



PRESS RELEASE

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Gear Up to VoteSafe Receives Support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation

Additional funds urgently needed to help protect more election officials, poll workers, volunteers, and voters

October 22, 2020 – [RESOLVE](#) announces that the [W.K. Kellogg Foundation](#) has approved a grant to support [Gear Up to VoteSafe](#), a non-partisan initiative of RESOLVE, [VoteSafe](#), and [Mission for Masks](#), that supports safe, in-person voting by getting personal protective equipment (PPE) to election officials, poll workers, volunteers, and voters for the upcoming U.S. national election taking place during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The support provided by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will fund the provision of *Gear Up to VoteSafe* PPE kits for an initial eight voting centers and distribution of safe voting guides to poll workers and voters. The typical *Gear Up to VoteSafe* PPE kit will include a [Makers Respond](#) face shield, N95 or equivalent face mask, hand sanitizer, and a voter safety guide.¹ This PPE is essential for workers and volunteers who risk exposure to COVID-19 through interaction with voters over many hours. The kits can be distributed to election officials, poll workers, and volunteers via pre-election mailing packages and on Election Day at or near polling stations. A free *Gear Up to VoteSafe* voter safety guide, created by RESOLVE project [Open Source Medical Supplies](#) (OSMS), is also now available [online](#) for election workers and voters alike.

Polling places, including Election Super Centers, have varying needs for PPE. *Gear Up to VoteSafe* will target PPE kit distribution to maximize impact. The goal is to help protect at least 250,000 poll workers, volunteers, and voters, as well as others with whom they come in contact. RESOLVE is seeking additional funds or in-kind donations to enable the distribution of PPE kits and voter safety guides to polling places around the country in need of PPE. *Gear Up to VoteSafe* works with all political parties, businesses, civil society organizations, and faith groups of all kinds in support of this public health initiative.

¹ Kit contents may be adjusted based on availability of supplies.

Individuals and organizations looking to help can do so by [sponsoring](#) *Gear Up to VoteSafe* PPE kits for distribution to polling places lacking PPE, purchasing and donating kits for polling stations or volunteers, buying face shields to supplement voters' own PPE, distributing the voter safety guide among their networks, and sharing information about *Gear Up to VoteSafe*.

“RESOLVE’s commitment to provide personal protective equipment and supplies to election officials, poll workers, volunteers, and voters removes barriers and makes voting accessible, safe, and available,” said Caroline Brunton, Program Officer for the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. “When communities are given the opportunity to lift up their voices with their vote, they have a hand in ensuring a brighter future for all children.”

“*Gear Up to VoteSafe* is a non-partisan effort to support election workers and volunteers and a pledge and positive action each voter can take. We need businesses, foundations, and donors to add to this generous support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to ensure a safe, in-person vote,” said Stephen D’Esposito, President and CEO of RESOLVE.

“Voters want to choose between secure absentee ballots and safe in-person polling places, and they deserve those options. We’re proud to be working with RESOLVE and wish to thank the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. The generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation will help our election officials and poll workers, the guardians of our democracy, build safer, in-person polling places for their voters amidst this pandemic,” said Governor Tom Ridge, Co-Chair of the VoteSafe coalition.

“With the COVID-19 pandemic still impacting the lives of all Americans, it is imperative at Mission for Masks that we build coalitions like this one, and stay nimble and reactive to the needs of workers and volunteers who are the bedrock of our democratic voting process. Support from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation is matched by the heroic efforts of volunteers around the country. We need other donors to add to this support – every contribution helps,” said Jess Jacobs, co-founder of Mission for Masks.

For more information about *Gear Up to VoteSafe*, visit this [website](#).

RESOLVE is a Washington, D.C. based non-governmental organization with more than 40 years of experience forging sustainable solutions to critical social, health, and environmental challenges by creating innovative partnerships where they are least likely and most needed. RESOLVE is known for designing innovative projects that create common ground, including recent COVID-19 response initiatives like [Makers Respond](#), which has put PPE in the hands of first responders, and [Open Source Medical Supplies](#), which has helped makers and manufacturers respond to shortages by providing rapid, expert review of open-source PPE designs. This new partnership builds on RESOLVE’s history of supporting rapid response to issues like conflict minerals, food safety, the economic impact of the Ebola outbreak, and the wildlife poaching crisis, and an ability to transition immediate support into effective, scalable, long-term solutions. For more information on RESOLVE’s COVID-19 response initiative, please visit [this site](#).

VoteSafe is a non-partisan coalition of election administrators and organizations co-chaired by former Governors Tom Ridge (PA) and Jennifer Granholm (MI). VoteSafe endorses the simple principle that every American has the right to vote safely, even amidst the pandemic. VoteSafe is committed to ensuring voters have options: expanded access to absentee ballots as well as safe, sanitary, and accessible in-person voting locations. For more information on VoteSafe, please visit [this site](#).

Mission for Masks, an initiative to connect medical workers, essential workers, and non-profit organizations to PPE during the COVID-19 pandemic, was co-founded by actress, producer, and advocate Jess Jacobs and critical care nurse and author Sonja M. Schwartzbach. Mission for Masks has a roster of over 300 groups around the U.S.A. and is helping to facilitate the movement of equipment from manufacturers and importers directly to those in need, through hospital purchases, city and state partnerships, mutual aid groups, non-profits, and philanthropic donors. For more information on Mission for Masks, please visit [this site](#).

Open Source Medical Supplies, a project of RESOLVE, informs and connects local makers, manufacturers, organizers, institutions, and the public so local communities can produce their own supplies and use them to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises. OSMS has developed [safe voting resources](#) to support volunteers and voters. For more information about OSMS, please visit [this site](#).

W.K. Kellogg Foundation (WKKF), founded in 1930 as an independent, private foundation by breakfast cereal innovator and entrepreneur Will Keith Kellogg, is among the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States. Guided by the belief that all children should have an equal opportunity to thrive, WKKF works with communities to create conditions for vulnerable children so they can realize their full potential in school, work, and life. The Kellogg Foundation is based in Battle Creek, Michigan, and works throughout the United States and internationally, as well as with sovereign tribes. Special attention is paid to priority places where there are high concentrations of poverty and where children face significant barriers to success. WKKF priority places in the U.S. are in Michigan, Mississippi, New Mexico, and New Orleans; and internationally, are in Mexico and Haiti. For more information, visit www.wkkf.org.