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*Enlightened Democracy*

# American Hindu Voters Guide to Elections 2024

*Hindu Vote Matters!*

In Partnership with Hindu Mandir  
Empowerment Council



HinduPACT is an initiative of World Hindu Council of America (VHPA)



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NAVIGATING HINDUVOTE.ORG WEBSITE



# Why HinduPACT's HinduVote Initiative Matters

Today, Hindus form a significant demographic in the United States. This population encompasses not only individuals from India but also the broader Hindu diaspora, including people from countries as diverse as Bali, Ghana, Vietnam, Surinam, and the Caribbean. Additionally, many individuals have adopted Hindu practices, further expanding this community. In key battleground states for the Presidential election, such as Florida, Michigan, Pennsylvania, Arizona, North Carolina, Ohio, and Virginia, the Hindu population often exceeds the margin of victory for candidates. Therefore, Hindu issues should be of interest to candidates across the political spectrum.

Hindu issues are neither coercive nor threatening. We believe that addressing these issues will make the United States a better country for all its citizens. Our teachings from the shastras, summarized in three mahavakyas or great sentences, encapsulate the values we wish to share with America:

1. **Ekam Sataha Vipraha Bahudha Vadanti** – The Truth is One; the Seers Perceive it in Different Forms.
2. **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** – The Entire Universe is One Family.
3. **Sarve Bhavantu Sukhinaha** – Let Everyone be Happy and Prosper Together.

We are not here to claim superiority but to offer these *dharmic* principles that we believe can create a righteous and harmonious society. We do not expect everyone to become Hindu or adopt these principles solely to appease Hindus. Instead, we advocate for these principles because they can help America become a better place for everyone.

We advocate for human rights as an electoral issue, whether it concerns rights within the United States or the plight of innocent girls in Pakistan who are abducted, forcibly converted, trafficked, and married off to much older men.





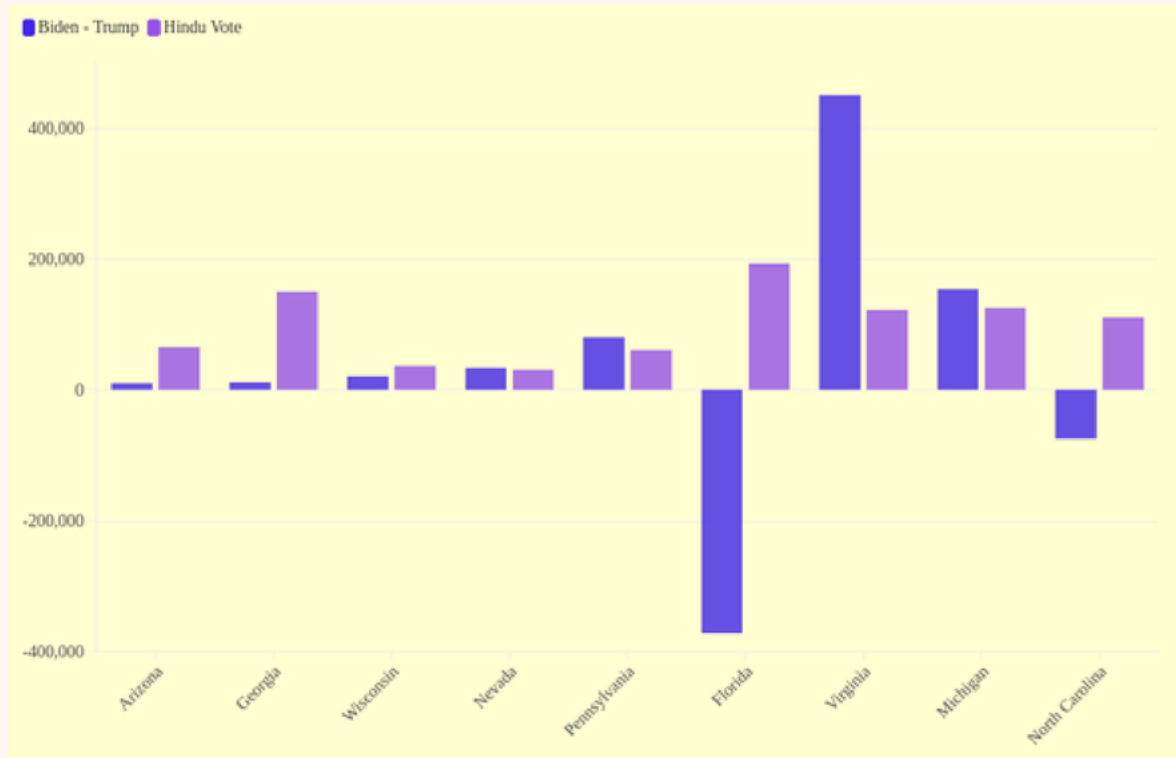
Our scriptures, such as the Ramayana and Mahabharata, compel us to seek the victory of good over evil, and we believe American foreign policy should reflect this. Therefore, we support candidates who stand against terrorism.

We oppose dividing people based on caste, race, or other outward characteristics and advocate for equal and fair treatment. We support a merit-based educational system for the benefit of society. Our quest for a saatvik lifestyle leads us to seek candidates who oppose illicit drugs. Candidates seeking the Hindu vote must also recognize the rise of Hindu hatred in the US. Hindus have faced harassment, physical attacks, vandalism of temples, and destruction of Mahatma Gandhi statues. In a law-abiding society, such acts cannot be tolerated. Candidates must commit to allocating federal and state resources to ensure that the full force of the law addresses violent Hindu hatred in public spaces.

We advocate for the environmentally sustainable development because our dharma and culture inspire us to treat earth as we mother.

That is why we have HinduVote initiative. HinduVote is a movement for voter education and voter empowerment. We help register voters, provide dharma-centric educational material to voters and candidates.





### Analysis of 2020 Presidential Elections

Hindu Vote is estimated based on Indian-American Vote, with approximation of non-Hindu Indian Americans and non-Indian Hindu





# HinduVote Activities

## Voter Registration

Many Hindus are first generation voters. HinduVote voter registration efforts ensure that Hindu voters register and participate in our democratic process at national, state and local levels.



## Tools for Voters

From pledge to vote to links to Voter Registration and locating polling booths, candidate profiles to American Hindu agenda, all the tools in one place!



## Get Out the Vote (GOTV)

Coordinate with temples and other organizations to ensure that Hindus exercise their democratic right to vote in person or mail-in their ballot



## Voter Outreach

Educate voters on issues that impact them in their daily lives. Organize virtual and in-person voter outreach campaigns



## Law Maker/Candidate Awareness

Articulate issues to candidates and elected officials, and seek candidate views on questionnaires, and candidate forums.



## Briefings and Testimonials

Hold briefings and testimonials for legislators and their key staff members. Present testimonies at all levels of the government



## Beyond Hindu Issues

We advocate dharma-based positions on jobs financial security, healthcare, social security, education, abortion, school prayers, gun control, national security etc.



## Hold Feed to Fire

Are the elected officials fulfilling their promises? We track the elected officials to see if they are fulfilling their promises made to the voters



# Hindus and Democracy

*HinduVote draws its essence from the ancient tapestry of democracy woven by the Hindus across millennia.*

As early as the 6th century BCE, Hindus embraced democratic practices. Several Mahajanapadas (major states) exhibited a republican structure.



By Avantiputra7 – Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=33202412>



Among these states, Vajji (or Vriji) in present-day Bihar, composed of eight clans such as the Licchavis, was renowned for its republican governance system. Other Mahajanapadas included: Malla, Sakyas, Lichchhavis (part of Vajji), Videha, Koliya, and Bulii.

The temple inscriptions of Uthiramerur describe the rural self-governance. They indicate that Uthiramerur had two village assemblies: Sabha and Ur.

The earliest surviving inscriptions from Uthiramerur date to the reign of the Pallava king Dantivarman (795–846 CE). These inscriptions indicate that the Sabha was already a well-established and mature institution by this time.





# Representation & Governance

**Sabha and Samiti** were popular assemblies that played important roles in governance. The Sabha was a council of elders or a senate, whereas the Samiti was a general assembly of people.

**Gana** were the assemblies where decisions were made collectively by representatives.



## Decentralized Governance – Gram Sabhas and Panchayats:

Ancient Indian democracies exhibited a high degree of decentralization. Local governance was strong, with village assemblies (known as grama sabhas) playing significant roles in managing local affairs.

## Consensus and Debate:

Decision-making processes involved extensive debates and discussions, aiming for consensus.

## Legal and Ethical Frameworks:

The functioning of these republics was guided by established legal and ethical frameworks, as seen in texts like the Arthashastra.



## Voting

One of the ways votes cast was using colored tickets called Salakas, and the process of collecting the tickets was called Salakagrahana. The official collecting ticket was called Salakagrahaka.



# Dharma Guide on Who To Vote For

## Ramayana

### Ayodhya Kanda 100.7-8:

• “A righteous leader, who provides for the welfare of his/her constituents, wins the hearts of the people.”

### Ayodhya Kanda 2.100.4:

• “A leader should always be active and vigilant, ensuring that her/his constituents are content and free from suffering.”

• “The prosperity of the State depends on the welfare of its constituents.”

### Ayodhya Kanda 15.18:

• “Leader should be just and treat all his/her constituents with equal kindness.”

### Ayodhya Kanda 34.2:

• “The leader who does not protect her/his constituents and does not ensure their welfare is the greatest sinner.”

• “A leader’s prime duty is to look after the safety and well-being of his/his constituents.”

### Yuddha Kanda 128.106:

• “It is the duty of a leader to ensure that his/her constituents are happy, prosperous, and free from fear.”

• “She/He should lead by example, upholding the highest standards of *dharma*.”

### Ayodhya Kanda 100.20:

• “Rama speaks of the importance of listening to the grievances of the subjects and addressing them promptly.”

• “A leader must be approachable and attentive to the needs of his/her constituents.”

### Ayodhya Kanda 100.6:

• “The true measure of a leader’s success is the happiness and prosperity of her/his constituents.”

## Bhagwad Gita

A saatvic leader, as described in the Bhagavad Gita, is one who is pure, wise, and selfless. Such a leader performs their duties without attachment, ego, or desire for personal gain, focusing on the welfare of all.

### Bhagavad Gita 18.26:

• “One who performs their duty without association with the modes of material nature, without false ego, with great determination and enthusiasm, and without wavering in success or failure, is said to be in the mode of goodness (*sattva*).”

### Bhagavad Gita 18.23:

• “That action which is regulated and performed without attachment, without love or hatred, and without desire for fruitive results, is said to be in the mode of goodness (*sattva*).”

*Note: We have replaced king/queen in some translations with “leader” and him/his to she/her, subjects/people with constituents, kingdom with state.*



# Dharma Guide on Who to Vote For



## Mahabharata

### Shanti Parva 90.30-31:

• “It is the duty of a leader to protect his constituents and ensure their prosperity. The leader who seeks to promote the welfare of her/his constituents acquires great merit.”

### Shanti Parva 109.10:

• “A leader should never act in a way that is detrimental to the welfare of his/her constituents. His/her duty is to protect them and ensure their well-being.”

• “She/He who governs the State with righteousness and ensures the happiness of her/his subjects is considered a true ruler.”

### Shanti Parva 132.18-19:

• “The leader who treats his/her constituents with kindness and fairness, who listens to their grievances and addresses them promptly, is loved by all.”

• “Such a leader gains the trust and loyalty of her/his constituents, leading to a prosperous and harmonious State.”

### Udyoga Parva 35.11:

• “A leader should be vigilant and active, always working for the welfare of his/her constituents. He/she should be accessible to his/her constituents and protect them from harm.”

“He/She who acts for the welfare of his constituents and protects them from danger is a true leader.”

### Shanti Parva 92.2-3:

• “A leader should always act with righteousness and uphold the principles of dharma. Her/His actions should be guided by the welfare of her/his constituents.”

• “The leader who ensures the well-being of her/his people and protects them from injustice attains the highest merit.”



## Artha Shastra

### Arthashastra 1.19.34-35:

• “What pleases himself/herself the leader shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his/her constituents the leader shall consider as good.”

### Arthashastra 1.19.25:

• “A just leader listens to the words of the constituents and then decides what should be done.”

• “She/He should act in such a way that her/his constituents are pleased with her/him.”

### Arthashastra 1.13.5:

• “The leader, well-versed in the science of politics, should be active in the affairs of the State.”

• “He/she should make himself accessible to his constituents, hear their grievances, and remove their causes.”

### Arthashastra 5.3.2:

• “The welfare of the State is based on the protection of its people.”

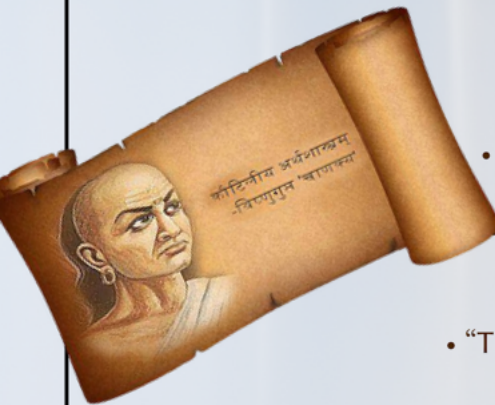
• “The leader should always protect his constituents from all kinds of dangers.”

### Arthashastra 1.6.2:

• “A leader who is merely guided by the literal words of the scriptures or by the examples of those who have failed in their duties is not entitled to reign.”

• “The leader should make use of his intellect, discern the truth, and ensure the welfare of his constituents.”

*Note: We have replaced king/queen in some translations with “leader” and him/his to she/her, subjects/people with constituents, kingdom with state.*



# AMERICAN HINDU AGENDA 2024



## Hindu Hate

Support legislation to bar “Hinduphobia.” Defund academic departments and academicians that actively promote Hindu hatred



## Hindu Temples

Support FBI investigation to determine systemic causes and culprits who have vandalized the Hindu temples and Mahatma Gandhi statues across the US



## Legal Immigration

Endorse immigration of highly skilled workers, removal of country based caps in H1B visas, expedite green cards for H1B visa holders and protect children with H1B visa from deportation



## Fairness in Education & Employment

Support merit based educational and occupational opportunities and the verdict in “Fair Admissions vs. Harvard” case



## Human Rights

Hold religious theocracies like Afghanistan, Pakistan and Bangladesh that egregiously abuse religious minorities accountable, and withhold their US aid



## Historic Artifacts

Facilitate the repatriation of stolen Hindu artifacts from museums and private collections to their countries of origin through legislation and enforcement



## Foreign Policy

Promote a multifaceted partnership with India, a democratic ally, without the interference in their sovereign rights. Appoint Hindu representatives in USCIRF and other faith-centric agencies



## Environment

Support legislations and policies that promote environmentally responsible, sustainable development

## About You and Your Vision

1: Tell us who you are and why you want to serve in the US Congress.



2: What is your vision for a better America?

3: What are your top three priorities should you get elected?

## Growing Hindu Hate



4: To counter the growing instances of targeted hate against Hindus in America, H.Res. 1131 – “Celebrating Hindu Americans, and condemning attacks on Hindu places of worship, Hinduphobia, and anti-Hindu bigotry, and for other purposes” has been introduced in the 118th Congress. Do you support this resolution? Will you support a similar resolution if it is reintroduced in the next Congress?



## Affirmative Action

5: What are your thoughts on merit-based admissions policies?

## Immigration Policies



6: H.R.6542 – Immigration Visa Efficiency and Security Act of 2023 increases the annual per-country cap on family-based immigrant visas and eliminates the per-country cap for employment-based immigrant visas to help the US attract and retain highly skilled professionals. Do you support this resolution? Will you support this resolution if it is reintroduced in the next Congress?



## International Human Rights

7: Do you support the human rights of persecuted religious minorities in authoritative theocracies? For example, do you believe that US Foreign Policy and US Aid should take into account the egregious abuses of Hindu and other religious minorities in countries such as Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Afghanistan?



## Foreign Policy

8: Do you believe that the US is currently interfering in the sovereign rights of democratic allies like India?



## Sustainability and Environment

9: What is your position on promoting renewable energy and environmental protection?



## Free Speech

10: Do you think there are limitations to free speech? How do you intend to guarantee free speech for all groups on university campuses? Do you think there are limitations to free speech?



## Gun Control

11: What is your position on gun control?



## Abortion

12: In June 2022, the US Supreme Court effectively overturned Roe v. Wade. What is your position on the decision of the US Supreme Court on abortion?



# Your Responsibility as a Voter



Register to Vote



Learn about the Candidates



Evaluate candidate positions



Find Out Who has Endorsed the candidates



Find out who is funding the candidate



Confirm Your Voter Registration



Locate Your Polling Booth



Go Vote!



hinduvote.org  
@hindupact



# Your Responsibility as a Hindu Community Organizer



Volunteer for HinduVote initiative



Ask the local board of elections for a voter list to determine who is not registered



Help unregistered voters Register to Vote



Select leaders who reflect Dharmic values



Organize community voter education drives



Organize Candidate Meet-and-Greets



Ask your temple /community center to become a polling center



Setup or volunteer in a voter education phone bank



Sign up as a poll worker



Provide rides to the polls

hinduvote.org  
@hindupact



# Voter Eligibility & Ineligibility

## You can vote in U.S. federal, state, and local elections if you:

- Are a U.S. citizen (some areas allow non-citizens to vote in local elections only)
- Meet your state's residency requirements
- Can be experiencing homelessness and still meet these requirements.
- Are 18 years old on or before Election Day
  - In almost every state, you can register to vote before you turn 18 if you will be 18 by Election Day.
  - Some states allow 17-year-olds who will be 18 by Election Day to vote in primaries.
- Are registered to vote by your state's voter registration deadline. North Dakota does not require voter registration.



### Eligibility for Voting:

- Non-citizens, including permanent legal residents, cannot vote in federal, state, and most local elections.
- Some people cannot vote after being convicted of a felony or if they are currently serving time for other types of crimes. Rules are different in each state.
- Some people who have a mental disability may not be able to vote. Rules vary by state.
- U.S. citizens residing in U.S. territories cannot vote for president in the general election.

<https://www.usa.gov/who-can-vote>





# Non-Citizens and Election Donations

## Rules for Donations and Contributions:

Although foreign nationals may not make contributions or expenditures (including advances of personal funds) in connection with any federal, state or local election, an individual who is a foreign national may participate in campaign activities as an uncompensated volunteer.



In doing so, the volunteer must be careful not to participate in the decision-making process of the campaign.

The Federal Election Campaign Act (the Act) and Commission regulations specifically prohibit foreign nationals from participating in the decisions of any person involving election-related activity. For example, a foreign national volunteer may attend committee events and campaign strategy meetings, but may not be involved in the management of the committee.



### "Green Card" exception

While non-citizens are prevented from making a political contribution (see next section), an individual who is not a citizen of the United States is eligible to make a contribution if he or she has a "green card" indicating that he or she is lawfully admitted for permanent residence in the United States.



# Internet Volunteer Activity

## General exception

An uncompensated individual or group of uncompensated individuals may engage in certain voluntary Internet activities for the purpose of influencing a federal election without restriction. These exempted internet activities would not result in a contribution or an expenditure under the Act and would not trigger any registration or reporting requirements with the FEC. This exemption applies to individuals acting with or without the knowledge or consent of a campaign or a political party committee. Exempted internet activities include, but are not limited to, sending or forwarding electronic mail, providing a hyperlink to a website, creating, maintaining or hosting a website and paying a nominal fee for the use of a website, and any other form of communication distributed over the internet. Refer to AOs 2018-03 and 2011-14.



## Use of employer's computer and Internet internet access

A corporation or a labor organization may permit its employees, shareholders, officials and members to use its facilities for individual volunteer internet activity, without making a prohibited contribution. The individual volunteer must comply with the corporation's or labor organization's internal policies for computer and internet use and must complete the normal amount of work for which the employee is paid is expected to perform. Also, the activity must not increase the overhead or operating costs of the organization, and the activity must not be coerced. The organization may not condition the availability of the internet or the computer on their being used for political activity or for support for or opposition to any particular candidate or political party.





## ELECTION DAY CHECKLIST



Research all the candidates on [hinduvote.org](https://hinduvote.org). Check out their engagement with the community and their position on Hindu and other issues that matter to you. Don't just rely on what you hear in the news or on social media.



Find your polling location ahead of time. You can check by contacting your local election office



Check the voting hours for your polling location. Polls are generally open from 7am-8pm, but this may vary depending on your location.



Don't forget to bring your ID and proof of address with you to the polling station. You won't be able to vote without them!



Consider bringing a sample ballot with you to the polling station so you can keep track of who you want to vote for.



Don't be afraid to ask for assistance if you need it. Poll workers are there to help you and ensure that everyone can vote.



Remember that every vote counts! Your voice matters and can make a difference in the outcome of the election.





A HISTORIC FIRST  
A COMPREHENSIVE VOTING GUIDE FOR CONGRESSIONAL ELECTIONS

<https://elections2024.HinduVote.org>

Look up Candidate based on your address, see how they voted on Issues of importance to Hindus, read their responses to questions of importance to hindus and rate the candidate

### HINDU VOTE MATTERS

Hindu dharma is the fourth largest faith practiced in the US. People who follow dharmic faiths make up almost 2% of US population.

In many of the battleground states, Hindu vote will be a deciding factor.

### AMERICAN HINDU ISSUES

From physical attacks on Hindus, attempts to erase Hindu faith from school textbooks to concern for human rights, and equality, we have documented issues that are important to the American Hindus  
Questionnaire for Congressional Candidates

Engage your legislators. Find out how represents you and tell them how you feel about issues that are being discussed  
Engage Your Legislators

### STEPS TO BETTER DECISION MAKING

200 New Bond St 60554 Search

Enter your address, we will show you your candidates and their positions from the Hindu perspective. You will also have an opportunity to provide your thoughts on the candidate

200 New Bond St 60554 Search

#### US House of Representatives

 Lauren Underwood Democratic Illinois 14	 Scott Gryder Republican Illinois 14
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#### US Senate

 Kathy Salvi Republican Illinois	 Tammy Duckworth Democratic Illinois
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#### US House of Representatives

 Lauren Underwood Democratic Illinois 14	 Scott Gryder Republican Illinois 14
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#### Voters Survey

Express Your Thoughts on the Candidate

#### Candidate Questionnaire

#### Key Votes

Date	Legislation	HinduPACT Position Agreement
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# Elections Related Tools on HinduVote.Org



**Register to Vote**



**Find Voting Locations**



**Verify Voter Registration**



**Request Absentee Ballot**



**Election Reminders**



**Donor Lookup**



**Political Action Committee  
Endorsements**



**Analysis of Legislations**



**Congressional Outreach**





*hindu वोट*  
*Enlightened Democracy*

★  
**YOUR VOTE  
COUNTS.**

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HINDU VOICE MATTERS.



<https://hinduvote.org>

<https://hindupact.org>

