Indiana is beginning to rise. In another chart by the New York Times, it shows that COVID deaths were high from March to the beginning of June with the highest death count being 73 in that time period. COVID cases then began to fall with the lowest death count being 2 on July 13<sup>th</sup>, but deaths have been

increasing since the start of October. This also explains why voting should be made easier for Hoosiers because when COVID cases begin to increase, there is more risk for Hoosiers to catch COVID-19 and potentially die. With absentee ballots, this reduces the risk for Hoosiers because it will give them the opportunity to vote through mail and protect themselves and others, which would cause the cases and deaths to decrease rather than standing in a line with hundreds of other people risking the chance of catching COVID-19.

The final reason why voting should be made easier for Hoosiers is because absentee ballots can be more secure than in-person voting. According to an article posted by the Chicago Tribune, the article says, “Multiple studies have found that there is little to no risk of voter fraud when voting by mail and that voting by mail does not benefit one political party over another.” This shows how mail-in voting can be more secure than in-person voting because there are physical records of people’s votes which would make it hard to cause voter fraud. With all of this being said, it is safe to say that making voting for Hoosiers easier, would help protect lives and bring more security to the election.

In conclusion, voting should be made easier to Hoosiers because it would reduce the number of COVID-19 cases reported within Indiana along with the rest of America, it would reduce the number of deaths caused by COVID in Indiana as well as deaths for the rest of America, and would even provide more security to the election because with mail-in ballots, there are physical records of votes which would make it harder for voter fraud to occur than with regular in-person voting. The method of voting by mail has been proven to be a success with the election of 1864. This is because the mail-in ballots allowed for soldiers to stay stationed and protect their bases, all while still being able to vote. If absentee ballots had not been used during the 1864 election, then the turnout of the election, along with the future of America could have been different. The future of America could have been different because if Union soldiers would have been leaving to go vote, this would leave Union bases understaffed or even unattended. This would make their bases more vulnerable to Confederate attacks which would have led to more Union bases being taken over, and ultimately giving the Confederates the victory. If absentee ballots had not been introduced,

America could have potentially been a different place than it is now. The election of 1864 showed that even when there is struggle, there are still ways to get around those hurdles and progress. With that being said, the election of 2020 may bring new ideas on how the voting process works with how much the year of 2020 has impacted the world.