**SEC. 4011. APPLICABILITY OF ADJUSTMENTS TO DISCRETIONARY SPENDING LIMITS.**

Except as expressly provided otherwise, the adjustments provided by section 251(b) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 901(b)) shall not apply to allocations, aggregates, or other budgetary levels established pursuant to this concurrent resolution.

**SEC. 4012. BUDGETARY TREATMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.**

(a) SENATE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate, notwithstanding section 302(a)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)(1)), section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 632 note), and section 2009a of title 39, United States Code, the report or the joint explanatory statement accompanying this concurrent resolution on the budget or the statement filed pursuant to section 4006(a), as applicable, shall include in an allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) to the Committee on Appropriations of the Senate of amounts for the discretionary administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and the United States Postal Service.

(2) SPECIAL RULE.—In the Senate, for purposes of enforcing section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(f)), estimates of the level of total new budget authority and total outlays provided by a measure shall include any discretionary amounts described in paragraph (1).

(b) HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the House of Representatives, notwithstanding section 302(a)(1) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)(1)), section 13301 of the Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 (2 U.S.C. 632 note), and section 2009a of title 39, United States Code, the report or the joint explanatory statement accompanying this concurrent resolution on the budget or the statement filed pursuant to section 4006(b), as applicable, shall include in an allocation under section 302(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(a)) to the Committee on Appropriations of the House of Representatives of amounts for the discretionary administrative expenses of the Social Security Administration and the United States Postal Service.

(2) SPECIAL RULE.—In the House of Representatives, for purposes of enforcing section 302(f) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 633(f)), estimates of the level of total new budget authority and total outlays provided by a measure shall include any discretionary amounts described in paragraph (1).

**SEC. 4013. APPROPRIATE BUDGETARY ADJUSTMENTS IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

In the House of Representatives, the chair of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may make appropriate budgetary adjustments of new budget authority and the outlays flowing therefrom pursuant to the adjustment authorities provided by this concurrent resolution.

**SEC. 4014. ADJUSTMENT FOR CHANGES IN THE BASELINE IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.**

In the House of Representatives, the chair of the Committee on the Budget of the House of Representatives may adjust the allocations, aggregates, and other appropriate budgetary levels in this concurrent resolution to reflect changes resulting from the Congressional Budget Office's updates to its baseline for fiscal years 2022 through 2031.

**SEC. 4015. SCORING RULE IN THE SENATE FOR CHILD CARE AND PRE-KINDERGARTEN LEGISLATION.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—In the Senate, for the purposes of estimates with respect to any child care or pre-kindergarten legislation during the 117th Congress, the Congressional Budget Office shall consider funding for programs under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.) to continue at baseline levels.

(b) EXCEPTION.—This section shall not apply to any bill or joint resolution making appropriations for discretionary accounts.

**SEC. 4016. EXERCISE OF RULEMAKING POWERS.**

Congress adopts the provisions of this title—

(1) as an exercise of the rulemaking power of the Senate and the House of Representatives, and as such they shall be considered as part of the rules of each House or of that House to which they specifically apply, and such rules shall supersede other rules only to the extent that they are inconsistent with such other rules; and

(2) with full recognition of the constitutional right of either the Senate or the House of Representatives to change those rules (insofar as they relate to that House) at any time, in the same manner, and to the same extent as is the case of any other rule of the Senate or House of Representatives.

## JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT OF 2021

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 601, I call up the bill (H.R. 4) to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BEATTY). Pursuant to House Resolution 601, the amendment printed in House Report 117–117 is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 4

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

***SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.***

*This Act may be cited as the ''John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021''.*

***SEC. 2. VOTE DILUTION, DENIAL, AND ABRIDGMENT CLAIMS.***

*(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(a) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301(a)) is amended—*

*(1) by inserting after ''applied by any State or political subdivision'' the following: ''for the purpose of, or''; and*

*(2) by striking ''as provided in subsection (b)'' and inserting ''as provided in subsection (b), (c), (d), or (f)''.*

*(b) VOTE DILUTION.—Section 2(b) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10301(b)) is amended—*

*(1) by inserting after ''A violation of subsection (a)'' the following: ''for vote dilution'';*

*(2) by inserting after the period at the end the following: ''For the purposes of this subsection:'';*

*(3) by adding at the end the following new paragraphs:*

*''(1) To prevail, in demonstrating that a representational, districting, or apportionment scheme results in vote dilution, a plaintiff shall, as a threshold matter, establish that—*

*''(A) the members of the protected class are sufficiently numerous and geographically compact to constitute a majority in a single-member district;*

*''(B) the members of the protected class are politically cohesive; and*

*''(C) the residents of that district who are not the members of the protected class usually vote sufficiently as a bloc to enable them to defeat the preferred candidates of the members of the protected class.*

*''(2) Upon a plaintiff establishing the required threshold showing under paragraph (1), a court shall conduct a totality of the circumstances analysis with respect to a claim of vote dilution to determine whether there was a violation of subsection (a), which shall include the following factors:*

*''(A) The extent of any history of official voting discrimination in the State or political subdivision that affected the right of members of the protected class to register, to vote, or otherwise to participate in the political process.*

*''(B) The extent to which voting in the elections of the State or political subdivision is racially polarized.*

*''(C) The extent to which the State or political subdivision has used voting practices or procedures that tend to enhance the opportunity for discrimination against the members of the protected class, such as unusually large election districts, majority vote requirements, anti-single shot provisions, or other qualifications, prerequisites, standards, practices, or procedures that may enhance the opportunity for discrimination against the members of the protected class.*

*''(D) If there is a candidate slating process, whether the members of the protected class have been denied access to that process.*

*''(E) The extent to which members of the protected class in the State or political subdivision bear the effects of discrimination both public or private, in such areas as education, employment, health, housing, and transportation, which hinder their ability to participate effectively in the political process.*

*''(F) Whether political campaigns have been characterized by overt or subtle racial appeals.*

*''(G) The extent to which members of the protected class have been elected to public office in the jurisdiction.*

*''(3) In conducting a totality of the circumstances analysis under paragraph (2), a court may consider such other factors as the court may determine to be relevant, including—*

*''(A) whether there is a significant lack of responsiveness on the part of elected officials to the particularized needs of the members of the protected class, including a lack of concern for or responsiveness to the requests and proposals of the members of the protected class, except that compliance with a court order may not be considered evidence of responsiveness on the part of the jurisdiction; and*

*''(B) whether the policy underlying the State or political subdivision's use of such voting qualification, prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice or procedure is tenuous.*

*''In making this determination, a court shall consider whether the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure in question was designed to advance and materially advances a valid and substantiated State insterest.''.*

*''(4) A class of citizens protected by subsection (a) may include a cohesive coalition of members of different racial or language minority groups.''; and*

*(4) VOTE DENIAL OR ABRIDGEMENT.—Section 2 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10301), as amended by subsections (a) and (b), is further amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(c)(1) A violation of subsection (a) resulting in vote denial or abridgement is established if the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure—*

*''(A) results or will result in members of a protected class facing greater costs or burdens in participating in the political process than other voters; and''.*

*''(B) the greater costs or burdens are, at least in part, caused by or linked to social and historical conditions that have produced or produce*

*on the date of such challenge discrimination against members of the protected class.*

*''In determining the existence of a burden for purposes of subparagraph (A), the absolute number or the percent of voters affected or the presence of voters who are not members of a protected class in the affected area shall not be dispositive, and the affected area may be smaller than the jurisdiction to which the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure applies.''*

*''(2) The challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure need only be a but-for cause of the discriminatory result described in paragraph (1) or perpetuate pre-existing burdens or costs.*

*''(3)(A) The factors that are relevant to a totality of the circumstances analysis with respect to a claim of vote denial or abridgement pursuant to this subsection include the following:*

*''(i) The extent of any history of official voting-related discrimination in the State or political subdivision that affected the right of members of the protected class to register, to vote, or otherwise to participate in the political process.*

*''(ii) The extent to which voting in the elections of the State or political subdivision is racially polarized.*

*''(iii) The extent to which the State or political subdivision has used photographic voter identification requirements, documentary proof of citizenship requirements, documentary proof of residence requirements, or other voting practices or procedures, beyond those required by Federal law, that may impair the ability of members of the minority group to participate fully in the political process.*

*''(iv) The extent to which minority group members bear the effects of discrimination, both public and private, in areas such as education, employment, health, housing, and transportation, which hinder their ability to participate effectively in the political process.*

*''(v) The use of overt or subtle racial appeals either in political campaigns or surrounding adoption or maintenance of the challenged practice.*

*''(vi) The extent to which members of the minority group have been elected to public office in the jurisdiction, provided that the fact that the minority group is too small to elect candidates of its choice shall not defeat a claim of vote denial or abridgment.*

*''(vii) Whether there is a lack of responsiveness on the part of elected officials to the particularized needs of minority group members, including a lack of concern for or responsiveness to the requests and proposals of the group, except that compliance with a court order may not be considered evidence of responsiveness on the part of the jurisdiction.*

*''(viii) Whether the policy underlying the State or political subdivision's use of the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure is tenuous. In making a determination under this clause, a court shall consider whether the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure in question was designed to advance and materially advances a valid and substantiated State interest.*

*''(ix) Subject to paragraph (4), such other factors as the court may determine to be relevant.*

*''(B) The factors described in subparagraph (A), individually and collectively, shall be considered as a means of establishing that a voting practice amplifies the effects of past or present discrimination in violation in subsection (a).*

*''(C) A plaintiff need not show any particular combination or number of factors to establish a violation of subsection (a).*

*''(4) The factors that are relevant to a totality of the circumstances analysis with respect to a claim of vote denial or abridgement do not include the following:*

*''(A) The degree to which the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure has a long pedigree or was in widespread use at some earlier date.*

*''(B) The use of an identical or similar qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure in other States or jurisdictions.*

*''(C) The availability of other forms of voting unimpacted by the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure to all members of the electorate, including members of the protected class, unless the jurisdiction is simultaneously expanding such other practices to eliminate any disproportionate burden imposed by the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure.*

*''(D) Unsubstantiated defenses that the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure is necessary to address criminal activity.*

*''(d)(1) A violation of subsection (a) for the purpose of vote denial or abridgement is established if the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure is intended, at least in part, to dilute minority voting strength or to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2).*

*''(2) Discrimination on account of race, color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2) need only be one purpose of a qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure to demonstrate a violation of subsection (a).*

*''(3) A qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure intended to dilute minority voting strength or to make it more difficult for minority voters to cast a ballot that will be counted violates this subsection even if an additional purpose of the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure is to benefit a particular political party or group.*

*''(4) The context for the adoption of the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure, including actions by official decisionmakers before the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure, may be relevant to a violation of this subsection.*

*''(5) Claims under this subsection require proof of a discriminatory impact but do not require proof of a violation pursuant to subsection (b) or (c).''.*

*''(e) For purposes of this section, the term 'affected area' means any geographic area, in which members of a protected class are affected by a qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure allegedly in violation of this section, within a State (including any Indian lands).''.*

***SEC. 3. RETROGRESSION.***

*Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), as amended by section 2 of this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(f) A violation of subsection (a) is established when a State or political subdivision enacts or seeks to administer any qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting in any election that has the purpose of or will have the effect of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the United States on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2), to participate in the electoral process or elect their preferred candidates of choice. This subsection applies to any action taken on or after January 1, 2021, by a State or political subdivision to enact or seek to administer any such qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice or procedure.*

*''(g) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (f), final decisions of the United States District Court of the District of Columbia on applications or petitions by States or political subdivisions for preclearance under section 5 of any changes in voting prerequisites, standards, practices, or procedures, supersede the provisions of subsection (f).''.*

***SEC. 4. VIOLATIONS TRIGGERING AUTHORITY OF COURT TO RETAIN JURISDICTION.***

*(a) TYPES OF VIOLATIONS.—Section 3(c) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10302(c)) is amended by striking ''violations of the fourteenth or fifteenth amendment'' and inserting ''violations of the 14th or 15th Amendment, violations of this Act, or violations of any Federal law that prohibits discrimination in voting on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group,''.*

*(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10302(a)) is amended by striking ''violations of the fourteenth or fifteenth amendment'' and inserting ''violations of the 14th or 15th Amendment, violations of this Act, or violations of any Federal law that prohibits discrimination in voting on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group,''.*

***SEC. 5. CRITERIA FOR COVERAGE OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.***

*(a) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO SECTION 4(a).—*

*(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(b)) is amended to read as follows:*

*''(b) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS.—*

*''(1) EXISTENCE OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATIONS DURING PREVIOUS 25 YEARS.—*

*''(A) STATEWIDE APPLICATION.—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a State and all political subdivisions within the State during a calendar year if—*

*''(i) fifteen or more voting rights violations occurred in the State during the previous 25 calendar years;*

*''(ii) ten or more voting rights violations occurred in the State during the previous 25 calendar years, at least one of which was committed by the State itself (as opposed to a political subdivision within the State); or*

*''(iii) three or more voting rights violations occurred in the State during the previous 25 calendar years and the State itself administers the elections in the State or political subdivisions in which the voting rights violations occurred.*

*''(B) APPLICATION TO SPECIFIC POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—Subsection (a) applies with respect to a political subdivision as a separate unit during a calendar year if three or more voting rights violations occurred in the subdivision during the previous 25 calendar years.*

*''(2) PERIOD OF APPLICATION.—*

*''(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in subparagraph (B), if, pursuant to paragraph (1), subsection (a) applies with respect to a State or political subdivision during a calendar year, subsection (a) shall apply with respect to such State or political subdivision for the period—*

*''(i) that begins on January 1 of the year in which subsection (a) applies; and*

*''(ii) that ends on the date which is 10 years after the date described in clause (i).*

*''(B) NO FURTHER APPLICATION AFTER DECLARATORY JUDGMENT.—*

*''(i) STATES.—If a State obtains a declaratory judgment under subsection (a), and the judgment remains in effect, subsection (a) shall no longer apply to such State pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) unless, after the issuance of the declaratory judgment, paragraph (1)(A) applies to the State solely on the basis of voting rights violations occurring after the issuance of the declaratory judgment.*

*''(ii) POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—If a political subdivision obtains a declaratory judgment under subsection (a), and the judgment remains in effect, subsection (a) shall no longer apply to such political subdivision pursuant to paragraph (1), including pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) (relating to the statewide application of subsection (a)), unless, after the issuance of the declaratory judgment, paragraph (1)(B) applies to the political subdivision solely on the basis of voting rights violations occurring after the issuance of the declaratory judgment.*

*''(3) DETERMINATION OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a voting rights violation occurred in a State or political subdivision if any of the following applies:*

''(A) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATION OF THE 14TH OR 15TH AMENDMENT.—Any final judgment, or any preliminary, temporary, or declaratory relief (that was not reversed on appeal), in which the plaintiff prevailed or a court of the United States found that the plaintiff demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits or raised a serious question with regard to race discrimination, in which any court of the United States determined that a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group occurred, or that a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting created an undue burden on the right to vote in connection with a claim that the law unduly burdened voters of a particular race, color, or language minority group, in violation of the 14th or 15th Amendment, anywhere within the State or subdivision.

''(B) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATIONS OF THIS ACT.—Any final judgment, or any preliminary, temporary, or declaratory relief (that was not reversed on appeal) in which the plaintiff prevailed or a court of the United States found that the plaintiff demonstrated a likelihood of success on the merits or raised a serious question with regard to race discrimination, in which any court of the United States determined that a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting was imposed or applied or would have been imposed or applied anywhere within the State or subdivision in a manner that resulted or would have resulted in a denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, in violation of subsection 4(e) or 4(f) or section 2, 201, or 203 of this Act.

''(C) FINAL JUDGMENT; DENIAL OF DECLARATORY JUDGMENT.—In a final judgment (that was not been reversed on appeal), any court of the United States has denied the request of the State or subdivision for a declaratory judgment under section 3(c) or section 5, and thereby prevented a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting from being enforced anywhere within the State or subdivision.

''(D) OBJECTION BY THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—The Attorney General has interposed an objection under section 3(c) or section 5, and thereby prevented a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting from being enforced anywhere within the State or subdivision. A violation per this subsection has not occurred where an objection has been withdrawn by the Attorney General, unless the withdrawal was in response to a change in the law or practice that served as the basis of the objection. A violation under this subsection has not occurred where the objection is based solely on a State or political subdivision's failure to comply with a procedural process that would not otherwise constitute an independent violation of this act.

''(E) CONSENT DECREE, SETTLEMENT, OR OTHER AGREEMENT.—A consent decree, settlement, or other agreement was adopted or entered by a court of the United States or contained an admission of liability by the defendants, which resulted in the alteration or abandonment of a voting practice anywhere in the territory of such State or subdivision that was challenged on the ground that the practice denied or abridged the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in violation of subsection 4(e) or 4(f) or section 2, 201, or 203 of this Act, or the 14th or 15th Amendment. An extension or modification of an agreement as defined by this subsection that has been in place for ten years or longer shall count as an independent violation. If a court of the United States finds that an agreement itself as defined by this subsection denied or abridged the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, violated subsection 4(e) or 4(f) or section 2, 201, or 203 of this Act, or created an undue burden on the right to vote in connection with a claim that the consent decree, settlement, or other agreement unduly burdened voters of a particular race, color, or language minority group, that finding shall count as an independent violation.

''(F) MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS.—Each voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, including each redistricting plan, found to be a violation by a court of the United States pursuant to subsection (a) or (b), or prevented from enforcement pursuant to subsection (c) or (d), or altered or abandoned pursuant to subsection (e) shall count as an independent violation. Within a redistricting plan, each violation found to discriminate against any group of voters based on race, color, or language minority group shall count as an independent violation.

''(4) TIMING OF DETERMINATIONS.—

''(A) DETERMINATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLATIONS.—As early as practicable during each calendar year, the Attorney General shall make the determinations required by this subsection, including updating the list of voting rights violations occurring in each State and political subdivision for the previous calendar year.

''(B) EFFECTIVE UPON PUBLICATION IN FEDERAL REGISTER.—A determination or certification of the Attorney General under this section or under section 8 or 13 shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 4(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)) is amended—

(A) in paragraph (1), in the first sentence of the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking ''any State with respect to which'' and all that follows through ''unless'' and inserting ''any State to which this subsection applies during a calendar year pursuant to determinations made under subsection (b), or in any political subdivision of such State (as such subdivision existed on the date such determinations were made with respect to such State), though such determinations were not made with respect to such subdivision as a separate unit, or in any political subdivision with respect to which this subsection applies during a calendar year pursuant to determinations made with respect to such subdivision as a separate unit under subsection (b), unless'';

(B) in paragraph (1) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking the second sentence;

(C) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking ''(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)'';

(D) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking ''(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)'';

(E) in paragraph (3), by striking ''(in the case of a State or subdivision seeking a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)'';

(F) in paragraph (5), by striking ''(in the case of a State or subdivision which sought a declaratory judgment under the second sentence of this subsection)'';

(G) by striking paragraphs (7) and (8); and

(H) by redesignating paragraph (9) as paragraph (7).

(b) CLARIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—Section 4(a)(1) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''race or color,'' and inserting ''race, color, or in contravention of the guarantees of subsection (f)(2),''.

(c) ADMINISTRATIVE BAILOUT.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303) is amended by adding at the end the following:

''(g) ADMINISTRATIVE BAILOUT.—

''(1) DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—After making a determination under subsection (b)(1)(A) that the provisions of subsection (a) apply with respect to a State and all political subdivisions within the State, the Attorney General shall determine if any political subdivision of the State is eligible for an exemption under this subsection, and shall publish, in the Federal Register, a list of all such political subdivisions. Any political subdivision included on such list is not subject to any requirement under section 5 until the date on which any application under this section has been finally disposed of or no such application may be made.

''(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this subsection may be construed to provide—

''(i) that the determinations made pursuant to the creation of the list shall have any binding or preclusive effect; or

''(ii) that inclusion on the list—

''(I) constitutes a final determination by the Attorney General that the listee is eligible for an exemption pursuant to this subsection or that, in the case of the listee, the provisions of subparagraphs (A) through (F) of subsection (a)(1) are satisfied; or

''(II) entitles the listee to any exemption pursuant to this subsection.

''(2) ELIGIBILITY.—A political subdivision that submits an application under paragraph (3) shall be eligible for an exemption under this subsection only if, during the ten years preceding the filing of the application, and during the pendency of such application—

''(A) no test of device referred to in subsection (a)(1) has been used within such political subdivision for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color or in contravention of the guarantees of subsection (f)(2);

''(B) no final judgment of any court of the United States, other than the denial of declaratory judgment under this section, has determined that denials or abridgements of the right to vote on account of race or color have occurred anywhere in the territory of such political subdivision or that denials or abridgements of the right to vote in contravention of the guarantees of subsection (f)(2) have occurred anywhere in the territory of such subdivision and no consent decree, settlement, or agreement has been entered into resulting in any abandonment of a voting practice challenged on such grounds; and no declaratory judgment under this section shall be entered during the pendency of an action commenced before the filing of an action under this section and alleging such denials or abridgements of the right to vote;

''(C) no Federal examiners or observers under this Act have been assigned to such political subdivision;

''(D) such political subdivision and all governmental units within its territory have complied with section 5 of this Act, including compliance with the requirement that no change covered by section 5 has been enforced without preclearance under section 5, and have repealed all changes covered by section 5 to which the Attorney General has successfully objected or as to which the United States District Court for the District of Columbia has denied a declaratory judgment;

''(E) the Attorney General has not interposed any objection (that has not been overturned by a final judgment of a court) and no declaratory judgment has been denied under section 5, with respect to any submission by or on behalf of the plaintiff or any governmental unit within its territory under section 5, and no such submissions or declaratory judgment actions are pending; and

''(F) such political subdivision and all governmental units within its territory—

''(i) have eliminated voting procedures and methods of election which inhibit or dilute equal access to the electoral process;

''(ii) have engaged in constructive efforts to eliminate intimidation and harassment of persons exercising rights protected under this Act; and

''(iii) have engaged in other constructive efforts, such as expanded opportunity for convenient registration and voting for every person of voting age and the appointment of minority persons as election officials throughout the jurisdiction and at all stages of the election and registration process.

''(3) APPLICATION PERIOD.—Not later than 90 days after the publication of the list under paragraph (1), a political subdivision included on such list may submit an application, containing such information as the Attorney General may require, for an exemption under this subsection. The Attorney General shall provide notice in the Federal Register of such application.

''(4) COMMENT PERIOD.—During the 90-day period beginning on the date that notice is published under paragraph (3), the Attorney General shall give interested persons an opportunity to submit objections to the issuance of an exemption under this subsection to a political subdivision on the basis that the political subdivision is not eligible under paragraph (2) to the Attorney General. During the 1 year period beginning on the effective date of this subsection, such 90-day period shall be extended by an additional 30 days. The Attorney General shall notify the political subdivision of each objection submitted and afford the political subdivision an opportunity to respond.

''(5) DETERMINATION AS TO OBJECTIONS.—In the case of a political subdivision with respect to which an objection has been submitted under paragraph (4), the following shall apply:

''(A) CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS.—The Attorney General shall consider and respond to each such objection (and any response of the political subdivision thereto) during the 60 day period beginning on the day after the comment period under paragraph (4) concludes.

''(B) JUSTIFIED OBJECTIONS.—If the Attorney General determines that any such objection is justified, the Attorney General shall publish notice in the Federal Register denying the application for an exemption under this subsection.

''(C) UNJUSTIFIED OBJECTIONS.—If the Attorney General determines that no objection submitted is justified, each person that submitted such an objection may, not later than 90 days after the end of the period established under subparagraph (A), file, in the District Court of the District of Columbia, an action for judicial review of such determination in accordance with chapter 7 of title 5, United States Code.

''(6) EXEMPTION.—The Attorney General may issue an exemption, by publication in the Federal Register, from the application of the provisions of subsection (a) with respect to a political subdivision that—

''(A) is eligible under paragraph (2); and

''(B) with respect to which no objection under was submitted under paragraph (4) or determined to be justified under paragraph (5).

''(7) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Except as otherwise explicitly provided in this subsection, no determination under this subsection shall be subject to review by any court, and all determinations under this subsection are committed to the discretion of the Attorney General.

''(8) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—If a political subdivision was not subject to the application of the provisions of subsection (a) by reason of a declaratory judgment entered prior to the effective date of this subsection, and such political subdivision has not violated any eligibility requirement set forth in paragraph (2) at any time thereafter, then that political subdivision shall not be subject to the requirements of subsection (a).''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(a)(1) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)(1)), as amended by this Act, is further amended by inserting after ''the United States District Court for the District of Columbia issues a declaratory judgment under this section'' the following: '', or, in the case of a political subdivision, the Attorney General issues an exemption under subsection (g)''.

(B) EXPIRATION OF TIME LIMIT.—On the date that is 1 year after the effective date of this subsection, section 4(g)(3) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(g)(3)) is amended by striking ''During the 1 year period beginning on the effective date of this subsection, such 90-day period shall be extended by an additional 30 days.''. For purposes of any periods under such section commenced as of such date, the 90-day period shall remain extended by an additional 30 days.

**SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE FOR COVERED PRACTICES.**

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) is further amended by inserting after section 4 the following:

**''SEC. 4A. DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE FOR COVERED PRACTICES.**

''(a) PRACTICE-BASED PRECLEARANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State and each political subdivision shall—

''(A) identify any newly enacted or adopted law, regulation, or policy that includes a voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or a standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, that is a covered practice described in subsection (b); and

''(B) ensure that no such covered practice is implemented unless or until the State or political subdivision, as the case may be, complies with subsection (c).

''(2) DETERMINATIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS OF VOTING-AGE POPULATION.—

''(A) IN GENERAL.—As early as practicable during each calendar year, the Attorney General, in consultation with the Director of the Bureau of the Census and the heads of other relevant offices of the government, shall make the determinations required by this section regarding voting-age populations and the characteristics of such populations, and shall publish a list of the States and political subdivisions to which a voting-age population characteristic described in subsection (b) applies.

''(B) PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER.—A determination or certification of the Attorney General under this paragraph shall be effective upon publication in the Federal Register.

''(b) COVERED PRACTICES.—To assure that the right of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or abridged on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group as a result of the implementation of certain qualifications or prerequisites to voting, or standards, practices, or procedures with respect to voting newly adopted in a State or political subdivision, the following shall be covered practices subject to the requirements described in subsection (a):

''(1) CHANGES TO METHOD OF ELECTION.—Any change to the method of election—

''(A) to add seats elected at-large in a State or political subdivision where—

''(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the political subdivision's voting-age population; or

''(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision; or

''(B) to convert one or more seats elected from a single-member district to one or more at-large seats or seats from a multi-member district in a State or political subdivision where—

''(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the political subdivision's voting-age population; or

''(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision.

''(2) CHANGES TO JURISDICTION BOUNDARIES.—Any change or series of changes within a year to the boundaries of a jurisdiction that reduces by 3 or more percentage points the proportion of the jurisdiction's voting-age population that is comprised of members of a single racial group or language minority group in a State or political subdivision where—

''(A) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the political subdivision's voting-age population; or

''(B) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision.

''(3) CHANGES THROUGH REDISTRICTING.—Any change to the boundaries of election districts in a State or political subdivision where any racial group or language minority group that is not the largest racial group or language minority group in the jurisdiction and that represents 15 percent or more of the State or political subdivision's voting-age population experiences a population increase of at least 20 percent of its voting-age population, over the preceding decade (as calculated by the Bureau of the Census under the most recent decennial census), in the jurisdiction.

''(4) CHANGES IN DOCUMENTATION OR QUALIFICATIONS TO VOTE.—Any change to requirements for documentation or proof of identity to vote or register to vote that will exceed or be more stringent than such requirements under State law on the day before the date of enactment of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021; and further, if a State has in effect a requirement that an individual present identification as a condition of receiving and casting a ballot in an election for Federal office, if the State does not permit the individual to meet the requirement and cast a ballot in the election in the same manner as an individual who presents identification—

''(A) in the case of an individual who desires to vote in person, by presenting the appropriate State or local election official with a sworn written statement, signed by the individual under penalty of perjury, attesting to the individual's identity and attesting that the individual is eligible to vote in the election; and

''(B) in the case of an individual who desires to vote by mail, by submitting with the ballot the statement described in subparagraph (A).

''(5) CHANGES TO MULTILINGUAL VOTING MATERIALS.—Any change that reduces multilingual voting materials or alters the manner in which such materials are provided or distributed, where no similar reduction or alteration occurs in materials provided in English for such election.

''(6) CHANGES THAT REDUCE, CONSOLIDATE, OR RELOCATE VOTING LOCATIONS, OR REDUCE VOTING OPPORTUNITIES.—Any change that reduces, consolidates, or relocates voting locations, including early, absentee, and election-day voting locations, or reduces days or hours of in-person voting on any Sunday during a period occurring prior to the date of an election during which voters may cast ballots in such election, or prohibits the provision of food or non-alcoholic drink to persons waiting to vote in an election except where the provision would violate prohibitions on expenditures to influence voting—

''(A) in one or more census tracts wherein two or more language minority groups or racial groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population of the political subdivision; or

''(B) on Indian lands wherein at least 20 percent of the voting-age population belongs to a single language minority group.

''(7) NEW LIST MAINTENANCE PROCESS.—Any change to the maintenance of voter registration lists that adds a new basis for removal from the list of active registered voters or that incorporates new sources of information in determining a voter's eligibility to vote, wherein such a change would have a statistically significant disparate impact on the removal from voter rolls of members of racial groups or language minority groups that constitute greater than 5 percent of the voting-age population—

''(A) in the case of a political subdivision imposing such change if—

''(i) two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population of the political subdivision; or

''(ii) a single language minority group represents 20 percent or more of the voting-age population on Indian lands located in whole or in part in the political subdivision; or

''(B) in the case of a State imposing such change, if two or more racial groups or language minority groups each represent 20 percent or more of the voting-age population of—

''(i) the State; or

''(ii) a political subdivision in the State, except that the requirements under subsections (a) and (c) shall apply only with respect to each such political subdivision.

''(c) PRECLEARANCE.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to which the requirements set forth in subsection (a) are in effect shall enact, adopt, or seek to implement any covered practice described under subsection (b), such State or subdivision may institute an action in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia for a declaratory judgment that such covered practice neither has the purpose nor will have the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, and unless and until the court enters such judgment such covered practice shall not be implemented. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, such covered practice may be implemented without such proceeding if the covered practice has been submitted by the chief legal officer or other appropriate official of such State or subdivision to the Attorney General and the Attorney General has not interposed an objection within 60 days after such submission, or upon good cause shown, to facilitate an expedited approval within 60 days after such submission, the Attorney General has affirmatively indicated that such objection will not be made. Neither an affirmative indication by the Attorney General that no objection will be made, nor the Attorney General's failure to object, nor a declaratory judgment entered under this section shall bar a subsequent action to enjoin implementation of such covered practice. In the event the Attorney General affirmatively indicates that no objection will be made within the 60-day period following receipt of a submission, the Attorney General may reserve the right to reexamine the submission if additional information comes to the Attorney General's attention during the remainder of the 60-day period which would otherwise require objection in accordance with this section. Any action under this section shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges in accordance with the provisions of section 2284 of title 28, United States Code, and any appeal shall lie to the Supreme Court.

''(2) DENYING OR ABRIDGING THE RIGHT TO VOTE.—Any covered practice described in subsection (b) that has the purpose of or will have the effect of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the United States on account of race, color, or membership in a language minority group, to elect their preferred candidates of choice denies or abridges the right to vote within the meaning of paragraph (1) of this subsection.

''(3) PURPOSE DEFINED.—The term 'purpose' in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall include any discriminatory purpose.

''(4) PURPOSE OF PARAGRAPH (2).—The purpose of paragraph (2) of this subsection is to protect the ability of such citizens to elect their preferred candidates of choice.

''(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The Attorney General or any aggrieved citizen may file an action in a Federal district court to compel any State or political subdivision to satisfy the obligations set forth in this section. Such actions shall be heard and determined by a court of three judges under section 2284 of title 28, United States Code. In any such action, the court shall provide as a remedy that any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, that is the subject of the action under this subsection be enjoined unless the court determines that—

''(1) the voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, is not a covered practice described in subsection (b); or

''(2) the State or political subdivision has complied with subsection (c) with respect to the covered practice at issue.

''(e) COUNTING OF RACIAL GROUPS AND LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—For purposes of this section, the calculation of the population of a racial group or a language minority group shall be carried out using the methodology in the guidance promulgated in the Federal Register on February 9, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 7470).

''(f) SPECIAL RULE.—For purposes of determinations under this section, any data provided by the Bureau of the Census, whether based on estimation from sample or actual enumeration, shall not be subject to challenge or review in any court.

''(g) MULTILINGUAL VOTING MATERIALS.—In this section, the term 'multilingual voting materials' means registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assistance, or other materials or information relating to the electoral process, including ballots, provided in the language or languages of one or more language minority groups.''.

***SEC. 7. PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY TO ENFORCE THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT.***

(a) TRANSPARENCY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 5 the following new section:

***''SEC. 6. TRANSPARENCY REGARDING CHANGES TO PROTECT VOTING RIGHTS.***

''(a) NOTICE OF ENACTED CHANGES.—

''(1) NOTICE OF CHANGES.—If a State or political subdivision makes any change in any qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting in any election for Federal office that will result in the qualification or prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure being different from that which was in effect as of 180 days before the date of the election for Federal office, the State or political subdivision shall provide reasonable public notice in such State or political subdivision and on the website of the State or political subdivision, of a concise description of the change, including the difference between the changed qualification or prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure and the prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure which was previously in effect. The public notice described in this paragraph, in such State or political subdivision and on the website of a State or political subdivision, shall be in a format that is reasonably convenient and accessible to persons with disabilities who are eligible to vote, including persons who have low vision or are blind.

''(2) DEADLINE FOR NOTICE.—A State or political subdivision shall provide the public notice required under paragraph (1) not later than 48 hours after making the change involved.

''(b) TRANSPARENCY REGARDING POLLING PLACE RESOURCES.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to identify any changes that may impact the right to vote of any person, prior to the 30th day before the date of an election for Federal office, each State or political subdivision with responsibility for allocating registered voters, voting machines, and official poll workers to particular precincts and polling places shall provide reasonable public notice in such State or political subdivision and on the website of a State or political subdivision, of the information described in paragraph (2) for precincts and polling places within such State or political subdivision. The public notice described in this paragraph, in such State or political subdivision and on the website of a State or political subdivision, shall be in a format that is reasonably convenient and accessible to persons with disabilities who are eligible to vote, including persons who have low vision or are blind.

''(2) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The information described in this paragraph with respect to a precinct or polling place is each of the following:

''(A) The name or number.

''(B) In the case of a polling place, the location, including the street address, and whether such polling place is accessible to persons with disabilities.

''(C) The voting-age population of the area served by the precinct or polling place, broken down by demographic group if such breakdown is reasonably available to such State or political subdivision.

''(D) The number of registered voters assigned to the precinct or polling place, broken down by demographic group if such breakdown is reasonably available to such State or political subdivision.

''(E) The number of voting machines assigned, including the number of voting machines accessible to persons with disabilities who are eligible to vote, including persons who have low vision or are blind.

''(F) The number of official paid poll workers assigned.

''(G) The number of official volunteer poll workers assigned.

''(H) In the case of a polling place, the dates and hours of operation.

''(3) UPDATES IN INFORMATION REPORTED.—If a State or political subdivision makes any change in any of the information described in paragraph (2), the State or political subdivision shall provide reasonable public notice in such State or political subdivision and on the website of a State or political subdivision, of the change in the information not later than 48 hours after the change occurs or, if the change occurs fewer than 48 hours before the date of the election for Federal office, as soon as practicable after the change occurs. The public notice described in this paragraph and published on the website of a State or political subdivision shall be in a format that is reasonably convenient and accessible to persons with disabilities who are eligible to vote, including persons who have low vision or are blind.

''(c) TRANSPARENCY OF CHANGES RELATING TO DEMOGRAPHICS AND ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.—

''(1) REQUIRING PUBLIC NOTICE OF CHANGES.—Not later than 10 days after making any change in the constituency that will participate in an election for Federal, State, or local office or the boundaries of a voting unit or electoral district in an election for Federal, State, or local office (including through redistricting, reapportionment, changing from at-large elections to district-based elections, or changing from district-based elections to at-large elections), a State or political subdivision shall provide reasonable public notice in such State or political subdivision and on the website of a State or political subdivision, of the demographic and electoral data described in paragraph (3) for each of the geographic areas described in paragraph (2).

''(2) GEOGRAPHIC AREAS DESCRIBED.—The geographic areas described in this paragraph are as follows:

''(A) The State as a whole, if the change applies statewide, or the political subdivision as a

whole, if the change applies across the entire political subdivision.

''(B) If the change includes a plan to replace or eliminate voting units or electoral districts, each voting unit or electoral district that will be replaced or eliminated.

''(C) If the change includes a plan to establish new voting units or electoral districts, each such new voting unit or electoral district.

''(3) DEMOGRAPHIC AND ELECTORAL DATA.—The demographic and electoral data described in this paragraph with respect to a geographic area described in paragraph (2) are each of the following:

''(A) The voting-age population, broken down by demographic group.

''(B) If it is reasonably available to the State or political subdivision involved, an estimate of the population of the area which consists of citizens of the United States who are 18 years of age or older, broken down by demographic group.

''(C) The number of registered voters, broken down by demographic group if such breakdown is reasonably available to the State or political subdivision involved.

''(D)(i) If the change applies to a State, the actual number of votes, or (if it is not reasonably practicable for the State to ascertain the actual number of votes) the estimated number of votes received by each candidate in each statewide election held during the 5-year period which ends on the date the change involved is made; and

''(ii) if the change applies to only one political subdivision, the actual number of votes, or (if it is not reasonably practicable for the political subdivision to ascertain the actual number of votes) in each subdivision-wide election held during the 5-year period which ends on the date the change involved is made.

''(4) VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE BY SMALLER JURISDICTIONS.—Compliance with this subsection shall be voluntary for a political subdivision of a State unless the subdivision is one of the following:

''(A) A county or parish.

''(B) A municipality with a population greater than 10,000, as determined by the Bureau of the Census under the most recent decennial census.

''(C) A school district with a population greater than 10,000, as determined by the Bureau of the Census under the most recent decennial census. For purposes of this subparagraph, the term 'school district' means the geographic area under the jurisdiction of a local educational agency (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965).

''(d) RULES REGARDING FORMAT OF INFORMATION.—The Attorney General may issue rules specifying a reasonably convenient and accessible format that States and political subdivisions shall use to provide public notice of information under this section.

''(e) NO DENIAL OF RIGHT TO VOTE.—The right to vote of any person shall not be denied or abridged because the person failed to comply with any change made by a State or political subdivision to a voting qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure if the State or political subdivision involved did not meet the applicable requirements of this section with respect to the change.

''(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

''(1) the term 'demographic group' means each group which section 2 protects from the denial or abridgement of the right to vote on account of race or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2);

''(2) the term 'election for Federal office' means any general, special, primary, or runoff election held solely or in part for the purpose of electing any candidate for the office of President, Vice President, Presidential elector, Senator, Member of the House of Representatives, or Delegate or Resident Commissioner to the Congress; and

''(3) the term 'persons with disabilities', means individuals with a disability, as defined in section 3 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.''.

(2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10302(a)) is amended by striking ''in accordance with section 6''.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a)(1) shall apply with respect to changes which are made on or after the expiration of the 60-day period which begins on the date of the enactment of this Act.

**SEC. 8. AUTHORITY TO ASSIGN OBSERVERS.**

(a) CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY IN POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE.—Section 8(a)(2)(B) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10305(a)(2)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

''(B) in the Attorney General's judgment, the assignment of observers is otherwise necessary to enforce the guarantees of the 14th or 15th Amendment or any provision of this Act or any other Federal law protecting the right of citizens of the United States to vote; or''.

(b) ASSIGNMENT OF OBSERVERS TO ENFORCE BILINGUAL ELECTION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 8(a) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10305(a)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''or'' at the end of paragraph (1);

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

''(3) the Attorney General certifies with respect to a political subdivision that—

''(A) the Attorney General has received written meritorious complaints from residents, elected officials, or civic participation organizations that efforts to violate section 203 are likely to occur; or

''(B) in the Attorney General's judgment, the assignment of observers is necessary to enforce the guarantees of section 203;''; and

(3) by moving the margin for the continuation text following paragraph (3), as added by paragraph (2) of this subsection, 2 ems to the left.

(c) TRANSFERRAL OF AUTHORITY OVER OBSERVERS TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—

(1) ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS.—Section 3(a) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10302(a)) is amended by striking ''United States Civil Service Commission in accordance with section 6'' and inserting ''Attorney General in accordance with section 8''.

(2) OBSERVERS; APPOINTMENT AND COMPENSATION.—Section 8 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10305) is amended—

(A) in subsection (a)(2), in the matter following subparagraph (B), by striking ''Director of the Office of Personnel Management shall assign as many observers for such subdivision as the Director'' and inserting ''Attorney General shall assign as many observers for such subdivision as the Attorney General''; and

(B) in subsection (c), by striking ''Director of the Office of Personnel Management'' and inserting ''Attorney General''.

(3) TERMINATION OF CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS OF OBSERVERS.—Section 13(a)(1) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10309(a)(1)) is amended by striking ''notifies the Director of the Office of Personnel Management,'' and inserting ''determines,''.

**SEC. 9. CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY TO SEEK RELIEF.**

(a) POLL TAX.—Section 10(b) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10306(b)) is amended by striking ''the Attorney General is authorized and directed to institute forthwith in the name of the United States such actions'' and inserting ''an aggrieved person or (in the name of the United States) the Attorney General may institute such actions''.

(b) CAUSE OF ACTION.—Section 12(d) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10308(d)) is amended—

(1) by striking ''Whenever any person has engaged'' and all that follows through ''in the name of the United States'' and inserting ''(1) Whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that any person has implemented or will implement any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure that would (A) deny any citizen the right to vote in violation of the 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendments, or (B) would violate this Act (except for section 4A) or any other Federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in the voting process, an aggrieved person or (in the name of the United States) the Attorney General may institute''; and

(2) by striking '', and including an order directed to the State and State or local election officials to require them (1) to permit persons listed under chapters 103 to 107 of this title to vote and (2) to count such votes''.

(c) JUDICIAL RELIEF.—Section 204 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10504) is amended by striking ''Whenever the Attorney General has reason to believe'' and all that follows through ''as he deems appropriate'' and inserting ''Whenever there are reasonable grounds to believe that a State or political subdivision has engaged or is about to engage in any act or practice prohibited by a provision of title II, an aggrieved person or (in the name of the United States) the Attorney General may institute an action in a district court of the United States, for a restraining order, a preliminary or permanent injunction, or such other order as may be appropriate''.

(d) ENFORCEMENT OF TWENTY-SIXTH AMENDMENT.—Section 301(a)(1) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10701) is amended by striking ''The Attorney General is directed to institute'' and all that follows through ''Constitution of the United States'' and inserting ''An aggrieved person or (in the name of the United States) the Attorney General may institute an action in a district court of the United States, for a restraining order, a preliminary or permanent injunction, or such other order as may be appropriate to implement the twenty-sixth amendment to the Constitution of the United States''.

**SEC. 10. PREVENTIVE RELIEF.**

Section 12(d) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10308(d)), as amended by section 9, is further amended by adding at the end the following:

''(2)(A) In considering any motion for preliminary relief in any action for preventive relief described in this subsection, the court shall grant the relief if the court determines that the complainant has raised a serious question as to whether the challenged voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure violates this Act or the Constitution and, on balance, the hardship imposed on the defendant by the grant of the relief will be less than the hardship which would be imposed on the plaintiff if the relief were not granted.

''(B) In making its determination under this paragraph with respect to a change in any voting qualification, prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, the court shall consider all relevant factors and give due weight to the following factors, if they are present:

''(i) Whether the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure in effect prior to the change was adopted as a remedy for a Federal court judgment, consent decree, or admission regarding—

''(I) discrimination on the basis of race or color in violation of the 14th or 15th Amendment;

''(II) a violation of the 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendments;

''(III) a violation of this Act; or

''(IV) voting discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in violation of any other Federal or State law.

''(ii) Whether the qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure in effect prior

*to the change served as a ground for the dismissal or settlement of a claim alleging—*

*''(I) discrimination on the basis of race or color in violation of the 14th or 15th Amendment;*

*''(II) a violation of the 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendment;*

*''(III) a violation of this Act; or*

*''(IV) voting discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in violation of any other Federal or State law.*

*''(iii) Whether the change was adopted fewer than 180 days before the date of the election with respect to which the change is to take or takes effect.*

*''(iv) Whether the defendant has failed to provide timely or complete notice of the adoption of the change as required by applicable Federal or State law.*

*''(3) A jurisdiction's inability to enforce its voting or election laws, regulations, policies, or redistricting plans, standing alone, shall not be deemed to constitute irreparable harm to the public interest or to the interests of a defendant in an action arising under the Constitution or any Federal law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority group in the voting process, for the purposes of determining whether a stay of a court's order or an interlocutory appeal under section 1253 of title 28, United States Code, is warranted.''.*

***SEC. 11. RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS LAWS.***

*(a) IN GENERAL.—*

*(1) RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS LAWS.—In this section, the term ''prohibited act or practice'' means—*

*(A) any act or practice—*

*(i) that creates an undue burden on the fundamental right to vote in violation of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or violates the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States; or*

*(ii) that is prohibited by the 15th, 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, section 2004 of the Revised Statutes (52 U.S.C. 10101), the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C. 20501 et seq.), the Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52 U.S.C. 20301 et seq.), the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 20901 et seq.), the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (52 U.S.C. 20101 et seq.), or section 2003 of the Revised Statutes (52 U.S.C. 10102); and*

*(B) any act or practice in violation of any Federal law that prohibits discrimination with respect to voting, including the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).*

*(2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section shall be construed to diminish the authority or scope of authority of any person to bring an action under any Federal law.*

*(3) ATTORNEY'S FEES.—Section 722(b) of the Revised Statutes (42 U.S.C. 1988(b)) is amended by inserting ''a provision described in section 2(a) of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021,'' after ''title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964,''.*

*(b) GROUNDS FOR EQUITABLE RELIEF.—In any action for equitable relief pursuant to a law listed under subsection (a), proximity of the action to an election shall not be a valid reason to deny such relief, or stay the operation of or vacate the issuance of such relief, unless the party opposing the issuance or continued operation of relief meets the burden of proving by clear and convincing evidence that the issuance of the relief would be so close in time to the election as to cause irreparable harm to the public interest or that compliance with such relief would impose serious burdens on the party opposing relief.*

*(1) IN GENERAL.—In considering whether to grant, deny, stay, or vacate any order of equitable relief, the court shall give substantial weight to the public's interest in expanding access to the right to vote. A State's generalized interest in enforcing its enacted laws shall not be a relevant consideration in determining whether equitable relief is warranted.*

*(2) PRESUMPTIVE SAFE HARBOR.—Where equitable relief is sought either within 30 days of the adoption or reasonable public notice of the challenged policy or practice, or more than 45 days before the date of an election to which the relief being sought will apply, proximity to the election will be presumed not to constitute a harm to the public interest or a burden on the party opposing relief.*

*(c) GROUNDS FOR STAY OR VACATUR IN FEDERAL CLAIMS INVOLVING VOTING RIGHTS.—*

*(1) PROSPECTIVE EFFECT.—In reviewing an application for a stay or vacatur of equitable relief granted pursuant to a law listed in subsection (a), a court shall give substantial weight to the reliance interests of citizens who acted pursuant to such order under review. In fashioning a stay or vacatur, a reviewing court shall not order relief that has the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote of any citizen who has acted in reliance on the order.*

*(2) WRITTEN EXPLANATION.—No stay or vacatur under this subsection shall issue unless the reviewing court makes specific findings that the public interest, including the public's interest in expanding access to the ballot, will be harmed by the continuing operation of the equitable relief or that compliance with such relief will impose serious burdens on the party seeking such a stay or vacatur such that those burdens substantially outweigh the benefits to the public interest. In reviewing an application for a stay or vacatur of equitable relief, findings of fact made in issuing the order under review shall not be set aside unless clearly erroneous.*

***SEC. 12. ENFORCEMENT OF VOTING RIGHTS BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.***

*Section 12 of the Voting Rights Act (52 U.S.C. 10308), as amended by this Act, is further amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(g) VOTING RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY GENERAL.—*

*''(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to fulfill the Attorney General's responsibility to enforce the Voting Rights Act and other Federal civil rights statutes that protect the right to vote, the Attorney General (or upon designation by the Attorney General, the Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights) is authorized, before commencing a civil action, to issue a demand for inspection and information in writing to any State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, with respect to any relevant documentary material that he has reason to believe is within their possession, custody, or control. A demand by the Attorney General under this section may require—*

*''(A) the production of such documentary material for inspection and copying;*

*''(B) answers in writing to written questions with respect to such documentary material; or*

*''(C) both.*

*''(2) CONTENTS OF AN ATTORNEY GENERAL DEMAND.—*

*''(A) IN GENERAL.—Any demand issued under paragraph (1), shall include a sworn certificate to identify the voting qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting, or other voting related matter or issue, whose lawfulness the Attorney General is investigating and to identify the civil provisions of the Federal civil rights statute that protects the right to vote under which the investigation is being conducted. The demand shall be reasonably calculated to lead to the discovery of documentary material and information relevant to such civil rights investigation. Documentary material includes any material upon which relevant information is recorded, and includes written or printed materials, photographs, tapes, or materials upon which information is electronically or magnetically recorded. Such demands are aimed at the Attorney General having the ability to inspect and obtain copies of relevant materials (as well as obtain information) related to voting and are not aimed at the Attorney General taking possession of original records, particularly those that are required to be retained by State and local election officials under Federal or State law.*

*''(B) NO REQUIREMENT FOR PRODUCTION.—Any demand issued under paragraph (1) may not require the production of any documentary material or the submission of any answers in writing to written questions if such material or answers would be protected from disclosure under the standards applicable to discovery requests under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure in an action in which the Attorney General or the United States is a party.*

*''(C) DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL.—If the demand issued under paragraph (1) requires the production of documentary material, it shall—*

*''(i) identify the class of documentary material to be produced with such definiteness and certainty as to permit such material to be fairly identified; and*

*''(ii) prescribe a return date for production of the documentary material at least twenty days after issuance of the demand to give the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, a reasonable period of time for assembling the documentary material and making it available for inspection and copying.*

*''(D) ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS.—If the demand issued under paragraph (1) requires answers in writing to written questions, it shall—*

*''(i) set forth with specificity the written question to be answered; and*

*''(ii) prescribe a date at least twenty days after the issuance of the demand for submitting answers in writing to the written questions.*

*''(E) SERVICE.—A demand issued under paragraph (1) may be served by a United States marshal or a deputy marshal, or by certified mail, at any place within the territorial jurisdiction of any court of the United States.*

*''(3) RESPONSES TO AN ATTORNEY GENERAL DEMAND.—A State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, must, with respect to any documentary material or any answer in writing produced under this subsection, provide a sworn certificate, in such form as the demand issued under paragraph (1) designates, by a person having knowledge of the facts and circumstances relating to such production or written answer, authorized to act on behalf of the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, upon which the demand was served. The certificate—*

*''(A) shall state that—*

*''(i) all of the documentary material required by the demand and in the possession, custody, or control of the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, has been produced;*

*''(ii) that with respect to every answer in writing to a written question, all information required by the question and in the possession, custody, control, or knowledge of the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, has been submitted; or*

*''(iii) both; or*

*''(B) provide the basis for any objection to producing the documentary material or answering the written question.*

*To the extent that any information is not furnished, the information shall be identified and reasons set forth with particularity regarding the reasons why the information was not furnished.*

*''(4) JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS.—*

*''(A) PETITION FOR ENFORCEMENT.—Whenever any State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, fails to comply with demand issued by the Attorney General under paragraph (1), the Attorney General may file, in a district court of the United States in*

*which the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, is located, a petition for a judicial order enforcing the Attorney General demand issued under paragraph (1).*

*''(B) PETITION TO MODIFY.—*

*''(i) IN GENERAL.—Any State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, that is served with a demand issued by the Attorney General under paragraph (1) may file in the United States District Court for the District of Columbia a petition for an order of the court to modify or set aside the demand of the Attorney General.*

*''(ii) PETITION TO MODIFY.—Any petition to modify or set aside a demand of the Attorney General issued under paragraph (1) must be filed within 20 days after the date of service of the Attorney General's demand or at any time before the return date specified in the Attorney General's demand, whichever date is earlier.*

*''(iii) CONTENTS OF PETITION.—The petition shall specify each ground upon which the petitioner relies in seeking relief under clause (i), and may be based upon any failure of the Attorney General's demand to comply with the provisions of this section or upon any constitutional or other legal right or privilege of the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent. During the pendency of the petition in the court, the court may stay, as it deems proper, the running of the time allowed for compliance with the Attorney General's demand, in whole or in part, except that the State or political subdivision, or other governmental representative or agent, filing the petition shall comply with any portions of the Attorney General's demand not sought to be modified or set aside.''.*

***SEC. 13. DEFINITIONS.***

*Title I of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

***''SEC. 21. DEFINITIONS.***

*''In this Act:*

*''(1) INDIAN.—The term 'Indian' has the meaning given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.*

*''(2) INDIAN LANDS.—The term 'Indian lands' means—*

*''(A) any Indian country of an Indian tribe, as such term is defined in section 1151 of title 18, United States Code;*

*''(B) any land in Alaska that is owned, pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act, by an Indian tribe that is a Native village (as such term is defined in section 3 of such Act), or by a Village Corporation that is associated with the Indian tribe (as such term is defined in section 3 of such Act);*

*''(C) any land on which the seat of government of the Indian tribe is located; and*

*''(D) any land that is part or all of a tribal designated statistical area associated with the Indian tribe, or is part or all of an Alaska Native village statistical area associated with the tribe, as defined by the Bureau of the Census for the purposes of the most recent decennial census.*

*''(3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term 'Indian tribe' or 'tribe' has the meaning given the term 'Indian tribe' in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act.*

*''(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term 'Tribal Government' means the recognized governing body of an Indian Tribe.*

*''(5) VOTING-AGE POPULATION.—The term 'voting-age population' means the numerical size of the population within a State, within a political subdivision, or within a political subdivision that contains Indian lands, as the case may be, that consists of persons age 18 or older, as calculated by the Bureau of the Census under the most recent decennial census.''.*

***SEC. 14. ATTORNEYS' FEES.***

*Section 14(c) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10310(c)) is amended by adding at the end the following:*

*''(4) The term 'prevailing party' means a party to an action that receives at least some of the benefit sought by such action, states a colorable claim, and can establish that the action was a significant cause of a change to the status quo.''.*

***SEC. 15. OTHER TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.***

*(a) ACTIONS COVERED UNDER SECTION 3.—Section 3(c) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10302(c)) is amended—*

*(1) by striking ''any proceeding instituted by the Attorney General or an aggrieved person under any statute to enforce'' and inserting ''any action under any statute in which a party (including the Attorney General) seeks to enforce''; and*

*(2) by striking ''at the time the proceeding was commenced'' and inserting ''at the time the action was commenced''.*

*(b) CLARIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—Section 4(f) of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(f)) is amended—*

*(1) in paragraph (1), by striking the second sentence; and*

*(2) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4).*

*(c) PERIOD DURING WHICH CHANGES IN VOTING PRACTICES ARE SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE UNDER SECTION 5.—Section 5 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10304) is amended—*

*(1) in subsection (a), by striking ''based upon determinations made under the first sentence of section 4(b) are in effect'' and inserting ''are in effect during a calendar year'';*

*(2) in subsection (a), by striking ''November 1, 1964'' and all that follows through ''November 1, 1972'' and inserting ''the applicable date of coverage''; and*

*(3) by adding at the end the following new subsection:*

*''(e) The term 'applicable date of coverage' means, with respect to a State or political subdivision—*

*''(1) June 25, 2013, if the most recent determination for such State or subdivision under section 4(b) was made on or before December 31, 2021; or*

*''(2) the date on which the most recent determination for such State or subdivision under section 4(b) was made, if such determination was made after December 31, 2021.''.*

***SEC. 16. SEVERABILITY.***

*If any provision of this Act or any amendment made by this Act, or the application of such a provision or amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be unconstitutional or is otherwise enjoined or unenforceable, the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment to any person or circumstance, and any remaining provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, shall not be affected by the holding.*

***SEC. 17. GRANTS TO ASSIST WITH NOTICE REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965.***

*(a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall make grants each fiscal year to small jurisdictions who submit applications under subsection (b) for purposes of assisting such small jurisdictions with compliance with the requirements of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to submit or publish notice of any change to a qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice or procedure affecting voting.*

*(b) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant under this section, a small jurisdiction shall submit an application to the Attorney General in such form and containing such information as the Attorney General may require regarding the compliance of such small jurisdiction with the provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.*

*(c) SMALL JURISDICTION DEFINED.—For purposes of this section, the term ''small jurisdiction'' means any political subdivision of a State with a population of 10,000 or less.*

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill, as amended, shall be debatable for 1 hour equally divided and controlled by the chair and the ranking minority member of the Committee on the Judiciary or their respective designees.

The gentleman from New York (Mr. NADLER) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JORDAN) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

□ 1615

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on H.R. 4.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021, would revitalize and strengthen the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to confront the onslaught of discriminatory voting laws and practices that have emerged in recent years across the country.

In 2013, the Supreme Court, in Shelby County v. Holder, gutted the Voting Rights Act's most important enforcement mechanism, the Section 5 preclearance regime, which required jurisdictions with a history of discrimination against racial and ethnic minority voters to seek approval of any changes to their voting laws before they could go into effect.

Almost immediately after the decision, many of these jurisdictions unleashed a raft of voter suppression measures, knowing that these laws now could only be challenged after the fact and only through a costly and time-consuming process that made such challenges unlikely and when people's votes had already been improperly invalidated.

When the Court struck down the coverage formula that determined which jurisdictions were subject to preclearance, it explicitly invited Congress to devise a new formula to meet the current need to remedy voting discrimination.

H.R. 4 answers that call.

This legislation would create a new geographic coverage formula that is fine-tuned to capture only those places with longstanding and persistent discrimination. At the same time, it targets only recent discrimination and does not leave jurisdictions frozen in time.

The bill also requires preclearance of certain practices that are historically associated with voting discrimination; it responds to the recent Supreme Court decision in Brnovich v. DNC, which severely limited enforcement of Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act; and it provides other important tools to strengthen enforcement of the VRA.

H.R. 4 rests on a substantial record that documents the myriad ways that

the right to vote, the most fundamental right in a democracy, remains under threat for too many Americans.

I want to thank TERRI SEWELL for introducing this bill, STEVE COHEN for the 13 hearings he held on voting rights in the Constitution Subcommittee, as well as our colleagues on the Subcommittee on Elections and the Committee on House Administration for their work.

I urge all Members to join me in honoring the legacy of our beloved colleague, the late John Lewis, who shed his blood to secure passage of the Voting Rights Act, by supporting this vital legislation.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS), the ranking member of the House Administration Committee.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, recently, another friend of ours and our colleague, Congressman BURGESS OWENS, who grew up in the Jim Crow South, testified before my committee, and I want to highlight two very important points he made: Not only is our country not facing a new era of Jim Crow voting laws, as many of my Democrat colleagues have falsely claimed, but it is incredibly offensive to lie to the American people to further a political agenda.

Our country has come a long way since the Jim Crow era, and it is in part because of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

More Americans voted in the last two elections than in any midterm or Presidential election in our Nation's history. This includes historic turnouts among African Americans and other minority voters.

We should celebrate this progress, not ignore it.

Using Georgia as an example, since my friends on the other side of the aisle were so quick to condemn new election integrity laws in this State; in Georgia, which was once covered under the VRA's preclearance formula, African-American turnout in the last election was 64 percent, compared to 27 percent in 1965. And an amazing 95 percent of the total eligible voting-age population in Georgia is registered to vote.

That is incredible. It is easier to vote in Georgia than it is in Democrat-run States like New York and Delaware and even others.

Democrats on the Committee on House Administration held hearing after hearing on election issues where they produced zero evidence of voter suppression, likely due to the fact that voter discrimination and suppression remain against the law in this country.

Yet, the bill before us goes far beyond the original VRA and would subject every State to preclearance, an extraordinary measure established in 1965 to prevent Democratic-led Southern States, with a history of discrimination, from intimidating and preventing African Americans from voting.

If you vote for this legislation, you are voting for a Federal takeover of elections; you are removing the people elected at the State and local level to run elections from making decisions about how elections are run, including voter ID laws, and putting an unaccountable, unelected election czar at the DOJ, the Attorney General, in charge of all election decisions in this country.

Members of this body and the American people should be asking the simple question: If it is easier to vote today than at any time in our history and more Americans are voting than ever before, then why are Democrats going to such extreme measures to ensure a Federal takeover of elections?

I hope my colleagues and the American people will see this bill for what it is, a partisan power grab which circumvents the people to ensure a one-party rule.

I urge a ''no'' vote on the underlying legislation.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD a report I released as ranking member of the House Administration Committee earlier this month titled ''The Elections Clause: States' Primary Constitutional Authority Over Elections.''

[From Representative Rodney Davis (IL–13), Ranking Member, House of Representatives, Committee on House Administration, Aug. 12, 2021]

REPORT—THE ELECTIONS CLAUSE: STATES' PRIMARY CONSTITUTIONAL AUTHORITY OVER ELECTIONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Republicans believe that every eligible voter who wants to vote must be able to do so, and all lawful votes must be counted according to state law. Through an examination of history, precedent, the Framers' words, debates concerning ratification, the Supreme Court, and the Constitution itself, this document explains the constitutional division of power envisioned by the Framers between the States and the federal government with respect to election administration. Article 1, Section 4 of the Constitution explains that the States have the primary authority over election administration, the ''times, places, and manner of holding elections''. Conversely, the Constitution grants the Congress a purely secondary role to alter or create election laws only in the extreme cases of invasion, legislative neglect, or obstinate refusal to pass election laws. As do other aspects of our federal system, this division of sovereignty continues to serve to protect one of Americans' most precious freedoms, the right to vote.

The Constitution reserves to the States the primary authority to set election legislation and administer elections—the ''times, places, and manner of holding of elections''—and Congress' power in this space is purely secondary to the States' power. Congress' power is to be employed only in the direst of circumstances. Despite Democrats' insistence that Congress' power over elections is unfettered and permits Congress to enact sweeping legislation like H.R. 1, it is simply not true. History, precedent, the Framers' words, debates concerning ratification, the Supreme Court, and the Constitution itself make this exceedingly clear.

The Framing Generation grappled with the failure of the Articles of Confederation, which provided for only a weak national government incapable of preserving the Union. Under the Articles, the States had exclusive authority over federal elections held within their territory; but, given the difficulties the national government had experienced with State cooperation (e.g., the failure of Rhode Island to send delegates to the Confederation Congress), the Federalists, including Alexander Hamilton, were concerned with the possibility that the States, in an effort to destroy the federal government, simply might not hold elections or that an emergency, such as an invasion or insurrection, might prevent the operation of a State's government, leaving the Congress without Members and the federal government unable to respond. Indeed, as counsel for the Democrat Members of our Committee so keenly observed:

For the Founders, particularly during the Federal Constitutional Convention, the primary concern was informing the discussions of federal elections in Article I was the risk of uncooperative states. For example, Alexander Hamilton noted that by providing states the authority to run congressional elections, under Article I, Section 4, ''risk[ed] 'leaving the existence of the Union entirely at their mercy.''' Following the failings of the Articles of Confederation, the Founders looked for processes that would insulate Congress from recalcitrant states. Indeed, ''[t]he dominant purpose of the Elections Clause, the historical record bears out, was to empower Congress to override state election rules, not to restrict the way States enact legislation[,]'' and that ''the Clause 'was the Framers' insurance against the possibility that a State would refuse to provide for the election of representatives to the Federal Congress.' ''

Quite plainly, Alexander Hamilton, a leading Federalist and proponent of our Constitution, understood the Elections Clause as serving only as a sort of emergency fail-safe, not as a cudgel used to nationalize our elections process. Writing as Publius to the people of New York, Hamilton further expounds on the correct understanding of the Elections Clause: ''T[he] natural order of the subject leads us to consider, in this place, that provision of the Constitution which authorizes the national legislature to regulate, in the last resort, the election of its own members.''

When questioned at the States' constitutional ratifying conventions with respect to this provision, the Federalists confirmed this understanding of a constitutionally limited, secondary congressional power under Article 1, Section 4:

Maryland: ''[C]onvention delegate James McHenry added that the risk to the federal government [without a fail-safe provision] might not arise from state malice: An insurrection or rebellion might prevent a state legislature from administering an election.''

N. Carolina: ''An occasion may arise when the exercise of this ultimate power of Congress may be necessary . . . if a state should be involved in war, and its legislature could not assemble, (as was the case of South Carolina and occasionally of some other states, during the [Revolutionary] war).''

Pennsylvania: ''Sir, let it be remembered that this power can only operate in a case of necessity, after the factious or listless disposition of a particular state has rendered an interference essential to the salvation of the general government.''

John Jay made similar claims in New York. And, as constitutional scholar Robert Natelson, notes in his invaluable article, The Original Scope of the Congressional Power to

Regulate Elections, Alexander Contee Hanson, a member of Congress whose pamphlet supporting the Constitution proved popular, stated flatly that Congress would exercise its times, places, and manner authority only in cases of invasion, legislative neglect or obstinate refusal to pass election laws [providing for the election of Members of Congress], or if a state crafted its election laws with a 'sinister purpose' or to injure the general government.''

Cementing his point, Hanson goes further to decree, ''The exercise of this power must at all times be so very invidious, that congress will not venture upon it without some very cogent and substantial reason.'' In Floor debate during the 117th Congress concerning H.R. 1, the Democrats' intended nationalization of elections, Ranking Member Davis argued, as he has many other times, that:

According to Article 1, Section 4 of the Constitution, States have the primary role in establishing ''[t]he Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives.'' Under the Constitution, Congress has a purely secondary role in this space and must restrain itself from acting improperly and unconstitutionally. Federal election legislation should never be the first step and must never impose burdensome, unfunded federal mandates on state and local elections officials. When Congress does speak, it must devote its efforts only to resolving highly significant and substantial deficiencies. State legislatures are the primary venues to correct most issues.

In fact, had the Democrats' view of the Elections Clause been accepted at the time of the Constitution's drafting—that is, that it offers Congress unfettered power over federal elections—it is likely that the Constitution would not have been ratified or that an amendment to this language would have been required. Indeed, at least seven of the original 13 states—over half and enough to prevent the Constitution from being ratified—expressed specific concerns with the language of the Elections Clause. However, ''[l]eading Federalists . . .'' assured them, ''. . . that, even without amendment, the [Elections] Clause should be construed as limited to emergencies.''

Three states, New York, North Carolina, and Rhode Island, specifically made their ratification contingent on this understanding being made express:

New York: ''Under these impressions and declaring that the rights aforesaid cannot be abridged or violated, and the Explanations aforesaid are consistent with the said Constitution, And in confidence that the Amendments which have been proposed to the said Constitution will receive early and mature Consideration: We the said Delegates, in the Name and in [sic] the behalf of the People of the State of New York Do by these presents Assent to and Ratify the said Constitution. In full Confidence . . . that the Congress will not make or alter any Regulation in this State respecting the times places and manner of holding Elections for Senators or Representatives unless the Legislature of this State shall neglect or refuse to make laws or regulations for the purpose, or from any circumstance be incapable of making the same, and that in those cases such power will only be exercised until the Legislature of this State shall make provision in the Premises[.]''

N. Carolina: ''That Congress shall not alter, modify, or interfere in the times, places, or manner of holding elections for senators and representatives, or either of them, except when the legislature of any state shall neglect, refuse or be disabled by invasion or rebellion, to prescribe the same.''

Rhode Island: ''Under these impressions, and declaring, that the rights aforesaid cannot be abridged or violated, and that the explanations aforesaid, are consistent with the said constitution, and in confidence that the amendments hereafter mentioned, will receive an early and mature consideration, and conformably to the fifth article of said constitution, speedily become a part thereof; We the said delegates, in the name, and in [sic] the behalf of the People, of the State of Rhode-Island and Providence-Plantations, do by these Presents, assent to, and ratify the said Constitution. In full confidence . . . That the Congress will not make or alter any regulation in this State, respecting the times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives, unless the legislature of this state shall neglect, or refuse to make laws or regulations for the purpose, or from any circumstance be incapable of making the same; and that [i]n those cases, such power will only be exercised, until the legislature of this State shall make provision in the Premises[.]

This clearly demonstrates that the Framers designed and the ratifying States understood the Elections Clause to serve solely as a protective backstop to ensure the preservation of the Federal Government, not as a font of limitless power for Congress to wrest control of federal elections from the States.

This understanding was also reinforced by debate during the first Congress that convened under the Constitution. ''During the first session of the First Congress . . . Representative Aedanus Burke unsuccessfully proposed a constitutional amendment to limit the Times, Places and Manner Clause to emergencies.'' But those on both sides of the Burke amendment debate already understood the Elections Clause to limit Federal elections power to emergencies.

For example, the recorded description of opponent Representative Goodhue's comments notes that he believed the Elections Clause as written was intended to prevent ''. . . the State Governments [from] oppos[ing] and thwart[ing] the general one to such a degree as finally to overturn it. Now, to guard against this evil, he wished the Federal Government to possess every power necessary to its existence.'' With any change to the original text therefore unnecessary to achieve Burke's desired goal, Mr. Goodhue voted against the proposed amendment.

Similarly, proponent Representative Smith of South Carolina also believed the original text of the Elections Clause already limited the Federal Government's power over federal elections to emergencies and so thought there would be no harm in supporting an amendment to make that language express. So, even the records of the First Congress reflect a recognition of the emergency nature of congressional power over federal elections.

Similarly, the Supreme Court has supported this understanding. In Smiley v. Holm, the Court held that Article 1, Section 4 of the Constitution reserved to the States the primary

''. . . authority to provide a complete code for congressional elections, not only as to times and places, but in relation to notices, registration, supervision of voting, protection of voters, prevention of fraud and corrupt practices, counting of votes, duties of inspectors and canvassers, and making and publication of election returns; in short, to enact the numerous requirements as to procedure and safeguards which experience shows are necessary in order to enforce the fundamental right involved. And these requirements would be nugatory if they did not have appropriate sanctions in the definition of offenses and punishments. All this is comprised in the subject of ''times, places and manner of holding elections,'' and involves lawmaking in its essential features and most important aspect.''

This holding, of course, is consistent with the understanding of the Elections Clause since the framing of the Constitution. The Smiley Court also held that while Congress maintains the authority to ''. . . supplement these state regulations or [to] substitute its own[]'', such authority remains merely ''a general supervisory power over the whole subject.'' More recently, the Court noted in Arizona v. Inter-Tribal Council of Ariz., Inc. that ''[t]his grant of congressional power [that is, the fail-safe provision in the Elections Clause] was the Framers' insurance against the possibility that a State would refuse to provide for the election of representatives to the Federal Congress.'' The Court explained that the Elections Clause ''. . . imposes [upon the States] the duty . . . to prescribe the time, place, and manner of electing Representatives and Senators[.]'' And, while, as the Court noted, ''[t]he power of Congress over the 'Times, Places and Manner' of congressional elections 'is paramount, and may be exercised at any time, and to any extent which it deems expedient; and so far as it is exercised, and no farther, the regulations effected supersede those of the State which are inconsistent therewith[]'', the Inter-Tribal Court explained, quoting extensively from The Federalist no. 59, that it was clear that the congressional fail-safe included in the Elections Clause was intended for the sorts of governmental self-preservation discussed in this Report: ''[E]very government ought to contain in itself the means of its own preservation[.]''; ''[A]n exclusive power of regulating elections for the national government, in the hands of the State legislatures, would leave the existence of the Union entirely at their mercy. They could at any moment annihilate it by neglecting to provide for the choice of persons to administer its affairs.''

CONCLUSION

It is clear in every respect that the congressional fail-safe described in the Elections Clause vests purely secondary authority over federal elections in the federal legislative branch and that the primary authority rests with the States. Congressional authority is intended to be, and as a matter of constitutional fact is, limited to addressing the worst imaginable issues, such as invasion or other matters that might lead to a State not electing representatives to constitute the two Houses of Congress.'' Our authority has never extended to the day-to-day authority over the ''Times, Places and Manner of Election'' that the Constitution clearly reserves to the States. Unfortunately for Democrats, this clear restriction on congressional authority means that we do not have the power to implement the overwhelming majority—if not the entirety—of their biggest legislative priority, H.R. 1 and related legislation, which would purport to nationalize our elections and centralize their administration in Washington, D.C. Thankfully, the Framers had the foresight to write our Constitution so as to prevent those bad policies from going into effect and preserve the health of our republic.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Alabama (Ms. SEWELL), the chief sponsor of this legislation.

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today in full support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Nothing is more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote.

Nothing is more precious to my district, Alabama's 7th Congressional District, the home of Birmingham, Montgomery, and my hometown of Selma, Alabama, than the fight to protect the right to vote for all Americans.

It was in my district that ordinary Americans peacefully protested for the equal right to vote for all Americans.

Nothing is more personal to me, nothing more represents America's civil rights district than to be able to stand here, as so many of us have, with John Lewis at the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge, as I announced with glee that we have reintroduced H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

It was on that same bridge in Selma, Alabama, that a 26-year-old John Lewis was bludgeoned by State troopers with billy clubs in the name of justice.

Their efforts led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the seminal piece of legislation in Congress to protect the right of all Americans to vote.

Those protections were gutted in 2013 by the Supreme Court's decision in Shelby v. Holder, and Section 2 was also affected by the most recent decision in Brnovich.

Today, 8 years after Shelby, Congress is finally answering the Supreme Court's call to action by passing H.R. 4.

H.R. 4 will create a new coverage formula to determine which States have been the most egregious actors and subject them to preclearance that is based on current evidence of voter discrimination.

Madam Speaker, old battles have indeed become new again. While literacy tests and poll taxes no longer exist, certain States and local jurisdictions have passed laws that are modern-day barriers to voting. As long as voter suppression exists, the need for the full protections of VRA will continue. We must fully restore the VRA.

Why? Because as John Lewis would say: When you hear something or see something that is not right, that is not just, that is not fair, we have a moral obligation to do something about it.

We, the Members of the House of Representatives, can today do something about it. Let's pass H.R. 4. Let's do so not just in the name of John Lewis; let's do so for the people, the American people. We must secure the right to vote.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD 14 letters of support and statements of support from all across this Nation, from civil rights groups, from labor groups, from amazing folks who are fighting every day on the front lines for the right to vote.

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 4—JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT OF 2021—REP. SEWELL, D–AL, AND 218 COSPONSORS

The Administration strongly supports House passage of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (VRAA).

The right to vote freely, the right to vote fairly, the right to have your vote counted is fundamental. In the last election, all told, more than 150 million Americans of every age, of every race, of every background exercised their right to vote.

This historic level of participation in the face of a once-in-a-century pandemic should have been celebrated by everyone. Instead, some have sought to delegitimize the election and make it harder to vote, in many cases by targeting the methods of voting that made it possible for many voters to participate. These efforts violate the most basic ideals of America.

Yet another massive wave of discriminatory action may be imminent as we enter a new legislative redistricting cycle. Unfortunately, incumbents too often cling to power by drawing district lines to favor their own prospects at the expense of minority communities, choosing their voters instead of the other way around.

While anti-voter action undermines democracy for all Americans, we know that communities of color often suffer the worst effects of these measures—and all too often, that is not by accident.

The sacred right to vote is under attack across the country.

The VRAA will strengthen vital legal protections to ensure that all Americans have a fair opportunity to participate in our democracy. Among other things, it would create a new framework for allowing DOJ to review voting changes in jurisdictions with a history of discrimination to ensure that they do not discriminate based on race. It would also clarify the scope of legal tools designed to challenge discriminatory voting laws in court, ensuring that the Voting Rights Act offers protection against modern forms of voter suppression.

In an essay published shortly after he died, Congressman John Lewis wrote, ''Democracy is not a state. It is an act[.]'' This bill not only bears his name, it heeds his call. The Administration looks forward to working with Congress as the VRAA proceeds through the legislative process to ensure that the bill achieves lasting reform consistent with Congress' broad constitutional authority to protect voting rights and to strengthen our democracy.

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AUGUST 18, 2021.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Southern Poverty Law Center Action Fund, we write to urge you to support H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, when the House considers this essential legislation next week. When enacted into law, this legislation will restore Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) and require states and localities with recent histories of racial discrimination to seek federal approval before implementing any voting changes; would require any state or jurisdiction to seek federal approval before implementing any voting practice known to have racially discriminatory impact; and would strengthen Section 2 of the VRA, which gives the Department of Justice and voters the ability to challenge discriminatory voting laws and practices.

Through our collaborative, intersectional work with community partners around the Deep South, the SPLC has witnessed firsthand continued efforts to suppress the vote and undermine the democratic process—particularly for communities of color—since the Supreme Court's Shelby County v. Holder decision in 2013. Earlier this week, during an oversight hearing held by the U.S. House of Representatives Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties on the need for federal voting rights protection legislation, SPLC submitted a series of detailed reports revealing current, consistent, and well-documented racial discrimination in voting in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi for the legislative record. The reports highlight a range of recent and persistent efforts to make it more difficult to vote, from reducing early voting to closing polling places in majority-Black communities and banning Sunday voting that has the effect—and often the intent—of blocking Black voters and other voters of color from voting. The United States claims to be the world's oldest democracy, but from its founding to today it has never fully secured and defended the right to vote for all Americans, particularly Black Americans and other voters of color.

For generations, legislators of both parties and Americans across all ideologies have supported the VRA—because they have understood that for our democracy to be healthy, every voter in the country must have safe, easy, and equitable access to their fundamental right to vote. The VRA has extraordinary bipartisan roots. Passed in 1965, Congress has reauthorized the VRA four times since then, with four Republican Presidents signing the legislation into law: President Nixon in 1970, President Ford in 1975, President Reagan in 1982, and President George W. Bush in 2006. In 2006, after more than twenty hearings, with over 90 witnesses, and over 15,000 pages of evidence of ongoing voter suppression and discrimination, Congress approved a 25-year extension of the VRA by a vote of 98–0 in the Senate and 390–33 in the House. More than ninety current Members of Congress voted for that legislation. Yet, notwithstanding well-documented findings and overwhelming congressional support, just seven years later, in the Shelby County decision, a 5–4 majority of the Supreme Court held that Section 5's coverage formula was not based on ''current conditions,'' and we lost a critical tool in the fight for equal voting rights—the Justice Department's opportunity to review and reject discriminatory voting changes in jurisdictions with a history of racial discrimination in voting.

Enactment of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act will enable the federal government to once again act as a barrier to prevent racially discriminatory voting changes and help protect a democracy that works for all of us—no matter where we live. Congress should utilize every legislative tool in its capacity to get this done; democracy is too important to be subject to a minority veto.

Last month, Justice Elena Kagan wrote eloquently about the Voting Rights Act in her stirring dissent in another Supreme Court refusal to recognize and enforce broad voting rights, the deeply disappointing Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee decision:

''If a single statute represents the best of America, it is the Voting Rights Act. It marries two great ideals: democracy and racial equality . . . . If a single statute reminds us of the worst of America, it is the Voting Rights Act. Because it was—and remains—so necessary.''

We could not agree more.

In the wake of Supreme Court decisions that have significantly weakened the VRA, and a proliferation of state anti-voter laws—primarily in the South—Congress must act to restore the Voting Rights Act to its full vigor and promise and ensure that citizens in every state have broad opportunities to exercise their constitutional right to vote.

Respectfully,

LASHAWN Y. WARREN,
*Chief Policy Officer.*
NANCY ABUDU,
*Interim Director of Strategic Litigation*

*& Deputy Legal Director for Voting Rights.*

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AUGUST 23, 2021.

FRIENDS: This week, the House is scheduled to take up the FY22 Budget Resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4), as well as the rule to consider these bills. The Human Rights Campaign urges Members to vote in favor of the rule, the budget resolution, and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. We will consider these key votes.

The FY22 Budget Resolution (S. Con. Res. 14) will pave the way for reconciliation. The provisions of that package will include paid leave, a long-needed benefit particularly for the 40% LGBTQ+ adults working in restaurants and food service, who often lack the ability to take leave care for a family member. It will also provide a pathway to citizenship for the approximately 75,000 LGBTQ+ Dreamers living in the United States, as well as the millions of TPS holders, many of whom are essential workers that have helped keep our country running during the pandemic.

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4) would restore key voting rights protections that the Supreme Court gutted in the 2013 Shelby County v. Holder decision. Since the Supreme Court's decision, states and localities have brazenly pushed forward discriminatory changes to voting practices, such as changing district boundaries to disadvantage select voters, instituting more onerous voter identification laws, and changing polling locations with little notice. These laws especially disenfranchise people of color, the elderly, low-income people, transgender people and people with disabilities.

Transgender people are particularly vulnerable to voting discrimination and disenfranchisement due primarily to challenges around valid identification documents. Many transgender people do not have forms of ID that reflect their true gender identity, either because they are in the process of changing their documents or because they face financial or legal barriers to doing so. In addition, many LGBTQ+ people face compounded discrimination based on other characteristics, including race, age, disability, and economic status. These vulnerabilities weaken our entire community's voting power.

Again, we urge Members to vote in favor of the rule, S. Con. Res. 14, and H.R. 4.

Best,

DAVID STACY,
*Government Affairs Director, Human Rights Campaign.*

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HI HILLARY: J Street, along with over 100 other organizations, is proud to share our support for the newly reintroduced John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (H.R. 4). The bill would restore the preclearance protections stripped from the Voting Rights Act and strengthen voting rights across the country.

With voting rights under threat, the passage of H.R. 4 would be a critical step toward protecting the future of our democracy and functioning governance.

J Street urges both co-sponsorship and a YES vote when the bill comes to the floor next week.

As always, please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any questions.

All the best,

HANNAH MORRIS,
*Deputy Director of Government Affairs, J Street.*

TUESDAY, AUGUST 17, 2021.

LDF Media
For Immediate Release

LDF ISSUES STATEMENT ON INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 4, THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT, BY THE U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Today, the U.S. House of Representatives introduced H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, a much needed piece of legislation aimed at protecting the right to vote. In response, Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) issued the following statement:

''We commend the House of Representatives for taking this critically important step in protecting the right to vote with its introduction today of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, H.R. 4. This legislation provides the building blocks for Congress to fully engage in its duty to protect citizens from any efforts to restrict or abridge their most fundamental right—the right to vote.

''H.R. 4 includes provisions that would require states and localities with recent records of discrimination in voting to have their proposed voting changes reviewed before they are implemented to ensure they are not discriminatory. These provisions are crucial to ensure that people are not disenfranchised and able to freely participate in the political process. If these provisions had been in effect this year—as was the case prior to the Shelby County decision—the restrictive voting bills that were recently enacted in states, such as Georgia, Florida, and Arizona, would not have been able to go into effect unless and until the states proved that those laws would not discriminate against racial, ethnic, or language minorities.

''Time is of the essence. Today's introduction of H.R. 4 is the beginning of the process that ultimately must end in the passage of this critically important piece of legislation. With the fall election season nearly upon us and nation-wide midterm elections a year away, Congress must ensure that every voter—especially Black voters and other voters of color—can exercise their right to participate in the political process without barriers to having their votes cast and counted.''

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AUGUST 20, 2021.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: As President and CEO of the National Urban League, and on behalf of its 91 affiliates in 37 states and the District of Columbia, I am writing to express our strong support for H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act as it is considered on the House floor this week. As a historic civil rights organization dedicated to ensuring that all people are able to exercise their fundamental right to vote, we stand with our fellow racial justice organizations in supporting this bill.

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act reauthorizes the Voting Rights Act, while putting in place ''fixes'' in response to the Shelby County v. Holder (2013) and Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee (2021) decisions. After the Shelby County decision, the number of discriminatory voting laws and practices have drastically increased across the country. The bill is in response to the current needs of this nation in the fight for voting rights, which have been presented in months-long congressional investigations and hearings. The Voting Rights Act has a long history of bipartisan support that must continue to prevent future inequitable bills and manipulative redistricting efforts from discriminating against voters of color.

Specifically, this legislation updates the ''preclearance formula'' that blocks discriminatory voting laws from being implemented by establishing a new review criterion that accounts for current conditions and requires federal review of specific voting practices known to impact voters of color. Additionally, the bill mandates greater nationwide transparency of voting laws and policy changes, expands and updates the frameworks that allow courts to ''bail in'' and ''bail out'' judicial review of jurisdictional practices, and restores voters' ability to legally challenge racially discriminatory changes in voting laws and policies. Lastly, the bill allows the Justice Department to compel documents to investigate voting rights violations, expands the federal observer program, and pauses discriminatory voting changes during judicial review.

This bill is a concrete way to advance the nation's fight against discriminatory voting laws which specifically target people of color. We will continue to support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and other proposals that advance the fight for the rights, safety, and empowerment of all people in our nation.

For more information, please contact Yvette Badu-Nimako, Senior Director for Judiciary, Civil Rights and Social Justice at ybadu@nul.org.

Sincerely,

MARC H. MORIAL,
*President and Chief Executive Officer, National Urban League.*

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PASS THE JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT

THE BILL WOULD RESTORE CRUCIAL PROTECTIONS THAT HAVE BEEN REMOVED FROM THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965.

On Tuesday afternoon, Democratic lawmakers stood on consecrated ground—the foot of the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama.

The members of Congress weren't there simply to honor the sacrifices of the late civil rights icon John Lewis and the hundreds of other marchers who braved police tear gas and clubs for the right to vote, as they've done in the past. They were gathered to announce the introduction of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H. R. 4), transformative legislation that would restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act that Lewis fought so hard to enact as a civil rights activist.

In 2013, the Supreme Court's infamous Shelby County v. Holder decision invalidated the 1965 law's Section 5 ''preclearance'' requirements. which prevented jurisdictions with a history of racial discrimination from changing voting rules without permission from the Justice Department or a federal court. In the ruling gutting the landmark civil rights law, Chief Justice John Roberts waved away concerns of new voting restrictions, claiming that ''nearly 50 years later, things have changed dramatically.''

Unfortunately, things have changed dramatically—just not how Roberts thought.

The danger of new voting restrictions is no longer theoretical. It's a grim reality. After record voter turnout in 2020, Republican state legislators around the country have responded by cracking down on the right to vote. Brennan Center research shows that this year, 49 states have introduced over 400 bills with provisions that make it harder to vote, 30 of which have become law in 18 states. Just last month, the Supreme Court's decision in Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee weakened Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, degrading citizens' ability to challenge policies that lead to voting discrimination.

This all paints a bleak picture as the nation's first redistricting cycle since the Shelby County decision looms, potentially redefining the balance of power in Congress and state legislatures for the next decade.

As my colleague Wendy Weiser told Congress yesterday, the bill named for Lewis is an essential step in turning the tide in this war on voting rights. Restoring preclearance and strengthening Section 2 of the original Voting Rights Act would undo much of the damage from the Brnovich and the Shelby County rulings.

President Biden has placed his full support behind it, and his Justice Department has told Congress that the bill must be passed so that the federal government can properly protect Americans' voting rights nationwide as the midterms quickly approach. The legislation would provide a desperately needed bulwark against continuing state voter suppression efforts.

Congress must pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act without delay.

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Re: NHLA Urges Support of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, H.R. 4

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: We write on behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of the nation's leading Latino nonpartisan civil rights and advocacy organizations, to urge you to vote ''yes'' on the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (VRAA), H.R. 4. This legislation restores necessary voting protections to ensure that discriminatory voting-related changes are blocked before they are implemented. There is no right more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote, and for more than 50 years the Voting Rights Act (VRA) provided voters with one of the most effective mechanisms for protecting that right. H.R. 4 would provide Latino voters and other voters of color new and forward-looking protections against voter discrimination. NHLA will closely monitor all votes related to this legislation for inclusion in future NHLA scorecards evaluating Member support for the Latino community.

The VRA is regarded as one of the most important and effective pieces of civil rights legislation in our country's history because it protected voters of color from discriminatory voting practices before they occurred. In 2013, the Supreme Court, in its decision in Shelby County v. Holder, struck down the formula that determined which states and political subdivisions were required to seek federal pre-approval of their voting-related changes to ensure they did not discriminate against minority voters. After Supreme Court's decision, states or political subdivisions were no longer required to seek preclearance unless ordered by a federal court in the course of litigation. The Supreme Court put the onus on Congress to enact a new formula better tailored to current conditions.

H.R. 4 includes both a new geographic coverage formula to identify those jurisdictions that will have to ''preclear'' their voting-related changes and a new provision requiring practice-based preclearance, or ''known-practices coverage.'' Known-practices coverage would focus administrative or judicial review narrowly on suspect practices that are most likely to be tainted by discriminatory intent or to have discriminatory effects, as demonstrated by a broad historical record. Any jurisdiction in the U.S. that is home to a racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse population and that seeks to adopt a covered practice will be required to preclear the change before implementation. The known practices covered under the bill include: (1) changes in method of election to change a single-member district to an at-large seat or to add an at-large seat to a governing body; (2) certain redistricting plans where there is significant minority population growth in the previous decade; (3) annexations or deannexations that would significantly alter the composition of the jurisdiction's electorate; (4) certain identification and proof of citizenship requirements; (5) certain polling place closures, realignments, or efforts to deny sustenance to voters waiting in line; (6) the withdrawal of multilingual materials and assistance not matched by the reduction of those services in English; and (7) certain voter registration list maintenance changes. Preclearance is an efficient and effective form of alternative dispute resolution that prevents the implementation of voting-related changes that would deny voters of color a voice in our elections. Preclearance saves taxpayers in covered jurisdictions a considerable amount of money because the jurisdiction can obtain quick decisions without having to pay attorneys. expert witnesses, or prevailing plaintiffs fees and costs that are incurred in complex and expensive litigation.

Across the U.S., racial, ethnic, and language-minority communities are rapidly growing-the country's total population is projected to become majority-minority by 2044. Between 2007 and 2014, five of the ten U.S. counties with the most rapid rates of Latino population growth were in North Dakota or South Dakota, two states whose overall Latino populations still account for less than ten percent of their residents, and are dwarfed by Latino communities in states like New Mexico, Texas, and California. It is precisely this rapid growth of different racial or ethnic populations that results in the perception that emerging communities of color are a threat to those in political power. H.R. 4 identifies different voting changes most likely to discriminatorily affect access to the vote in increasingly diverse jurisdictions whose minority populations are attaining visibility and influence. The approach is tailored to the current needs of voters today and is supported by a large body of evidence that shows that certain practices are used routinely to discriminate against voters of color.

Congress must protect the access to the polls, and it must include a known-practices coverage formula. H.R. 4 is a critical piece of legislation, including to the Latino community, that will restore voter protections that were lost after the Shelby County decision. NHLA urges you to stand with voters and to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 4.

Please feel free to contact Andrea Senteno, of MALDEF, at asenteno@maldef.org or (202) 293–2828 with any questions.

Sincerely,

THOMAS A. SAENZ,
*NHLA Civil Rights Committee, Co-Chair*
*MALDEF, President & General Counsel.*

JUAN CARTAGENA,
*NHLA Civil Rights Committee, Co-Chair*
*LatinoJustice PRLDEF, President & General Counsel.*

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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC, August 23, 2021.*

Re: MALDEF Support for the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021, H.R. 4

DEAR CONGRESSMEMBER: On behalf of MALDEF (Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund), I write to strongly urge you to support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021, H.R. 4. Following the 2013 Shelby County v. Holder decision, which effectively ended pre-clearance review under Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), states and localities moved to implement discriminatory voting practices that would previously have been blocked by the VRA. What we have seen post-Shelby County confirms what we have long-known—that voter discrimination lives on. Congress must act to restore the preclearance coverage formula in the VRA, legislation that has long-enjoyed bipartisan support.

Founded in 1968, MALDEF is the nation's leading Latino legal civil rights organization. Commonly known as the ''law firm of the Latino community,'' MALDEF promotes social change in the areas of voting rights, immigrants' rights, education, employment, and access to justice. Since its founding, MALDEF has worked diligently to secure equal voting rights for Latinos and to promote increased civic engagement and participation within the Latino community. MALDEF played a leading role in securing the full protection of the VRA for the Latino community through the 1975 congressional reauthorization of the 1965 VRA. In court, MALDEF has, over the years, litigated numerous cases under Section 2, Section 5, and Section 203 of the VRA, challenging at-large systems, discriminatory redistricting, ballot access barriers, undue voter registration requirements, voter assistance restrictions, and failure to provide bilingual ballot materials.

Discrimination in voting, including against Latino voters, continues to be a serious and persistent threat to our democracy today. This is demonstrated in the comparative rates of voter registration and voter participation among racial groups, including Latinos. The 2020 presidential general election showed unprecedented numbers of voters participating and rates of eligible participation unseen in a century, but instead of celebrating this work to reduce voter suppression and continue a trend toward expanding the franchise, the election has been used to justify increased efforts to reduce minority voter participation in future elections. This is a continuation of a recent pattern of increasing voter suppression efforts, which stems from ongoing demographic changes, including in particular the unprecedented growth of the Latino voting community.

In the aftermath of Shelby County, MALDEF originated the idea of practice-based pre-clearance coverage as a limited complement to a geographic, history-based formula for broader pre-clearance coverage. Practice-based coverage would address the increasing introduction and enactment of voter suppression measures precisely in response to the growth of the local Latino community to a level viewed as a threat to the political establishment. Practice-based pre-clearance would focus administrative or judicial review narrowly on suspect practices that are most likely to be tainted by discriminatory intent or to have discriminatory effects, as demonstrated by a broad historical record. This coverage would extend to any jurisdiction in the U.S. that is home to a racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse population and that seeks to adopt a covered practice, despite that practice's known likelihood of being discriminatory when used in a diverse population.

While litigation, by private parties and by the Department of Justice, under Section 2 of the VRA remains a powerful means to stop voter suppression, such litigation is not sufficient to address all the current and future potential for elections changes tied to voter suppression. Pre-clearance review benefits jurisdictions by reducing their costs in

defending potential elections changes, and benefits voting rights by yielding more timely resolution of voting rights disputes.

Congress must protect access to the polls and pass H.R. 4, including provisions for practice-based preclearance. This legislation is critical to restore voter protections that were lost due to Shelby County. We cannot allow any more time to pass without ensuring that every voter can register and cast a meaningful ballot. MALDEF urges you to stand with all voters and to vote ''yes'' on H.R. 4.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

ANDREA SENTENO,
*Regional Counsel.*

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AUGUST 24, 2021.

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: Democracy 21 strongly urges you to vote for passage of H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, when it comes to the floor for a vote.

H.R. 4 is a vitally important—and urgently needed—step forward in the work to protect the sacred right to vote for all eligible citizens.

Today, millions of Black, brown, other minorities, the disabled, elderly, and young, are at risk of losing their ability to vote due to voter suppression laws being passed in numerous states.

These efforts, if not overridden, will represent the greatest voter suppression in the United States since the Jim Crow era.

H.R. 4 will restore the preclearance provision of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and would modernize the formula for determining which states have a pattern of discrimination and would fall under the preclearance provision.

Voting is not a privilege, it is a right. It is incumbent that Congress act now as the right to vote is being severely threatened in states around the country.

The passage of H.R. 4 and H.R. 1, the For the People Act, which the House passed in March, are essential if we are to protect the right to vote in federal elections for all eligible citizens. The two bills protect the right to vote in complementary ways and both must be enacted.

''The vote is precious. It is almost sacred,'' the late Representative John Lewis, the civil rights champion, once said. ''It is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in a democracy.''

Democracy 21 strongly urges you to vote for H.R. 4.

Our democracy deserves nothing less.

Sincerely,

FRED WERTHEIMER,
*President.*

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AUGUST 17, 2021.

END CITIZENS UNITED // LET AMERICA VOTE ACTION FUND STATEMENT ON THE INTRODUCTION OF THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT

END CITIZENS UNITED // LET AMERICA VOTE ACTION FUND PRESIDENT TIFFANY MULLER RELEASED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ON THE U.S. HOUSE INTRODUCING THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT:

''In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965 during a critical moment in our nation when Jim Crow laws were being used to prevent Black Americans from exercising their fundamental right to vote. Since then, the Voting Rights Act has been gutted by a right-wing Supreme Court and partisan Republican-led legislatures have moved once again to take away that right. We've seen 400 bills introduced nationwide that include restrictive voting proposals with 30 of these bills becoming law in 18 states just this year alone.

''The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act is a fundamental step in protecting our freedom to vote by fully restoring the power of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and ensuring that any changes to voting rules could not discriminate against voters based on race and that we all have an equal voice in our democracy.

''From his historic march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, to his decades of fighting for voting rights and social justice, Congressman John Lewis never gave up in the pursuit of America adhering to its core values and principles—that every American citizen should be heard and have a voice. Congress must honor his legacy by passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For the People Act to protect access to the ballot and ensure that our democracy is truly representative of the American people.''

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DEAR HILLARY: As you prepare to consider H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, Foreign Policy for America encourages you to uphold the principles of democracy and efforts to protect the right to vote. Foreign Policy for America urges members of the House of Representatives to support H.R. 4 to restore democracy and safeguard the right to vote. We will consider scoring final passage in our 117th Congressional Scorecard.

Foreign Policy for America (FP4A) is a non-partisan 501c4 organization founded to promote principled American engagement in the world. Each Congress, we convene a group of experts from across the foreign policy community to advise on the development of our Policy Agenda and our biennial Congressional Scorecard. The FP4A Scorecard offers our members, concerned voters nationwide, and the media a way to quickly and easily understand the degree to which Members of Congress support strong, principled American foreign policy.

America's commitment to pluralism, equality, and non-partisan election administration are the hallmarks of our democracy and have inspired transitions to democracy in every region of the world. The United States is able to rally allies and mobilize action on the biggest global challenges because of who we are as a pluralistic, democratic country that for generations has inspired the world. H.R. 4 is needed to safeguard our democracy—the beating heart of our prosperity and strength.

Our democracy is at risk today. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act restores and expands key ballot access provisions enshrined in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that were dramatically weakened by 2013 Supreme Court decision in Shelby County v. Holder. The right to vote is one of the most critical pillars of American Democracy. We must protect it.

We urge all Members of the House of Representatives to support the John Lewis Voting Rights Act (H.R. 4) to help strengthen our democracy and protect the right to vote.

Please don't hesitate to reach out if we can answer any questions about our position.

Sincerely,

CASSANDRA VARANKA,
*Advocacy Director,*
*Foreign Policy for America.*

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CIVIL RIGHTS GROUPS TELL CONGRESS TO PASS JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT NOW

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today at 1pm ET, standing on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Rep. Terri Sewell will introduce H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, a bill to restore the pre-clearance protections stripped from the Voting Rights Act, and strengthen voting rights across the country. The bill is expected to be voted on in the House next week.

Stephany Spaulding, Just Democracy Spokesperson and Founder of Truth and Conciliation, issued the following statement:

''H.R. 4 is essential legislation to ensure that the over 400 state-level voter suppression laws proposed around the country will be countered by federal law. But this bill can only stop the bleeding—it cannot repeal the dangerous suppression laws already passed in Georgia, Florida, and more. We need Congress to take comprehensive action to protect our country's voting rights and pass the For the People Act, the John Lewis Voting Rights Act, and the Washington, D.C. Admissions Act—and we have to eliminate the Jim Crow filibuster to get it done.

This fight for voting rights won't be easy, but it is an existential turning point for the fate of our democracy—that's why we're marching in cities around the country in the March On for Voting Rights on August 28, to raise our voices and demand Congress take action. We're marching in the spirit of Congressman John Lewis, Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and countless civil rights leaders who never gave up on the fight for voting rights—and neither will we.''

About Just Democracy. Just Democracy is an intersectional coalition with racial justice at its core—uplifting voices from all walks of American life that are too often left out of the conversation. The coalition is made up of over 40 Black and Brown-led organizations working across issue areas. It mobilizes thousands who know that advancing social and racial justice issues first requires bold structural democracy reform.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE,
AUGUST 17, 2021.

MARCH ON FOR VOTING RIGHTS RESPONDS TO JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT INTRODUCTION IN THE HOUSE

MARTIN LUTHER KING III, ARNDREA WATERS KING, REV. AL SHARPTON, ANDI PRINGLE AND OTHER VOTING RIGHTS LEADERS ORGANIZE MASS MOBILIZATION TO PASS THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Today, standing on the Edmund Pettus Bridge, Congresswoman Terri Sewell (D–AL) introduced the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which will restore critical provisions of the Voting Rights Act gutted by the Supreme Court. Expected to receive a vote in the House of Representatives next week, the bill will help stem the rush of attacks on voting rights across the country by ensuring that states with a recent history of voter discrimination are once again subject to federal oversight.

March On for Voting Rights will call on the Senate to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For the People Act on Saturday, August 28, when millions join the March On for Voting Rights in D.C., Phoenix, Atlanta, Houston, Miami and more than 40 other cities across the country to make their voices heard. Marchers will also call for the Senate to remove the filibuster as a roadblock to critical voting rights legislation.

Rev. Al Sharpton, President and Founder of National Action Network, commented in response: ''If you want to understand why the vote is so important, look at the last 4 years, the last 10 years, and the last 100 years. Freedom fighter and Congressman John Lewis knew it was essential that every vote must count in order to assure every voice is represented, but unfortunately

through federal voter suppression and gerrymandering, that hasn't been the case. Today, Members of Congress continue to fight for the rights of the voiceless with the introduction of H.R. 4, the first step to right the wrongs done to the Voting Rights Act and reassert our Constitutional authority over democracy. Whether in Congress, in the streets, or during our March On for Voting Rights, this is the summer of activism.''

Martin Luther King III, Chairman of the Drum Major Institute, commented in response: ''Both John Lewis and my father agreed that there is no right more central to democracy than our right to vote. It is the cornerstone of democracy, the way we have our voices heard. Congress must pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Restoration Act. Our nation is being put to the test, and we must remember my father's words about the fierce urgency of now.

Arndrea Waters King, President of the Drum Major Institute, commented in response: ''Coretta Scott King told us, 'Freedom is never really won, you earn it and win it in every generation.' Now is the time to earn and win our sacred right to vote. It is up to us to remind Congress they represent the people, and the people demand the passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Restoration Act.''

Andi Pringle, Political and Strategic Campaigns Director at March On, commented in response: ''Voting rights in America hang by a thread, and we are grateful to our leaders in Congress who understand the gravity of this moment. But some of those in Congress act as though voting rights are debatable. They are not—voting rights are a fundamental requirement of democracy. Without legislation like the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the For the People Act to protect both voters and elections, millions will be disenfranchised and America will cease to be the democracy we claim to be. This is why millions will take to the streets on August 28 to demand passage of this legislation before it's too late.''

Stasha Rhodes, Campaign Manager of 51 for 51, commented in response: ''We are resolved to march on August 28 to make sure Congress does everything in its power to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, the For the People Act and the Washington D.C. Admissions Act. We can no longer allow states with long histories of disenfranchising our communities to strip away voting rights for Black and Brown people. After it passes the House, the Senate must remove the Jim Crow filibuster as a roadblock. Millions will march to make that call crystal clear.''

Sopia Woodrow, Community Manager of Future Coalition commented in response: ''As a young advocate, it is fundamental that our voting rights be protected. This act, combined with the action imminent with March On For Voting Rights, demonstrates a renewed commitment to protecting the voices of every American. Congress must pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Act to ensure the voices of Americans and youth for generations to come are heard. Disenfranchised communities have waited far too long for the voting rights necessary to justice.''

Ms. SEWELL. Madam Speaker, in conclusion, I want to thank the chairman of this committee, Chairman NADLER; the chairman of the subcommittee, STEVE COHEN; the chairwoman of the House Administration Committee, Representative ZOE LOFGREN; as well as G.K. BUTTERFIELD, for the countless hours of testimony and the reams of documents that show that voter suppression is still alive and well.

The price of freedom is not free. Let's pay for it by passing the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Thousands of Americans are stranded in Afghanistan, fearing for their lives, and Democrats are focused on passing legislation to make sure States can't require a photo ID to vote.

Thousands of Americans are stranded in Afghanistan, while hundreds of thousands of illegal immigrants cross our southern border every single month. March was the largest month on record for illegal crossings until April; April was the largest month of illegal crossings until May; May was the largest month until June; and June was the largest month until July; and Democrats are focused on passing legislation which says: States who want to go back to the election law they had just a year ago before the virus, you can't do that unless you come get permission from the Department of Justice.

As Mr. DAVIS said, in 1965, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act, a good piece of legislation that did things that needed to be done, put things in place that needed to be put in place. But we are a long way from that and so much better.

In 2013, in the Shelby County v. Holder Supreme Court decision, the Court said there is no need to continue preclearance requirements. Here's a quote from the Chief Justice: ''The conditions that originally justified'' these measures ''no longer characterize voting in the covered jurisdictions,'' Justice Roberts stated. African-American turnout today exceeds White voter turnout in five of the six originally covered States. During the past election, voter turnout was higher across all racial groups as compared to prior presidential elections.

The United States of America is the greatest country in the history of the world. There is no question that our country has done more to advance the cause of liberty and democracy than any other Nation. But, unfortunately, it seems the Democrats do not want to acknowledge all of that amazing progress that has been made and where we are at today.

H.R. 4 would subject States and localities to the whims of partisan bureaucrats within President Biden's Department of Justice. They get to decide—not States, as our Constitution says—no, no, no, you have to go get permission from the big Federal Government, do what they say, when it comes to your election laws, even if, as I said before, you just want to go back to where you were a year before COVID.

Republican States that Democrats always want to target actually do better than Democrat States, like President Biden's home State of Delaware. But for some reason, you don't hear Democrats raising alarms about Delaware, and you don't see the Biden administration bringing lawsuits against Delaware.

Democrats want to focus on this manufactured crisis, because they have no plans to deal with the real crises that are facing our country: inflation; crime; the border; and, of course, what is going on in Afghanistan as we speak.

Don't be fooled. Today, it is easier to vote than ever in our country. We need to applaud the strides this Nation has taken. We need to embrace the greatness of our country. This bill is not about expanding voting rights; it is about Democrats consolidating their political power. That is why they are focused on this. At a time when there are so many critical issues and crises facing our Nation, they are focused on consolidating their power and, I think, taking it away from the States.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LOFGREN).

Ms. LOFGREN. Madam Speaker, I support the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Congress first passed the Voting Rights Act while Martin Luther King, Jr. led for civil rights and John Lewis stood by his side. The law made a difference, defeating racial discrimination in voting.

But the Court, in the Shelby and Brnovich cases, destroyed important parts of the law. This bill fixes that. With an updated coverage formula, practice-based preclearance, and rational standards to challenge racial discrimination, this bill is essential.

Representatives BUTTERFIELD and FUDGE both chaired the Subcommittee on Elections, whose hearings established the factual bases for this bill. All the members of the Subcommittee on Elections worked hard holding hearings around America. I thank them, and I thank my colleagues on the Judiciary Committee for their work.

As we vote to restore the Voting Rights Act, to protect the rights of Americans from being denied the right to vote because of their race, we should remember, honor, and thank those who came before us, and especially our late colleague, John Lewis.

I urge a ''yes'' vote.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. ISSA).

□ 1630

Mr. ISSA. Madam Speaker, our colleague Rahm Emanuel famously said: ''You never let a serious crisis go to waste.'' Today, my Democratic colleagues are not letting a serious crisis go to waste.

While America is focused on the tragedy halfway around the world in Afghanistan, a plan to fail that now has successfully failed, the reality is, here, instead of holding real hearings, looking at the causes, and maybe, in fact, being more helpful in preventing further suffering of the 37 million people

in Afghanistan, what are we doing? We are codifying a permanent majority of the Democratic Party everywhere they can. We are making changes to election law that pull into Washington and into the Attorney General's office control of elections that the Constitution clearly gave to legislatures.

What we are doing, by the statements of my own colleagues on the other side of the aisle, is we are clearly saying we don't like the Supreme Court's decisions, so we are going to find a way to do what we want to do even though, in fact, the time and the success of the Civil Rights Act has, in fact, mostly passed.

Why can't you take success? Because it no longer benefits the goals of a permanent Democratic majority. I am sorry for my Democratic colleagues that, in fact, the people of America do not at times approve of things like the tragedy in Afghanistan or, in fact, are not willing to accept a permanent smear of we can never have elections without Federal intervention.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Madam Speaker, the Republicans say we don't need this voting rights bill, that we should leave the power with the States. My subcommittee had 13 hearings over 2 years, and the professors and the attorneys told us that every time Black and Brown people gain in population and start to take power, there start to be changes in the laws to stop them from having power.

Just this year, 18 States have enacted 30 laws restricting the ability to vote. There were at least 495 voter suppression bills pending in the States as of yesterday.

For them to say we don't need a bill in the year that this Capitol faced an insurrection, when they tried to overturn the electoral college and overturn a free and fair election, and after that happened, two-thirds of the Republicans voted to overturn the election by throwing out the results in Arizona and Pennsylvania. And then we wanted to study that insurrection, and a very thin number of Republicans even voted to study it.

Democracy is on the line. The right to vote is on the line. What we learned from our hearings is that we need to pass the Voting Rights Act and protect people's rights to vote because that is what America is about. I support this John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I would just remind the gentleman that Democrats have objected to the electors for every Republican President this century—every single one.

I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. STEIL).

Mr. STEIL. Madam Speaker, this House just passed a spending framework for $3.5 trillion in new government spending. And immediately following, what is next? A plan for a Federal Government takeover of elections.

H.R. 4 is focused on overturning the Supreme Court decision in Shelby County v. Holder and reinstituting Federal power over State election laws.

Preclearance was established in 1965 because there were blatant attempts to disenfranchise African Americans. We are not debating that today. We have made great progress since 1965.

What is the purpose of H.R. 4? H.R. 4 is a Federal power grab. This bill would gut voter ID laws across the country. The bill would allow the Biden Department of Justice to veto State voter ID laws.

In my home State of Wisconsin, some said commonsense voter ID laws would lower turnout. They were wrong. In 2020, Wisconsin had the fourth highest voter turnout in the country.

This bill would make it harder for States to maintain accurate voter rolls. Accurate voter rolls are essential for local election officials to accurately administer elections.

This bill is a Federal overreach. Instead of Federal overreach, let's get to work and make it easier to vote and hard to cheat.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE).

Mr. CICILLINE. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. I am proud to be an original cosponsor of this vital legislation. This is one of the most important bills we will consider this Congress.

Voting rights are the foundation of our democracy, ensuring that every American gets a fair say in who represents them and who makes the laws governing their lives.

Voting rights have been under attack all across this country. This year alone, 30 new discriminatory voting restriction laws have targeted communities of color, young people, and working people across 18 States. We cannot allow this in America.

This critical legislation will restore voting rights protections and provide the tools necessary to ensure discriminatory voting laws cannot stand. There is nothing more American than protecting the right to vote.

I want to thank my colleague, Congresswoman SEWELL, for her leadership. I thank Chairman NADLER, Speaker PELOSI, and all the leadership for the important work they are doing to ensure that voting rights are protected for all Americans.

I want to end by taking a moment to recognize and remember the late Congressman John Lewis, our colleague and friend, one of history's greatest fighters for equality and voting rights, after whom this legislation is so appropriately named.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, we have to be clear about what is happening here.

Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in 1965 to overcome shameful State resistance and barriers that prevented minorities from exercising their right.

But in 2013, the U.S. Supreme Court held that continuing to require States to preclear election law changes based upon conduct from a half century ago was an unconstitutional invasion of State sovereignty.

The truth is, as JIM said a moment ago, it is easier today for Americans to vote than it has ever been before in our Nation's history. The VRA worked. Thank the Lord that it did. We overcame those problems.

In fact, voter registration disparities between minority and nonminority voters in States like Texas, Florida, North Carolina, Mississippi, and my home State of Louisiana, all previously covered under the old VRA provisions, are now below the national average and, get this, they are lower than Democrat-run States like New York, California, and President Biden's home State of Delaware.

H.R. 4 is a radical, unprecedented Federal power grab by unaccountable bureaucrats in Washington that every conscientious American ought to oppose. I urge my colleagues to vote ''no'' on this.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Mrs. DEMINGS).

Mrs. DEMINGS. Madam Speaker, my mother was a maid and my father a janitor, but they were good, decent, honest people who saw voting as their duty and knew their vote mattered regardless of who they were and where they lived.

When did some of us, as elected officials, start believing it is okay to no longer protect basic rights but to lie if you have to, cheat if you have to, suppress the vote if you have to, and then stand up and claim victory?

John Lewis called the right to vote ''precious, almost sacred,'' and he was willing to risk his life to protect it.

We reject the politically motivated lies that seek to undermine faith in our elections. We are the United States of America. Yes, we are the greatest Nation in the world.

Let's live up to America's promise once again by protecting the precious, almost sacred right to vote.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. MCCLINTOCK).

Mr. MCCLINTOCK. Madam Speaker, not long ago, our elections worked well. We maintained accurate voter registration rolls and routinely removed people who moved or died.

After all the candidates had their say, on election day, we went to our local polling place. We brought our children to watch the process and taught them to respect it.

Our neighbors on the precinct board handed us our ballot after we identified ourselves and signed the roll. We took

it into a curtained booth where no one could pressure us to vote a certain way. We then handed that ballot back to our neighbor, who placed it in a locked box.

It was very hard to cheat because every ballot had a simple chain of custody.

The woke left seeks to destroy that process. Where they control the law, registration is instant, and outdated registrations are rarely removed. Ballots are sent to every name, followed by partisan harvesters to collect them. In fact, over 300 mail-in recall ballots were just found in the possession of a felon passed out in his car in Torrance, California.

Back in California, you can print ballots on your home printer and then send them in. Ballots are no longer secret. Family members, spouses, caregivers, or party hacks can cajole or pressure you as you cast your vote.

Every fraudulent vote disenfranchises a legitimate voter. That is the ultimate in voter suppression.

This bill effectively makes it impossible for States to restore integrity measures like in-person election day voting or voter ID. It ensures that the chaos and turmoil of recent elections is magnified and institutionalized.

In every election, somebody wins and somebody loses. Democracy depends on both sides having the confidence that an election was fair and accurately reflects the will of the majority. How can anyone have that confidence under such a system as the left would impose? The answer is we can't.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD an article with breaking news: The Texas Speaker of the House signs arrest warrants for absent Democrats in bid to end chamber's weekslong stalemate to fight against suppression and oppression in S.B. 7.

[From the Texas Tribune, Aug. 10, 2021]

TEXAS HOUSE SPEAKER DADE PHELAN SIGNS ARREST WARRANTS FOR ABSENT DEMOCRATS IN BID TO END CHAMBER'S WEEKSLONG STALEMATE

(By Cassandra Pollock and Patrick Svitek)

House Speaker Dade Phelan signed arrest warrants Tuesday evening for Democrats who broke quorum to block a controversial GOP elections bill. The warrants will be delivered to the House Sergeant-at-Arms Wednesday. Credit: Jordan Vonderhaar for The Texas Tribune. Sign up for The Brief, our daily newsletter that keeps readers up to speed on the most essential Texas news.

Texas House Speaker Dade Phelan on Tuesday evening signed civil arrest warrants for 52 House Democrats still missing from the state Capitol as he aimed to regain the quorum needed for the chamber to begin moving legislation during the second special session.

The move was confirmed by Phelan spokesperson Enrique Marquez, who said the warrants ''will be delivered to the House Sergeant-at-Arms tomorrow morning for service.''

The warrants were first reported by The Dallas Morning News. Democrats who may be arrested would not face criminal charges or fines and could only be brought to the House chamber. Dozens of minority party members fled to Washington, D.C., during the first special session to block a GOP voting restrictions bill.

The 52 warrants represent all but 15 Democrats in the lower chamber. There were at least 11 present Tuesday. There were no additional new Democrats on the floor Tuesday after four returned a day earlier—and drew the wrath of some Democratic colleagues still in Washington, and prompted a renewed push inside the party to hold the line.

Earlier Tuesday, the House voted overwhelmingly to authorize law enforcement to track down lawmakers absent from the chamber.

That 80–12 vote came hours after the Texas Supreme Court ordered that those missing Democrats could soon be detained by state authorities. The order by the all-GOP court came at the request of Gov. Greg Abbott and Phelan, both of whom had asked the court Monday to overturn a ruling from a state district judge that blocked those leaders from ordering the arrest of the quorum-breaking Democrats.

In a statement after the warrants were signed Tuesday evening, state Rep. Chris Turner of Grand Prairie, who chairs the House Democratic Caucus, said it is ''fully within our rights as legislators to break quorum to protect our constituents'' and reiterated Democrats' commitment ''to fighting with everything we have against Republicans' attacks on our freedom to vote.''

Since the Legislature gaveled in Saturday for its second special session ordered by Abbott, the House has been unable to make a quorum as dozens of Democrats have remained absent from the chamber.

When the House was unable to meet its 100-member threshold to conduct business Monday, members adopted a procedural move known as a ''call of the House'' in an effort to secure a quorum. That move locks doors to the chamber and prevents members on the floor from leaving unless they have permission in writing from the speaker.

That vote earlier Tuesday marks the second time in recent weeks that the chamber has voted to send law enforcement after Democrats still missing from the House.

During the first special session in July, and after more than 50 House Democrats flew to D.C., members present authorized state authorities to track down their colleagues—but the move carried little weight since Texas law enforcement lacks jurisdiction outside the state.

By the time that first 30-day stretch ended last week, Phelan had signed only one civil arrest warrant, for Rep. Philip Cortez, a San Antonio Democrat. But that move came too late since Cortez, who had briefly returned to Austin, had already gone back to the nation's capital.

Intraparty pressure has been mounting on House Democrats since the second special session started. After at least four of them returned to the floor Monday, bringing the chamber within five members of a quorum, some of their Democratic colleagues who were still in Washington unleashed on them. Rep. Ana-Maria Ramos of Richardson tweeted at the returning Democrats that they ''all threw us under the bus today.''

Pressure ramped up Tuesday morning, when a coalition of Democratic-aligned groups released a statement urging House Democrats to hold firm and continue breaking quorum. The 21 groups included Planned Parenthood Texas Votes, the state's Sierra Club chapter, the Texas Organizing Project, Progress Texas, the Communications Workers of America and several groups that advocate for Latino Texans.

''To every pro-democracy Texas lawmaker: the only way to preserve our right to vote and the best way to fight is to stay off the House floor,'' the coalition's statement said.

The group also released a four-page memo arguing that far more was at stake in the second special session than just the elections bill, citing a ''host of radical conservative priorities'' throughout the agenda. The memo was particularly emphatic about a new proposal for the second special session—dropping the quorum threshold to a simple majority—calling it an ''ominous allusion to reducing or eliminating minority rights in the Legislature, breaking centuries of Texas bipartisanship.''

Meanwhile, a number of House Democrats have returned to Texas but have not come to the House floor to help provide quorum.

One of them is state Rep. Evelina ''Lina'' Ortega, who says she is home in El Paso but not showing up on the House floor until there is already a quorum or a majority of the Democratic caucus decides to be there.

''I pretty much feel that it's a shame that the governor and Republicans . . . are really using the dirtiest tactic available to them,'' Ortega told the Tribune on Tuesday evening after the House's vote to send law enforcement after the absentee Democrats. ''To me it's all about a power grab. I'm glad to stay away and continue to fight them.''

As for whether she is concerned about arrest, Ortega said she believes it would be a ''big mistake'' by Republicans.

''We'll see what happens,'' she said.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. This is John Lewis, and he says: ''We will stand up for what is right, for what is fair, and what is just,'' and we will ensure that we have courage, the kind of courage that is ''raw courage.''

Today, I ask my Republican colleagues to reject the big lie, to reject the insurrection, and to reject the idea that there is not voter suppression.

I stand with H.R. 4, a bill that is the continuation of the reauthorization that I have done over the years as a member of the Judiciary Committee. I thank Chairman NADLER, Chairman COHEN, TERRI SEWELL, all those who are part of this great effort, and our whip.

But the real important point is that we give the vote back to the American people, to the disabled, to young people, to senior citizens, and we reject that unfortunate statement. The State of Texas attorney general, the secretary of state, never found any fraud in the election, in particular in 2020.

I am very glad that this will particularly have the look-back. It will protect us against such dilution and diminution.

This is a bill that has to pass, and the Senate has to pass it. Give the vote back to the American people. Have raw courage.

Madam Speaker, as a senior member of the Judiciary Committee and an original cosponsor, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which corrects the damage done in recent years to the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and commits the national government to protecting the right of all Americans to vote free from discrimination and without injustices that previously prevented them from exercising this most fundamental right of citizenship.

I thank my colleague, Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL of Alabama for introducing this

legislation, to Speaker PELOSI, Chairman NADLER, and the Democratic leadership, and to the many colleagues and countless number of ordinary Americans who never stopped agitating and working to protect the precious right to vote.

Madam Speaker, in response to the Supreme Court's invitation in *Shelby County* v. *Holder*, 570 U.S. 193 (2013), H.R. 4 provides a new coverage formula based on ''current conditions'' and creates a new coverage formula that hinges on a finding of repeated voting rights violations in the preceding 25 years.

It is significant that this 25-year period is measured on a rolling basis to keep up with ''current conditions,'' so only states and political subdivisions that have a recent record of racial discrimination in voting are covered.

States and political subdivisions that qualify for preclearance will be covered for a period of 10 years, but if they have a clean record during that time period, they can be extracted from coverage.

H.R. 4 also establishes ''practice-based preclearance,'' which would focus administrative or judicial review narrowly on suspect practices that are most likely to be tainted by discriminatory intent or to have discriminatory effects, as demonstrated by a broad historical record.

Under the bill, this process of reviewing changes in voting is limited to a set of specific practices, including such things as:

1. Changes to the methods of elections (to or from at-large elections) in areas that are racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse.

2. Redistricting in areas that are racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse.

3. Reducing, consolidating, or relocating polling in areas that are racially, ethnically, or linguistically diverse; and

4. Changes in documentation or requirements to vote or to register.

Madam Speaker, while I am proud to strongly support this bill, I would be remiss if I did not express my disappointment at the decision to not include my amendments to this bill.

Jackson Lee Amendments #6, #7, and #8 are easy to understand and vitally important—they simply protect state legislators who, in keeping with their sacred oath to uphold the Constitution of the United States, refuse to perform unconstitutional acts under the guise of legislative process.

Specifically:

Jackson Lee Amendment #6 allows for federal judicial review of any warrants issued for the arrest of a state legislator where said state legislator refuses to engage in the state legislative process due to a reasonably held belief that doing so would infringe on the right to vote.

Jackson Lee Amendment #7 inserts a Sense of the Congress stating that a state's power to arrest a duly elected representative of a constituency for refusal to engage in a state's legislative process should be subject to federal judicial review where such elected representative's refusal is premised upon a reasonable belief that participation would result in the suppression of voting rights or other violations of the Constitution of the United States of America.

Jackson Lee Amendment #8 privileges against arrest any member of a state legislature for any reason except treason or murder while the legislature of that state is debating or voting on legislation relating to redistricting or election practices or legislation relating to the right to vote in federal, state, or municipal elections.

These amendments would have critically strengthened H.R. 4 because state legislatures across the country are utilizing every weapon in their arsenal to curtail voting rights; and no one should fear arrest due to fighting for the Constitutional rights of their constituents.

This includes my home state of Texas, where earlier this month officers of the Texas House of Representatives delivered civil arrest warrants, signed by the Texas state Speaker of the House, for more than 50 absent Democrats in an attempt force a vote on the naked attempt at voter suppression known as Texas S.B. 7.

This is the latest Republican attack on these brave state legislators, which began on May 30, where after a night of impassioned debate and procedural objections, these Democratic lawmakers in Texas took action to block passage of this massive overhaul of the state's election laws.

With little more than an hour before the voting deadline, these Democrats staged a walkout, depriving their Republican colleagues of the 100-member quorum needed to pass the measure.

And when Governor Abbot called a special session in Texas for the purpose of passing horrific voter suppression legislation, those brave Texas Democrats rose to the challenge again and broke quorum.

Under the threat of arrest, those heroes fighting for voting rights have escaped to Washington, D.C.

Since the arrest warrants were issued, it is my understanding that mass intimidation of the Texas House Democrats has occurred.

State officials came to their homes with the purpose of dragging them back to eviscerate the voting rights of thousands of Texas.

These elected Texas Representatives have had to hide away from their friends, their families, and their loved ones, all to ensure that Texans retain their most sacred of rights.

They are risking their freedom to ensure every Texan has full access to their constitutional right to vote.

Although the Republicans have tried to spin this in many different ways, let's be clear—Texas Democrats are taking a righteous stand for our democracy.

Breaking quorum isn't an easy choice—legislators must leave family, friends, constituents, and their important work for days or weeks.

But by making this choice, these Texas Democrats are fighting for all of us, because voting is not a partisan issue.

Access to the ballot is a sacred cornerstone of our democracy, and we must protect it at all costs.

Last month marked one year since we lost a champion for voting rights, and the namesake of H.R. 4, Congressman John Lewis.

In his final words, he reminded us that, ''the vote is the most powerful nonviolent change agent [we] have in a democratic society,'' and that ''Though I may not be here with you, I urge you to answer the highest calling of your heart and stand up for what you truly believe.''

We may no longer have John Lewis with us, but in his absence, the Texas Democrats are following his example, and stirring up good trouble, necessary trouble, for our right to vote.

They have followed the truth in his words and have sacrificed much to follow the highest calling of their hearts.

Texas Republicans seek to pass voting regulation laws focused on diverse, urban areas, by setting rules for the distribution of polling places in only the handful of counties with a population of at least 1 million—most of which are either under Democratic control or won by Democrats in recent national and statewide elections.

These bills would limit extended early voting hours, prohibits drive-thru voting and makes it illegal for local election officials to proactively send applications to vote by mail to voters, even if they qualify.

These bills are at the forefront of Texas Republicans' crusade to further restrict voting in Texas, which saw the highest turnout in decades in 2020, with Democrats continuing to drive up their vote counts in the state's urban centers and diversifying suburban communities.

Standing between all of this and the voting rights of thousands of Texans are those brave state legislators who currently have a warrant out for their arrest.

No elected representative in this great nation should fear that he or she will be locked away for simply standing up for justice and ensuring that America's citizens have the right to vote.

For this reason, I believe that H.R. 4 would have been greatly strengthened by the inclusion of my amendments in the Rule.

Madam Speaker, I strongly encourage all Members of Congress to support this bill, because it is the responsibility and sacred duty of all members of Congress who revere democracy to preserve, protect, and expand the precious right to vote of all Americans by passing H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

It is useful, Madam Speaker, to recount how we arrived at this day. Madam Speaker, fifty-six years ago, in Selma, Alabama, hundreds of heroic souls risked their lives for freedom and to secure the right to vote for all Americans by their participation in marches for voting rights on ''Bloody Sunday,'' ''Turnaround Tuesday,'' or the final, completed march from Selma to Montgomery.

Those ''foot soldiers'' of Selma, brave and determined men and women, boys and girls, persons of all races and creeds, loved their country so much that they were willing to risk their lives to make it better, to bring it even closer to its founding ideals.

The foot soldiers marched because they believed that all persons have dignity and the right to equal treatment under the law, and in the making of the laws, which is the fundamental essence of the right to vote.

On that day, Sunday, March 7, 1965, more than 600 civil rights demonstrators, including our beloved colleague, Congressman John Lewis of Georgia for whom this important legislation is named, were brutally attacked by state and local police at the Edmund Pettus Bridge as they marched from Selma to Montgomery in support of the right to vote.

''Bloody Sunday'' was a defining moment in American history because it crystallized for the nation the necessity of enacting a strong and effective federal law to protect the right to vote of every American.

No one who witnessed the violence and brutally suffered by the foot soldiers for justice who gathered at the Edmund Pettus Bridge will never forget it; the images are deeply seared in the American memory and experience.

On August 6, 1965, in the Rotunda of the Capitol President Johnson addressed the nation before signing the Voting Rights Act:

The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 was critical to preventing brazen voter discrimination violations that historically left millions of African Americans disenfranchised.

In 1940, for example, there were less than 30,000 African Americans registered to vote in Texas and only about 3 percent of African Americans living in the South were registered to vote.

Poll taxes, literacy tests, and threats of violence were the major causes of these racially discriminatory results.

After passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, which prohibited these discriminatory practices, registration and electoral participation steadily increased to the point that by 2012, more than 1.2 million African Americans living in Texas were registered to vote.

In 1964, the year before the Voting Rights Act became law, there were approximately 300 African-Americans in public office, including just three in Congress.

Few, if any, African Americans held elective office anywhere in the South.

Because of the Voting Rights Act, in 2007 there were more than 9,100 black elected officials, including 46 members of Congress, the largest number ever.

Madam Speaker, the Voting Rights Act opened the political process for many of the approximately 6,000 Hispanic public officials that have been elected and appointed nationwide, including more than 275 at the state or federal level, 32 of whom serve in Congress.

Native Americans, Asians and others who have historically encountered harsh barriers to full political participation also have benefited greatly.

The crown jewel of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is Section 5, which requires that states and localities with a chronic record of discrimination in voting practices secure federal approval before making any changes to voting processes.

The preclearance requirement of Section 5 protects minority voting rights where voter discrimination has historically been the worst.

Between 1982 and 2006, Section 5 stopped more than 1,000 discriminatory voting changes in their tracks, including 107 discriminatory changes right here in Texas.

Passed in 1965 with the extraordinary leadership of President Lyndon Johnson, the greatest legislative genius of our lifetime, the Voting Rights Act of 1965 was bringing dramatic change in many states across the South.

But in 1972, change was not coming fast enough or in many places in Texas.

In fact, Texas, which had never elected a woman to Congress or an African American to the Texas State Senate, was not covered by Section 5 of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and the language minorities living in South Texas were not protected at all.

But thanks to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, Barbara Jordan was elected to Congress, giving meaning to the promise of the Voting Rights Act that all citizens would at long last have the right to cast a vote for person of their community, from their community, for their community.

Madam Speaker, it is a source of eternal pride to all of us in Houston that in pursuit of extending the full measure of citizenship to all Americans, in 1975 Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who also represented this historic 18th Congressional District of Texas, introduced, and the Congress adopted, what are now Sections 4(f)(3) and 4(f)(4) of the Voting Rights Act, which extended the protections of Section 4(a) and Section 5 to language minorities.

We must remain ever vigilant and oppose all schemes that will abridge or dilute the precious right to vote.

Madam Speaker, I am here today to remind the nation that the need to pass this legislation is urgent because the right to vote—that ''powerful instrument that can break down the walls of injustice''—faces grave threats.

The threats stem from the decision issued in June 2013 by the Supreme Court in *Shelby County* v. *Holder*, 570 U.S. 193 (2013), which invalidated Section 4(b) of the VRA, and paralyzed the application of the VRA's Section 5 preclearance requirements.

Not to be content with the monument to disgrace that is the Shelby County decision, the activist right-wing conservative majority on the Roberts Court, on July 1, 2021, issued its evil twin, the decision in *Brnovich* v. *DNC*, 594 U.S. ___, No. 19–1257 and 19–1258 (July 1, 2021), which engrafts on Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act onerous burdens that Congress never intended and explicitly legislated against.

Madam Speaker, were it not for the 24th Amendment, I venture to say that this conservative majority on the Court would subject poll taxes and literacy tests to the review standard enunciated in Brnovich v. DNC.

According to the Supreme Court majority, the reason for striking down Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act was that ''times change.''

Now, the Court was right; times have changed.

But what the Court did not fully appreciate is that the positive changes it cited are due almost entirely to the existence and vigorous enforcement of the Voting Rights Act.

And that is why the Voting Rights Act is still needed and that is why we must pass H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Let me put it this way: in the same way that the vaccine invented by Dr. Jonas Salk in 1953 eradicated the crippling effects but did not eliminate the cause of polio, the Voting Rights Act succeeded in stymieing the practices that resulted in the wholesale disenfranchisement of African Americans and language minorities but did not eliminate them entirely.

The Voting Rights Act is needed as much today to prevent another epidemic of voting disenfranchisement as Dr. Salk's vaccine is still needed to prevent another polio epidemic.

As Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg stated in Shelby County v. Holder, ''[t]hrowing out preclearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet.''

Madam Speaker, in many ways my home state of Texas is ground-zero for testing and perfecting schemes to deprive communities of color and language minorities of the right to vote and to have their votes counted.

Consider what has transpired in Texas in recent past, let alone the noxious voter suppression bill, SB7, it is currently trying to ramrod through the legislature.

Only 68 percent of eligible voters are registered in Texas and state restrictions on third party registration, such as the Volunteer Deputy Registrar program, exacerbate the systemic disenfranchisement of minority communities.

These types of programs are often aimed at minority and underserved communities that, for many, many other reasons (like demonization by the president, for example) or mistrust of law enforcement are afraid to live as openly as they should.

In Harris County, we had a system where voters were getting purged from the rolls, effectively requiring people to keep active their registrations and hundreds of polling locations closed in Texas, significantly more in number and percentage than any other state.

In addition, the Texas Election Code only requires a 72-hour notice of polling location changes.

Next, take what happened here in Texas in 2019 when the Texas Secretary of State claimed that his office had identified 95,000 possible noncitizens on the voter rolls and gave the list to the Texas State Attorney General for possible prosecution—leading to a claim from President Trump about widespread voter fraud and outrage from Democrats and activist groups.

The only problem was that list was not accurate.

At least 20,000 names turned out to be there by mistake, leading to chaos, confusion, and concern that people's eligibility vote was being questioned based on flawed data.

The list was made through state records going back to 1996 that show which Texas residents were not citizens when they got a driver's license or other state ID.

But many of the persons who may have had green cards or work visas at the time they got a Texas ID are on the secretary of state's office's list, and many have become citizens since then since nearly 50,000 people become naturalized U.S. citizens in Texas annually.

Latinos made up a big portion of the 95,000-person list.

Texas Republicans adopted racial and partisan gerrymandered congressional, State legislative redistricting plans that federal courts have ruled violate the Voting Rights Act and were drawn with discriminatory intent.

Even after changes were demanded by the courts, much of the damage was already done.

Reversing the position by the Obama administration, the Trump Department of [in]Justice represented to a federal court that it no longer believed past discrimination by Texas officials should require the state to get outside approval for redistricting maps that will be drawn in 2021.

In addition to affirmative ways to making it harder to vote, we also know face other odious impediments in Texas.

Those of us who cherish the right to vote justifiably are skeptical of voter ID laws because we understand how these laws, like poll

taxes and literacy tests, can be used to impede or negate the ability of seniors, racial and language minorities, and young people to cast their votes.

This is the harm that can be done without preclearance, so on a federal level, there is an impetus to act.

Consider the demographic groups who lack a government issued ID:

1. African Americans: 25 percent
2. Asian Americans: 20 percent
3. Hispanic Americans: 19 percent
4. Young people, aged 18–24: 18 percent
5. Persons with incomes less than $35,000: 15 percent

And there are other ways abridging or suppressing the right to vote, including:

1. Curtailing or eliminating early voting.
2. Ending same-day registration.
3. Not counting provisional ballots cast in the wrong precinct on Election Day will not count.
4. Eliminating adolescent pre-registration.
5. Shortening poll hours.
6. Lessening the standards governing voter challenges thus allowing self-proclaimed ''ballot security vigilantes'' like the King Street Patriots to cause trouble at the polls.

The malevolent practice of voter purging is not limited to Texas; we saw it in 2018 in Georgia, where then Secretary of State and now Governor Brian Kemp purged more than 53,000 persons from the voter, nearly the exact margin of his narrow win over his opponent, Stacy Abrams in the 2018 gubernatorial election.

Voter purging is a sinister and malevolent practice visited on voters, who are disproportionately members of communities of color, by state and local election officials.

This practice, which would have not passed muster under section 5 of the Voting Rights Act, has proliferated in the years since the Supreme Court neutralized the preclearance provision, or as Justice Ginsburg observed in Shelby County v. Holder, ''threw out the umbrella'' of protection.

Madam Speaker, citizens in my congressional district and elsewhere know and have experienced the pain and heartbreak of receiving a letter from state or local election officials that they have been removed from the election rolls, or worse, learn this fact on Election Day.

That is why I am very pleased that H.R. 4 includes language that I worked hard to include in the Manager's Amendment to the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019 that strengthens the bill's ''practice-based preclearance'' provisions by adding specifically to the preclearance provision, voting practices that add a new basis or process for removing a name from the list of active registered voters and the practice of reducing the days or hours of in-person voting on Sundays during an early voting period.

For millions of Americans, the right to vote protected by the Voting Rights Act of 1965 is a sacred treasure, earned by the sweat and toil and tears and blood of ordinary Americans who showed the world it was possible to accomplish extraordinary things.

Madam Speaker, it is the responsibility and sacred duty of all members of Congress who revere democracy to preserve, protect, and expand the precious right to vote of all Americans by passing H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, was it a big lie when the Democrats for 4 years questioned the 2016 election, when in October of 2020 Secretary Clinton said the election was stolen from her in 2016? Was that the big lie that the previous speaker was talking about?

I yield 2 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BENTZ).

Mr. BENTZ. Madam Speaker, this bill would operate to freeze in place, to substantially chill, changes to the election processes of some of the 90,126 State and local government units found in this United States.

Madam Speaker, I assure you, the election processes of many of these State and local units are not perfect, but this bill would chill necessary corrections and updating of such election processes. Why? Because the bill creates a private enforcement cause of action, with attorney fees to the prevailing party, and establishes a clear risk to these 90,126 government units of incurring tens if not hundreds of thousands of dollars of attorney fees if the government unit gets it wrong and violates the subjective standards, such as the undefined term ''diminishes'' found in section 4A(c)(2) in the bill.

Madam Speaker, after what we have been through in the last election, we should be working to encourage certainty and clarity in our election processes. This bill does not do that. It does the opposite.

□ 1645

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. JEFFRIES).

Mr. JEFFRIES. Madam Speaker, how dare Republicans come to this floor and lecture America about masks and liberty over and over again while at the same time undermining the precious right to vote?

Free and fair elections are central to our liberty, and we are not going to let anyone take that away from us.

Those who worship at the altar of voter suppression will fail. Those who worship at the altar of Jim Crow-like oppression will fail. Those who worship at the altar of turning back the clock to make America hate again will fail.

We are not going backward.

The John Robert Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act will become law, and when it is all said and done, democracy will prevail, and good trouble will win the day.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT).

Mr. GOHMERT. Madam Speaker, as has been said earlier by DARRELL ISSA, it was Rahm Emanuel that pointed out, don't let a good crisis go to waste.

So here we have a crisis on our southern border and Afghanistan, and what do we do? The majority comes in here and says, we don't want our Members to have to vote on a $3.5 trillion spending bill, so we will just pass a rule that says without anybody voting on it we pass a $3.5 trillion spending bill. And then we will immediately jump over to a noble man with a great name that did such great work for America along with Dr. King, John Lewis, the John Lewis Voting Rights Act bill.

Well, I was here when that was reauthorized, when that was redone, and I begged, after talking to some liberal constitutional professors of law, I begged Jim Sensenbrenner and John Conyers not to go forward with section 4(b) the way it was and section 5. Let's do this right so that it won't be struck down. Mr. Sensenbrenner was not open to that whatsoever; John Conyers, to his credit, was. I said, please talk to some professors, let them tell you, it is at risk of being struck down. And he said, well, they say there is a decent chance of that, but let's see what happens.

What happens now? We come in here, and we are going to disenfranchise American voters by taking over the voting across America. The Constitution reserves those provisions to the State legislature. We shouldn't be doing this.

Back after the 2000 election when there were some people in Florida that were not as smart as fifth graders because they couldn't figure out the butterfly ballots, this body jumped in, took over, and said everybody go to electronic ballots and electronic voting, and they have caused us misery ever since.

Let's let States and local government do the job the Constitution gave them.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. CORREA).

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

Today across the Nation, States are eliminating same-day voter registration, reducing voting times, and limiting the availability of polling places. These changes essentially make it harder for our friends and neighbors to vote.

This bill is a simple bill. It ensures that all legally cast ballots are counted. It ensures that the voices of Americans are louder than those of special interests.

I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes'' on the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. CARTER).

Mr. CARTER of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 4.

This legislation is named after a good man and a fellow Georgian, John Lewis, whom I was honored to call friend while we served together in this body.

And let me remind my colleagues on the other side of the aisle and the Speaker that I was the only Republican to join you in San Diego for the christening of the USNS *John Lewis*, and I

did it because he was my friend. I did it because he should be honored.

While he was a good man, this legislation does nothing to advance the rights of our citizens to vote as my friends on the other side of the aisle would claim.

H.R. 4 is a radical and unprecedented Federal power grab over State-administered elections under the guise of updating the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

At the time, the extraordinary measures employed by the Voting Rights Act were important, however, thankfully, as the U.S. Supreme Court recognized in a 2013 decision, things have changed dramatically in the U.S. since 1965.

In fact, elections in 2018 and 2020 saw record turnout among Americans from minority communities.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 4 must be rejected to ensure that the Federal takeover of our elections stops right here.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. PELOSI), the distinguished Speaker of the House.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for the recognition, and I acknowledge his tremendous leadership over time, including right now on the issue of voting rights in our country. I thank him for bringing this important legislation to the floor and to do so under the name of Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, the author of the bill, who has been working on this for a long time, since the assault on the legislation, on these laws by the Supreme Court.

I also thank Mr. CLYBURN, a champion from the civil rights era to now, always fighting for all of this; and ZOE LOFGREN, the chair of the Committee on House Administration.

We have so many people to acknowledge; Mr. BUTTERFIELD for his work in establishing the constitutional record, as well as Marcia Fudge, now Secretary Fudge, for her work. So many people worked to build a constitutional basis to make it ironclad so that the Supreme Court of the United States cannot once again do violence as it did in Shelby County v. Holder and the most recent assault on section 2.

Madam Speaker, I think my colleagues will all agree that many wonderful honors are afforded us as Members of Congress. I can think of none that is more poignant than being here today to be able to speak on this important issue named for John Lewis. It is almost a religious experience because of the sanctity of the vote, which is greatly at risk.

Our colleagues have mentioned some of the assaults on voting that have taken place to undermine what we are, a democracy. We talk about the preamble where 230 years ago our Founders gave us guidance in the words, ''we the people'' establishing a government in which the people, not a king, would shape their own destiny.

Ever since, Americans have fought to make real that promise for all citizens while enshrining in the Constitution the 13th and 15th amendments and the 19th amendment, which we are celebrating this week to expand voting rights to women and to passing landmark civil and voting rights protections, including the Voting Rights Act.

Right here in this very Chamber the Voting Rights Act was passed. President Lyndon Johnson spoke in a beautiful speech, the ''We Shall Overcome'' speech, in which he called the VRA's passage, ''The history of this country, in large measure, is the history of the expansion of that right to all of our people.''

We all know that the story of America is a story of ever-expanding freedoms, yet today, that story and those rights are under threat from a targeted, brazen, and partisan campaign to deny Americans the ballot.

This campaign is anti-democratic, it is dangerous, and it demands action.

Today, the House will pass H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to combat this anti-democratic tide. This bill restores the power of the Voting Rights Act, as President Johnson said, '' . . . one of the most monumental laws in the entire history of American freedom.''

Any diminishment of the Voting Rights Act is a diminishment of our democracy. In America, the right to vote must never be compromised.

Again, I thank Representatives SEWELL, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Marcia Fudge, JERRY NADLER, ZOE LOFGREN, Mr. CLYBURN, and so many who made this day possible.

And let me pause to salute our beloved conscience of the Congress, the late John Lewis, whose words guide us. ''The vote is precious,'' he said. ''It is almost sacred. It is the most powerful, nonviolent tool we have in a democracy.''

The previous speaker mentioned that he had been at the christening of the USNS John Lewis. We were all together in San Diego, and we were honored that the Congressman was there with us.

As he was saying those words, I was remembering that day. We were all very excited. It was the largest contingent of Members of Congress to go to the christening of a ship—and I have been to several, so I know—and what it was reminding me of is when we had gone a couple years ago in 2019 to Ghana; John Lewis led us there. It was the 400th anniversary. You were there, Madam Speaker. Mr. CLYBURN and so many others were there. We were there with John Lewis, and we went to the door of no return, which now is the door of return as they were welcoming people back.

I have on this bracelet that I got from the President of Ghana when we were there as a remembrance of that trip, and I have it on now because what John Lewis said then, and apropos of the christening of a ship, We may have all come to this country on different ships, but now we're all in the same boat. That is what John Lewis said. He said it in Ghana. He said it many times.

We are all in the same boat. We all should have the right to vote. And that should not be diminished by anyone. It is unpatriotic to undermine the ability of people who have a right to vote to have access to the polls.

As John knew, this precious pillar of our democracy is under attack from what is the worst voter suppression campaign in America since Jim Crow. Unleashed by the dangerous Shelby v. Holder in 2013 and 2021, State lawmakers have introduced over 400 suppression bills.

I am very honored today, Madam Speaker, that we have legislators from the State of Texas who are fighting the fight for voting rights for people in their State and in our country. They are patriotic Americans. And let us hear applause for those Texans who have done so much.

Much has been said about preclearance and thousands of discriminatory voting changes. But let us just say that in the Shelby decision, the dissent was written by Justice Ginsburg, and she noted in her dissent the Court's reasoning in Shelby was nonsensical. ''Throwing out preclearance when it has worked and is continuing to work to stop discriminatory changes is like throwing away your umbrella in a rainstorm because you are not getting wet.''

Sadly, the Court has since continued that assault on the ballot.

So H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, would be a remedy to this assault and to restore the preclearance provisions.

I have said earlier today on the rule on this vote, in 2006 we all came together in a bipartisan way to pass the Voting Rights Act. Nearly 400 votes in the House, unanimous in the Senate. We came together in the center of the Capitol, marched down the Capitol steps celebrating that.

The bill was signed by President George Bush proudly. He joined us in Selma, hosted by Congresswoman SEWELL. He and President Obama joined us in Selma, and he came and spoke as the President who had signed the Voting Rights Act. As I say, more importantly, Mrs. Laura Bush was there, so their hearts were in all of this. It was bipartisan. I wish it could be today.

In our work to protect the ballot, let us recall John Lewis' final message published after his passing. ''Democracy is not a state. It is an act.'' With H.R. 4, his namesake, the Congress takes this action to build a future in which we all have equitable access to the ballot and to our democracy.

In memory of our beloved John, for whom this legislation is named, and in the interest of passing it and H.R. 1, of which he wrote the first 300 pages, let us honor our patriotic duty and make justice and equality there for everyone to vote.

□ 1700

Mr. JORDAN. Madam Speaker, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives just applauded Texas legislators for not showing up to work, for not doing their job. I mean, the things we see today, it is truly amazing to me.

Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. JOHNSON).

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Pennsylvania (Ms. SCANLON).

Ms. SCANLON. Madam Speaker, since the founding of our country, our quest for a more perfect union has featured measures to expand, not contract, the right to vote.

In 1965, activists, including a young John Lewis, put their lives on the line to pass the original Voting Rights Act.

For decades, that law enjoyed broad bipartisan support, but in recent years, State legislatures have passed hundreds of laws to restrict voter access.

In 2020, our system held. It held because voters turned out in overwhelming numbers. It held because election officials did their jobs faithfully, regardless of party. It held because brave officers of the U.S. Capitol and Metro Police defended our Constitution.

But let's be clear, the assault on voting rights continues, inspired by corrupt and cynical efforts to hold power at all costs. We must do our job to protect and reinforce our democratic system against these new threats because it won't hold indefinitely.

Madam Speaker, I urge all Americans to hold the line to protect and defend our democracy. I urge swift passage of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act by the House and the Senate.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time once more.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. GARCIA).

Ms. GARCIA of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4 and its efforts to protect access to the ballot box and advance justice and democracy for all, including Latinos, which represent 77 percent of my district.

We are all equal under the law and should be treated equally at the ballot box. Recent attempts by the GOP-led legislatures in States like my home State of Texas, demonstrate how urgent it is to protect our democracy. These attempts could disenfranchise nearly 8 in every 10 of my constituents.

Our country has one of the strongest democracies in the world, and it is simply un-American to disenfranchise voters. I urge my colleagues to pass H.R. 4, which would maintain elections free, fair, and accessible to all eligible voters. Let's make our democracy stronger. Si se puede. Yes, we can.

I urge my colleagues to join me in support of H.R. 4.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. TENNEY).

Ms. TENNEY. Madam Speaker, I am strongly opposed to H.R. 4. When our Founders created this self-governing constitutional republic, they vested the power to administer time, place, and manner of elections with our State legislatures. They knew the sacred right to vote would be better preserved by democratically elected, accountable State and local officials rather than unelected Federal bureaucrats. This principle has endured for two centuries. However, this principle is now under attack here in the people's House.

My colleagues on the other side of the aisle argue that democracy is somehow in peril. And their solution to this problem is to relinquish total control of our elections, again, to Federal, unelected bureaucrats—a complete opposite of democratic concepts; bureaucrats with the power to prosecute based on political views and party affiliations.

These are the same officials who were absent when now-disgraced former Democrat Governor Cuomo unilaterally altered New York election laws last year in violation of New York's constitution, which chaotically overstressed the system and compromised the guarantee of a free, secure, and fair election.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote against this legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Georgia (Mrs. MCBATH).

Mrs. MCBATH. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

During the Civil Rights Movement, I was a child in the stroller at the March on Washington. And my father, who was the president of the Illinois branch of the NAACP for over 20 years, he raised me to always fight for what is right and what is just; to stand up for those who don't always have a voice.

John Lewis embodied the spirit of justice, and he inspired so many to fight for voting rights. John did say, ''Freedom is not a state, it is an act.'' Freedom is the continuous action we all must take, and each generation must do its part to create an even more fair and more just society.

Today, we do our part. We stand up for the right to vote; freedoms this Nation was founded upon and freedoms which must long endure.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me today in the act of fighting for freedom, fighting for democracy, and supporting the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Madam Speaker, I include in the RECORD letters of support for the Advancement Act.

[From the New Democrat Coalition, Aug. 23, 2021]

NEW DEMOCRAT COALITION ENDORSES H.R. 4

The New Democrat Coalition (NDC) announced its endorsement of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. The bill, introduced by NDC Member Terri Sewell (AL–07), seeks to address the most egregious forms of recent voter suppression by restoring the protections of the 1965 Voting Rights Act and determining which states and localities with a recent history of voting rights violations must pre-clear election changes with the U.S. Department of Justice.

''Our responsibility as members of Congress is to ensure that the American people have trust in our democratic process and equitable access to the ballot box,'' said New Democrat Coalition Chair Suzan DelBene. ''Congresswoman Sewell is continuing Congressman John Lewis' legacy by reintroducing this crucial legislation all to keep our elections fair and open. The Coalition endorsed this bill because the right to vote is the most sacred and fundamental right our nation offers. We urge our colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join us in passing this historic piece of legislation.''

I'm so proud that the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act has earned the endorsement of the New Democrat Coalition,'' said New Democrat Member Rep. Terri Sewell. ''The right to vote is the most sacred and fundamental right we enjoy as American citizens and one that the Foot Soldiers fought, bled, and died for in my hometown of Selma, Alabama. Today, old battles have become new again as we face the most pernicious assault on the right to vote in generations. By restoring federal oversight and preventing states with a recent history of voter discrimination from restricting the right to vote, this bill keeps the promise of our democracy alive for all Americans and advances the legacy of those brave Foot Soldiers like John Lewis who dedicated their lives to preserving the sacred right to vote.

The Coalition has long been an advocate for promoting voting rights and protecting American elections and endorsed H.R. 4 last Congress. Earlier this year, the Coalition also endorsed H.R. 1. the For the People Act, earlier this year. With the endorsement and expected House action on H.R. 4, the Coalition remains committed to advancing voting and campaign reform legislation through the Senate and to the President as soon as possible.

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SIERRA CLUB,
*August, 24, 2021.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the Sierra Club's 4 million members and volunteers, we are writing to urge a YES vote on the rule for the upcoming budget resolution and H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and the Senate Amendment to H.R. 3684.

Vote yes on the Rule containing S. Con 14/H.R. 3684 and H.R. 4.

The vote on this rule will deem the budget resolution that would initiate the reconciliation process to tackle the ongoing climate crisis, one of our nation's greatest threats.

Today's vote comes just days after the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned that the changing climate and extreme weather events we're already experiencing will continue to rapidly worsen. For many states this includes sea level rise, coastal flooding, more frequent storms, and extreme weather conditions, all of which threaten infrastructure and the abundant natural resources critical for the local economy. The growing local impacts of climate change are clear, but so too is the fact that

climate inaction will have severe costs for the nation's economy.

The Sierra Club strongly urges you to consider the enormous significance of this moment and, VOTE YES on the budget resolution, so we can begin the necessary process through budget Reconciliation to address the climate crisis.

Vote yes on H.R. 4 The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

In addition to addressing our nation's climate crisis, it is imperative that we also protect our nation's democracy. The same communities most vulnerable to climate impacts are those disproportionately impacted and have been harmed by the dilution of the Voting Rights Act by the Supreme Court in 2013 and 2021.

Since then we have seen a rise in discriminatory voter laws, from cuts to early voting days to restrictive voter identification requirements. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act would restore preclearance coverage for state, localities, and political subdivisions with a history of voter discrimination, and would increase transparency and public awareness for changes to voting and polling practices that can be confusing and deter American voters.

For these reasons we urge a yes vote on the rule for the budget resolution, and for democracy and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Sincerely,

DAN CHU,
*Acting Executive Director.*

AFT,
*August 23, 2021.*

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U.S. House of Representatives,
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 1.7 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I strongly urge you to support the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (H.R. 4). The need to strengthen and reestablish the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the crowning achievement of the civil rights movement, is more pressing now than ever before.

The late Rep. John Lewis once said, ''The vote is precious. It is almost sacred. It is the most powerful non-violent tool we have in our democracy.'' The bedrock of American democracy is participation at the ballot box for all, no matter their religion, their race, their income, their gender, their age, where they come from, what state they reside in or their ZIP code. Everything relies on voting rights, from the ability of local communities to run their schools and manage local services to the peaceful transfer of presidential power.

In the wake of two U.S. Supreme Court decisions—Shelby County v. Holder and Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee that gutted the Voting Rights Act, states have considered and enacted a rush of new laws making the right to vote harder to exercise, especially for communities of color. According to the Brennan Center for Justice, more than 400 voter suppression bills have been taken up by state legislatures since January of this year, and 18 states have already enacted 30 laws restricting the right to vote. Recent voter suppression measures embrace a variety of tactics including reducing early voting, eliminating polling places, giving local judges the ability to overturn elections, and making it a crime to deliver water or food to voters standing in line. While companion legislation with comprehensive national voting standards and reforms, such as the For the People Act, is needed to address the state laws already enacted, passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act is essential to prevent new state voter suppression measures from being enacted.

The latest actions of state legislatures show that the protections of the Voting Rights Act are still woefully needed. They prove that the late Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg was right in her Shelby County dissent when she wrote that to use the success of the Voting Rights Act as proof that it is unneeded is as wise as not using an umbrella in a storm because you don't feel the rain. Most of the states that have recently enacted, or are currently debating, laws restricting the right to vote have a history of having their efforts blocked when the Voting Rights Act's preclearance requirements were in full effect. H.R. 4 would establish new preclearance formulas that would prevent states with a history of voter discrimination from enacting new laws that would suppress the vote. It would also ensure that last-minute voting changes do not adversely affect voters by requiring officials to publicly announce all voting changes at least 180 days before an election, and it would expand the government's authority to send federal observers to any jurisdiction where there may be a substantial risk of discrimination at the polls on Election Day or during an early voting period.

John Lewis reminded us, ''Each of us has a moral obligation to stand up, speak up and speak out. When you see something that is not right, you must say something. You must do something.'' This is your chance.

We urge you to defend voting rights throughout the country by supporting the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and renewing the fight for the comprehensive voting rights legislation that must accompany it.

Thank you for considering our views on this critical legislation.

Sincerely,

RANDI WEINGARTEN,
*President.*

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SEIU,
*August 20, 2021.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 2 million members of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), I write in support of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) as well as the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Resolution, and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Taken together, these critical bills will help strengthen our democracy and deliver on the full promise of President Biden's Build Back Better agenda.

After years of inaction, the IIJA advances important programs in public transportation, clean water, broadband and climate resilience. These public investments would give our communities a much-needed boost and help support safer roadways and schools, cleaner water, and more available and affordable Internet. But much more has to be done to build our country back better and ensure that workers have unions and a voice in their own futures.

By advancing the infrastructure bill along with the Build Back Better reconciliation package, with its commitments to living-wage care jobs with the opportunity to join together in a union—a path to citizenship and climate justice, Congress can take bold measures needed to meet essential workers' demands for common-sense and transformative policy solutions.

The budget resolution is the key to creating the pathway we need for both the IIJA and the reconciliation bill. We call on you to act immediately to pass the FY 2022 budget resolution to move forward on President Biden's Build Back Better full vision. In addition, we strongly urge you to support the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. This crucial legislation will help protect our democracy against the widespread attacks on our freedom to vote that are being mounted across our country—so that we all have an equal say in our future and our rights are protected.

For these reasons, we urge you to support the IIJA, the FY2022 budget resolution, and the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. We will add votes on each of these bills to our legislative scorecard for the 117th Congress.

Sincerely,

MARY KAY HENRY,
*International President.*

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LIUNA!,
*August 23, 2021.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the 500,000 members of the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), I want to express our strong support for H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021.

Since the 2013 Supreme Court Shelby County v. Holder decision, which challenged portions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, many states have enacted laws that restrict access to the polls by shortening early voting hours, enacting strict voter ID requirements, and decreasing the number of polling locations. These changes to the law disproportionally effect minority and disenfranchised communities. Just last month, in Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee, the Supreme Court decided that rules that impacted different populations unequally were not unfair. This decision opened the door even more broadly to different forms of voter suppression.

H.R. 4 is critically needed to help to reverse the negative effects of these restrictive state laws by requiring states and localities with a history of voting rights violations to pre-clear any changes to election laws with the Department of Justice. This important legislation will ensure that elections across this country remain fair and will restore the portions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 that recent Supreme Court decisions have eliminated. In addition, this legislation will ensure that multilingual voting materials are more widely available and that polling places do not disproportionally serve privileged communities over communities of color.

For decades LIUNA has stood side by side with civil rights activists, including the late Congressman John Lewis, as they marched and took to the streets to fight for the critical issue of voting rights—one of the cornerstones of our democracy. LIUNA will continue to speak out against discriminatory laws and practices that attempt to disenfranchise voters. Ensuring all Americans have equal access to their constitutionally enshrined right to vote is a top priority.

LIUNA supports H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021, which passed the U.S. House of Representatives with a bipartisan vote in the last Congress and urges you to vote for this much-needed legislation.

With kind regards, I am

Sincerely yours,

TERRY O'SULLIVAN,
*General President.*

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NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION,
*August 23, 2021.*

Hon. TERRI A. SEWELL,
*House of Representatives,*
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSWOMAN SEWELL: On behalf of the 3 million members of the National Education Association who work in 14,000 communities across the nation, we urge you to vote YES on the John Lewis Voting

Rights Advancement Act of 2021 (H.R. 4) because it will protect our most fundamental right as citizens and safeguard the integrity of our democracy. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 117th Congress.

NEA members help prepare students for the privileges and responsibilities of citizenship. They want students to understand how our government works and their role in making it work—especially through voting. Yet, accessing the vote has become more difficult in recent years, particularly for African Americans and other people of color, people with disabilities, students, and senior citizens. In fact, from January through mid-July of this year, nearly 400 bills were introduced in 49 states that would make voting more difficult, according to the Brennan Center for Justice. At least 18 of those states have enacted 30 new laws that restrict our freedom to vote.

The U.S. Supreme Court in the 2013 Shelby v. Holder decision invalidated a crucial provision in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) that prevented states with a history of discriminating against voters from changing their voting laws and practices without preclearance by federal officials. This federal review was an important feature of the Voting Rights Act; doing away with it has virtually annulled the federal oversight that was—and remains—crucial to ensuring that millions of people have equal access to the ballot box. Since the Shelby decision, several states have changed their voting practices in ways that have created barriers for people of color, low-income people, transgender people, college students, the elderly, and those with disabilities.

Furthermore, just last month, the Supreme Court ruled in Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee that two discriminatory Arizona voting laws did not violate Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act. In its opinion in Brnovich, the Court disregards the congressional purpose of Section 2, which is to provide a powerful means to combat race discrimination in voting and representation. The decision relies on a limited interpretation of the Voting Rights Act that will make it more difficult to challenge discriminatory voting laws. This decision underscores the need for Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to restore the legislative purpose of Section 2.

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act fills a distinct and critical role in protecting the freedom to vote and ensuring elections are safe and accessible by reversing these dangerous, undemocratic trends by taking several steps that include:

Updating the criteria used for identifying states and political subdivisions required to obtain federal review and approval of voting changes to ensure those changes do not infringe upon the freedom to vote for people of color;

Requiring that every state and locality nationwide that is sufficiently diverse obtain federal review before enacting specific types of voting changes that are known to be discriminatory in their use to silence the growing political power of voters of color;

Requiring all states and localities to publicly disclose, 180 days before an election, all voting changes, such as reductions in language assistance and changes in requirements to vote or register;

Authorizing the Attorney General to send federal observers to any jurisdiction where there is a substantial risk of racial discrimination at the polls;

Addressing the Brnovich decision by clarifying factors that voters of color can use to prove a vote dilution or vote denial claim under Section 2 of the VRA and restoring voters' full ability to challenge racial discrimination in voting in court;

Allowing the Department of Justice and voters of color to challenge changes in a voting rule that would make voters of color worse off in terms of their voting rights than the status quo;

Expanding authority for courts to ''bail-in'' jurisdictions to the preclearance process and updating the ability of jurisdictions to ''bail-out'' of the preclearance process once they demonstrate a record of not harming voters of color; and

Providing voters with additional protection by easing the standard for when courts can temporarily block certain types of voting changes while the change is under review in court. This is important because once a voter is discriminated against in an election, it cannot be undone.

NEA members live, work, and vote in every precinct, county, and congressional district in the United States. They take their obligation to vote seriously, viewing it as essential to protecting the opportunities that they believe all students should have. Educators teach students that voting is a responsibility of citizenship, a privilege people have died to protect, and a right we must dedicate ourselves to upholding. We urge you to vote YES on the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act so that all may participate in the electoral process and have a voice in our democracy.

Sincerely,

MARC EGAN,
*Director of Government Relations, National Education Association.*

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AARP,
*August 24, 2021.*

Hon. TERRI SEWELL,
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE SEWELL: AARP, on behalf of our nearly 38 million members and all older Americans, is proud to support H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021. The right to vote is the most fundamental of all political rights, and all Americans must be able to exercise their vote freely, easily, and safely.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) has been our nation's preeminent law protecting the voting rights of all Americans. But recent Supreme Court decisions have weakened several provisions of the law. H.R. 4 would help restore the law and ensure the protections contained in the 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution are enforced, by:

Creating a new coverage formula for all states and political subdivisions that takes into consideration repeated voting rights violations in the preceding 25 years;

Establishing a process for reviewing voting changes, focusing on measures that have historically been used to discriminate, including voter ID laws, the reduction of multilingual voting materials, changes to voting districts, and reductions in the number of polling locations;

Increasing transparency through public notice when voting changes are made; Expanding voting accessibility for Native American and Alaska Native voters; Allowing the Attorney General authority to request federal observers where there is a threat of racial discrimination in voting;

Allowing a federal court to order states or jurisdictions to be covered for results-based violations,

Clarifying that a voting change or practice is discriminatory even if other forms of voting are available to a protected class and;

Directing the Judicial Branch to discount a state or locality's claims of fraud as a reason to pass harmful voting laws if no evidence is presented of such fraud.

AARP looks forward to working with Congress and the Administration to ensure every citizen's right to vote.

Sincerely,

NANCY A. LEAMOND,
*Executive Vice President and Chief Advocacy & Engagement Officer.*

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AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION,
*August 23, 2021.*

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
*Washington, DC.*

DEAR REPRESENTATIVE: On behalf of the American Public Health Association, a diverse community of public health professionals that champions the health of all people and communities, I write in strong support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021.

Over the past decade, U.S. Supreme Court decisions such as Shelby County v. Holder and Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee have unfortunately eroded key protections provided by the Voting Rights Act that protect against racial discrimination in the voting process, giving many states the ability to suppress and discriminate against voters. This year alone, state lawmakers have introduced 400 bills and enacted 30 laws restricting access to voting in 48 states. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 would restore VRA protections by establishing a federal review process of changes to state voting laws. Potentially discriminatory changes would be paused until federal review is completed, and changes found to be discriminatory would be blocked entirely. Furthermore, strict oversight would be applied to states with histories of voter discrimination and policy changes known to be used to discriminate against voters of color.

Decades ago, the Institute of Medicine established in a report that voting is a public health issue because it helps shape ''the conditions in which people can be healthy.'' The ballot box is where community members can come together to decide on key issues that shape our response to today's public health emergencies: police brutality, gun violence, climate change and the ongoing COVID–19 pandemic. We commend Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL and the other sponsors for introducing this landmark legislation and the House for bringing it up for a vote. I write in strong support of H.R. 4 and urge you to vote yes on the bill. The provisions in this bill would support the advancement of racial and health equity, a key APHA priority and a crucial step toward achieving the healthiest nation in one generation.

Sincerely,

GEORGES C. BENJAMIN, MD,
*Executive Director.*

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. HOYER), the distinguished majority leader of the House.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, how pleased our friend would be that NIKEMA WILLIAMS is presiding, his successor. He was one of her mentors.

Madam Speaker, how proud you must be to preside at this critical time in our history.

Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman from Selma, Alabama, TERRI SEWELL. I have been with Terri and her church, worshipped with her, prayed

with John Lewis in her church, walked down the streets of her town and over a bridge called the Edmund Pettus Bridge. And unlike John Lewis, when we walked across it, there were Alabama troopers to protect us rather than prevent us from voting.

Madam Speaker, I have heard a lot of discussion on the floor today about how there is no problem in America; people have full access. Too many people that I talk to throughout the country have told me that is not the case.

The Supreme Court passed a ruling and said, Oh, everything was fine. And as soon as they did, as soon as they took this preclearance off, State after State after State enacted legislation to make it more difficult to vote; like that.

Justice Ginsburg made an analogy in Shelby that the Supreme Court was saying, Oh, well, there is no problem left. She said it was like the man with the umbrella who had the umbrella up; wasn't getting wet. It was raining, but he wasn't getting wet. So he gave the umbrella away and said, I'm okay. I am dry. And then immediately, of course, he got all wet.

Madam Speaker, I am proud to join my sister, TERRI SEWELL; John's sister. John called me brother, and he called all of us brothers and sisters, in this, the beloved community that he envisioned. That was King's vision, as John was his disciple.

Today, we are honoring the legacy of a historic Member of this House. In my view, I have served with two historic Members of the Congress of the United States and the Senate and the House. There were a lot of famous, but two historic figures: One was John Lewis. And the other is NANCY PELOSI, the first woman Speaker and, in my view, the most effective Speaker with whom I have served in the 40 years that I have been here.

John Lewis was my dear friend, and he was your dear friend. I called him the most Christlike person I have ever seen, our dear Saint John, who preached to us the gospel of getting into ''good trouble'' and creating a beloved community; the gospel of John Robert Lewis.

He would be proud of us today for bringing this bill to the floor. He worked hard on this bill. I can remember sitting— JIM CLYBURN and I, and John Lewis and others—sitting in my whip's conference room, working on voting rights' legislation.

So let us honor his memory today with strong support for its voting rights' protection, for its reversal of the damage wrought by the 2013 Shelby v. Holder ruling, and for its recognition that our democracy is imperfect if it is not open to all eligible to vote.

In that ruling, Shelby v. Holder, the Supreme Court erred in its assessment of how necessary the Voting Rights Act's preclearance section was for protecting Americans' right to vote. You are not protecting Americans' right to vote if the relief that you can seek is after the fact, after the governor or the President or the Senator or the House of Delegates or representative, Member has been elected. It is too late. That is why preclearance was so critically important to reform and to protection of voters' rights.

In her powerful dissent, as I said, Justice Ginsburg pointed out that throwing out preclearance when it has worked and has continued to work to stop discriminatory changes is like that gentleman giving away his umbrella.

Indeed, since 2013, we have seen a veritable downpour of discriminatory and exclusionary voter suppression measures. I hear people arguing—I heard a Texan argue on this floor about how it is so easy to vote in Texas. Yet, we see them fighting for legislation, which half of their body—or not quite half, unfortunately—but a big number of their body who represents minority citizens says, No, you are wrong. You ought to walk in our shoes and find that they are making it more difficult for me to vote.

Since 2013, we have seen a veritable downpour, as I said. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, sponsored by TERRI SEWELL, would confront this tempest head on. We have seen a campaign of voter suppression efforts in Republican-led jurisdictions that have changed their laws and voting rules to make it harder for eligible Americans to vote.

Their leader, Donald Trump, says there was fraud, there was theft. The problem is the Republican judges to which they appealed said no. The problem is Attorney General Barr, who covered up almost everything that Donald Trump said, even he couldn't say that there was fraud.

□ 1715

And so they justify these laws by somehow there is fraud out there, they are stealing our elections. That is baloney. It is the same kind of lie that Donald Trump continues to parrot. And if you say, like LIZ CHENEY did, he is lying, you are kicked out of your party.

We have seen a campaign of voter suppression over and over and over again, making it harder for eligible Americans to vote, disproportionately targeting African Americans. I am not an African American. It is hard for me to walk in those shoes.

I try to empathize, but I know if I am not Black, I can't really be as knowledgeable as I would be if I were Black, and I was every day subjected to discrimination, or if I were another person of color.

They have reduced early voting opportunities that help working people cast ballots. They want to eliminate—they haven't in every place—mail balloting, because they feel somehow if I don't see them when they fill out that form and attest that they are who they are under penalties of perjury that somehow——

Now, I can understand, from a party that in the last seven elections, in the last quarter of a century, have elected a number of Presidents, only one got a majority; only one, but they won the electoral college vote. That is why some Republicans said: Are you crazy? You confirm the electoral college, because it is what is protecting us against the majority.

They purged voter rolls so that people who believed themselves to be registered because they had registered and voted in the past, showed up to vote but were turned away.

I sponsored the Help America Vote Act with a guy named Bob Ney, who was from Ohio and a Republican, and a dear friend of mine. Unfortunately, he got in trouble, but he is a good man, still a good man. And we provided for provisional ballots, which simply said, if you made a mistake and came to the wrong precinct, fill out the ballot, we are going to check it tomorrow or the next day and make sure you are eligible to vote, and if you are, we will count it. That made sense; efforts to eliminate those.

These are real and pressing challenges facing our elections and our democracy; not imaginary fraud, but active and visible voter suppression. We have a duty, my colleagues, Democrat and Republican colleagues, we have a duty, a responsibility, a moral responsibility to make sure that people can vote and that we facilitate their vote, not impede it. Not make it more difficult. Facilitate it. Encourage them. Lift them up and let them vote.

And we owe it to John Lewis and the other heroes of Selma, and all the other small towns and byways and big cities and big States, where people fought, demonstrated, were bruised, battered, beaten, and yes, some died, so that their brothers and sisters could have the vote.

My colleagues, it falls to us now, today, to continue their march forward, and to carry on their work. There are no Alabama troopers waiting on the other side that are going to beat us or batter us or prevent us. We are not at risk. Whatever way we vote, we are going to walk out of there today and we are going to be fine.

But we have a moral responsibility to those who fought here and around the world to protect the vote, to protect democracy.

I urge my colleagues, Madam Speaker, to join you, to join me, to join our fellow colleagues in voting for H.R. 4, and for the protection of voting rights in our country. H.R. 4 the people.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I have a parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia). The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, my inquiry is, if it is appropriate to call the previous President a liar, is it appropriate that we can refer to the current President as a liar also?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. As recorded in section 370 of the House Rules and Manual, the prohibition against engaging in personalities does not apply to former Presidents.

Mr. BUCK. Does not apply to past Presidents?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. That is correct.

Mr. BUCK. Understood. I thank the Speaker.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, parliamentary inquiry.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, is it appropriate on the floor of the House to tell the truth?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman is not stating a proper parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. LAMALFA).

Mr. LAMALFA. Madam Speaker, it is interesting when President Trump was in office that the name-calling in this place about him occurred often during the President's time in office.

In California, we currently have a special election about to be underway here. Just the other day, 300 mail-in ballots were found in the car of a guy passed out in a 7–Eleven parking lot, 300 ballots. And we don't think there is an issue sometimes with the way mail-in ballots are distributed.

I get anecdotes all the time from folks like this current special election. Oh, I received three ballots for people that haven't lived at my apartment for a long time, or relatives that have long since passed away, because you just mail them out willy-nilly everywhere.

H.R. 4 is not about voting rights, it is about election control and manipulation. It is about political appointees at the Department of Justice overturning State and legislative process, and controlling from D.C. local election decisions.

We know that Americans of the right age and legal status have the right to vote, and no one here is trying to take that away from them. Voter suppression hype is just a big lie. It is absurd what is trying to be perpetrated in this legislation.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. JONES).

Mr. JONES. Madam Speaker, 8 years ago the Supreme Court demolished the Voting Rights Act, in the deluded, dangerous belief that we had somehow overcome white supremacy and no longer needed the greatest achievement of the Civil Rights Movement.

The next day, States began making it harder for Black and Brown Americans to vote, initiating the biggest wave of racist voter suppression since Jim Crow. But today, we act to restore the Voting Rights Act. We also act to reverse the Supreme Court's recent assault on the right to vote by passing my bill with Representative RUBEN GALLEGO, the Inclusive Elections Act, which is part of this package.

Having said that, let us be clear-eyed about how we got here and the threat that remains. The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act will not be safe so long as six far-right justices of the Supreme Court stand ready to destroy our democracy.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. FITZGERALD).

Mr. FITZGERALD. Madam Speaker, I want to just remind everybody, no matter what side of the bill you are on, there is a huge trust issue going on in America right now. People do not trust the system, and that is everyone's problem. If you think a centralized election bill to move the power to Washington, D.C., and put it in the hands of Congress and the courts is going to help, you are wrong. They don't trust us and they don't trust the courts.

A decentralized system is what has worked in America. So make sure that after you support this legislation, you go back and you meet with the town clerk that runs the elections, the county clerks, the parish clerks, the municipal clerks, and yes, the State legislatures. I notice the State legislatures are taking a real beating here today.

Pre-clearance expansion. Is that a can of worms that this body really wants to open up? Printed ballots. Photo ID. Now we are going to mandate polling places, election timelines, primary mechanics, who can be a poll worker. These are all things that are included in H.R. 4. I just want to make sure the public is aware of that.

We are now taking the power away from the people and placing it right here in Washington, D.C., in Congress and in the courts exclusively.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BUTTERFIELD).

Mr. BUTTERFIELD. Madam Speaker, for years I have said that the 1965 Voting Rights Act was written between Selma and Montgomery. The Voting Rights Act leveled the playing field and transformed southern electoral politics.

Since the Shelby decision, the right to vote and access to the ballot box are being compromised. The Subcommittee on Elections, which I chair, held five hearings, we called over 35 witnesses, produced a report detailing clear evidence of ongoing voter discrimination all across the country.

I thank Chairman NADLER, Chairman COHEN, and Ms. SEWELL for a good bill. The Voting Rights Act is as important today as ever. Passage of H.R. 4 will protect the right to vote and fully enforce the 15th Amendment.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, to come to the correct conclusion, a law professor used to say, ''You've got to know the facts.'' And that is what the American people need here: the facts, not emotion.

This bill would comprehensively transfer the power to govern elections in this country from the sovereign States to the Federal Government permanently and everywhere.

So what is the factual premise for so fundamentally concentrating the power here in Washington and diminishing the States? What has happened to justify making pervasive and permanent what Chief Justice Roberts explained was ''a drastic departure from basic principles of freedom'' when it was necessarily undertaken in the 1960s, temporarily and in limited parts of the country?

Well, Democrats offer lurid claims, but the American people are catching on. Like earlier this year, Stacey Abrams claimed that a simple voter ID law would be Jim Crow 2.0, but once the absurdity of that caught up to her, she looked so ridiculous that she tried to deny ever having claimed it.

Nothing epitomizes this better than the slur repeated in the Rules Committee yesterday by my law school classmate and colleague, Congresswoman ROSS. She quoted three ultraliberal judges in the Fourth Circuit who said that when the North Carolina legislature enacted voter ID and other reforms in 2013, it ''targeted African Americans with almost surgical precision.''

Activists and media have quoted that phrase over 7,500 times, according to Google. But few know that the three judges who stated that finding of fact were appellate judges who were supposed to be bound by the trial judge's finding of fact; or that the trial judge found in a painstaking 400-page analysis that the legislature's bill was not discriminatory. So the three appellate judges abused their power.

Few know how the three liberal appellate judges became the final word, that a Democrat State Attorney General intentionally sabotaged the State's appeal to prevent an upcoming review by the Supreme Court. That AG abused his power.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from North Carolina.

Mr. BISHOP of North Carolina. Madam Speaker, when the details are known, the absence of factual basis becomes plain. Nobody is getting wet. A University of Oregon economist showed, just in February, that the Shelby County decision to which this bill purports to respond, has not impaired Black voter turnout at all. There is no Jim Crow 2.0. This bill is about abuse of power.

Democrats wish to entrench themselves in power and to use the Federal

Government to obliterate the States in order to achieve it. You have to know the facts.

□ 1730

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. As Rhode Island's former secretary of state, I know the importance of access to the ballot box.

That is why I was devastated when the Supreme Court gutted one of our most momentous civil rights bills, opening the door to a litany of voter suppression laws.

Our dearly departed John Lewis was bloodied on the bridge at Selma while peacefully urging passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The scars he carried were not in vain, as decades of progress have shown us. But it is abundantly clear that we have not yet achieved equality of access. There are forces at work in this country trying to undo what we have so painstakingly earned.

That is why it is so important that we pass this bill to restore the Voting Rights Act and ensure that every American, regardless of race, can have his or her voice heard in our democracy.

Let's vote in favor of this bill and send a clear message that we want to protect every vote in America.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the distinguished gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. BEATTY).

Mrs. BEATTY. Madam Speaker, I am not sure what John Lewis my Republican colleagues are talking about when they say he was their friend and what he would have wanted. He helped write this bill.

Let me just say that, on behalf of millions of Black voters who stood in lines across this country, including in my home State of Ohio, and leaders like our beloved John Lewis, who risked his life as he crossed the Edmund Pettus Bridge, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021.

On behalf of the Congressional Black Caucus, we say we step into history today as we tread the same path when, 56 years ago, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law calling the day ''a triumph for freedom as huge as any victory won on any battlefield.''

So to all of my colleagues, I say: Support this bill. Our power, our message, the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. BOURDEAUX).

Ms. BOURDEAUX. Madam Speaker, Georgia was one of the first States in the country to pass a voter suppression bill after the 2020 general election, but S.B. 202 is just our State's latest attempt to disenfranchise minority communities.

Georgia has a long history of undermining the right to vote, from the Jim Crow era to recent tactics like voter roll purges and exact match policies.

It is time for Congress to fix what the Supreme Court broke in their 2013 ruling, which effectively gutted the Voting Rights Act.

When I came to Congress, I vowed to support the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, and I am proud to keep that commitment today.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 4 and protect the sacred right to vote.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BUCK).

Mr. BUCK. Madam Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman yielding.

Madam Speaker, we have weak leadership now and a crisis in Afghanistan. We have a crisis at our border because of weak leadership. We have an inflation crisis because of weak leadership. And we have a crime issue in our cities as a result of weak leadership.

Now, we debate preclearance requirements that are unnecessary and unconstitutional. We hear that they are necessary because of voter ID laws.

It takes identification to buy liquor in this country, to buy marijuana in this country, and to drive a car in this country. To enter this building, it takes identification.

Yet, it is such a burden that we need to have preclearance with the Department of Justice because of that heavy burden that is being placed on citizens, preclearance from an administration that has screwed up Afghanistan, screwed up the border, screwed up inflation. We are supposed to go to them and ask them for permission because voter ID is such a burden.

If there weren't people streaming across this border who could potentially vote, we wouldn't be asking for voter ID laws across this country, but we are.

Madam Speaker, you can't screw things up on the one hand and, on the other hand, try to require preclearance.

It is wrong, and I ask my colleagues to vote ''no.''

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4, critical legislation that confronts the crisis facing our democracy.

In Florida, we witnessed a Republican legislature attempting to cling to power through voter suppression, taking special aim at Black and Brown voices. The blatantly antidemocratic legislation signed by Governor DeSantis this year makes voter registration harder, limits voting by mail, and curbs the use of secure ballot drop boxes. Similar suppression tactics took root across the Nation, with at least 18 States making it harder to vote this year.

To honor our dear friend and colleague, Congressman Lewis, we must stand up to this assault on our constitutional rights. This bill would stop those who want to shape the electorate to help them win elections because they can't win on their losing agenda.

At this moment in history, bold action is necessary to protect the right to vote. After we pass this bill, we must ensure it moves through the Senate. Our very democracy depends on it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GALLEGO).

Mr. GALLEGO. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

It is because of the courage and sacrifices of civil rights leaders like Congressman John Lewis that we were able to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965. But for over a decade, we have witnessed a new era of voter suppression and Jim Crow laws pursued by Republican State legislatures, including in my State of Arizona.

These attacks on our right to vote are nothing new. For too long, Black, Latino, and Native American voters have overcome incredible barriers to cast their votes.

That is not how American democracy should work. That is why Representative MONDAIRE JONES and I were proud to add a provision to this bill today that bans discriminatory voting laws that harm voters of color.

I strongly urge my colleagues to pass this bill and this provision with it.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Illinois (Mr. QUIGLEY).

Mr. QUIGLEY. Madam Speaker, 66 years ago this week, Emmett Till was brutally lynched by two white supremacists.

When his body was returned to his mother, Mamie Till, in Chicago, she held an open casket funeral because, in her words: ''I wanted the world to see what they did to my baby.''

This was a galvanizing moment for the civil rights movement, but it was not the end of Mamie Till-Mobley's activism. She spent the rest of her life touring the country, speaking out about the injustice of her son's murder and the vital importance of eliminating racial discrimination, disenfranchisement, and segregation.

She also spent 23 years teaching in the Chicago public school system, continuing to speak to students in the Chicago area about civil rights as late as the year 2000.

Today, we are witnessing the reemergence of the kinds of voting discrimination that she spoke out against. We must pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act for Mamie Till, for John Lewis, and for every hero who fought for civil rights.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I have a joint report from the Committee on House Administration and the Committee on the Judiciary Republicans titled ''An Unprecedented and Unconstitutional Power Grab: How Democrats are Abusing the Constitution to Nationalize Elections.''

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. ADAMS).

Ms. ADAMS. Madam Speaker, Congressman John Lewis earned his reputation as the conscience of this body because of his leadership during the long march for equal rights at the ballot box.

John and so many people of conscience and courage were arrested, beaten, bruised, and even murdered. The memory of being denied the right to vote still dwells in the minds of countless Americans. Many of those minds, like John's, survived crushing blows to the skull to earn that right.

John fought and bled for voting rights. He led the charge for voting rights. He should be honored by passing this bill drafted in his name.

We have had the promise of one man, one vote since the birth of this country, and we can't backslide on this progress.

The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act will help us get to the promised land where every person has the right to vote.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I have the Census Bureau report detailing record turnout in 2020; the Election Integrity Network H.R. 4 fact sheet; the Honest Election Project analysis titled ''H.R. 4 Legal and Constitutional Challenges''; the Independent Women's Forum analysis titled ''D.C. Bureaucrats and Judges Will Steal the Pen in Drawing Voting Districts''; and also the Foundation for Government Accountability analysis titled ''H.R. 4 Isn't Voting Progress. It is a Power Grab.''

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. GREEN).

Mr. GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, and still I rise to announce that I will not only vote for H.R. 4 but I will also vote for those who are making it possible and who have made it possible for me to vote for H.R. 4.

I will vote for Medgar Evers, who was assassinated trying to secure the right to vote.

I will vote for Schwerner and Goodman, two Jews who died in Mississippi trying to secure the right to vote.

I will vote for all of those who suffered on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday to secure the right to vote.

I will do so because although it was signed in ink by a courageous President, it was written in blood.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I have the following reports: an analysis of H.R. 4 titled ''How H.R. 4 Would Let Leftist Extremists Control the Entire Nation's Elections''; the Lawyers Democracy Fund H.R. 4 analysis; a RealClear Politics article titled '''Jim Crow 2.0' Is Imaginary''; a letter opposing H.R. 4 from the Independent Women's Forum and others; a Heritage analysis titled ''Another Bill in Congress to Give Partisan Bureaucrats Control Over State Election Laws''; and lastly, the Honest Elections Project Action analysis titled ''H.R. 4: The Nancy Pelosi Power Grab.''

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE of California. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman NADLER for yielding. I thank Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, Speaker NANCY PELOSI, Whip CLYBURN, and so many Members for their leadership in keeping our eyes on the prize.

Now, the Supreme Court gutted critical protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Today, we are restoring that constitutional right that so many States are taking away from Black and Brown people, rural people, people of color—everyone. Sooner or later, it will be all of us who will be subject to these voter restrictions acts.

So make no mistake, these are efforts to turn the clock back to the days of Jim Crow. That is not something I am imagining. Madam Speaker, I vividly remember, as one who was born and raised in El Paso, Texas. So I, too, salute our Texas legislators for their boldness in protecting the right to vote.

H.R. 4 can restore these crucial protections that our beloved John Lewis and so many others fought for. John said that the right to vote is ''precious, almost sacred.'' In honor of his legacy as a paragon of democracy, let us vote to pass the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

I thank Congresswoman TERRI SEWELL, G. K. BUTTERFIELD, our Speaker, everyone who has brought this bill to the floor.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from Michigan (Mrs. LAWRENCE).

Mrs. LAWRENCE. Madam Speaker, like in many States, Republicans in Michigan's legislature have introduced legislation to suppress the right to vote. Make no mistake about it, the fundamental right to vote in this country is under assault. That is why my dear friend, John Lewis, once said: Voting is the most powerful, nonviolent tool we have in our democracy.

Today, we fight back. Today, we have an opportunity to restore the power of the vote. I urge my colleagues to support the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentlewoman from Illinois (Ms. SCHAKOWSKY).

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, one of the greatest honors and privileges of my life has been to serve with John Lewis whom I had the privilege of calling a precious friend.

In August, 58 years ago, the young John Lewis led a march to Washington with Martin Luther King and on August 16 of 1965, the momentous Voting Rights Act was signed into law, thanks to John Lewis.

Today, on August 25, 2021, we are here to vote for the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. A bill that he almost gave his life to pass all of those years ago will now restore the power of the Voting Rights Act, the right to vote, in the new legislation named for our dear friend and the conscience of this Congress. Let's vote ''yes.''

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. ARRINGTON).

Mr. ARRINGTON. Madam Speaker, I thank my friend from Louisiana for yielding.

Madam Speaker, COVID was the excuse to bail out blue States poorly managed and union pensions poorly managed. Our current recession has been the excuse to pay people more to be on unemployment than to be at work or to permanently expand the social welfare programs that were supposed to be temporary and targeted.

The supposed climate crisis is the excuse for destroying our energy independence. And if you listen to my colleagues' comments today, you would think there was rampant voter suppression and a rise of racial discrimination in voting. That is not true. That is

simply not true. It is divisive, and I would suggest that it is dangerous for our country.

The real crisis, Madam Speaker, is America's confidence in the integrity of our elections because elections are the backbone of our democracy, and so we need to make sure we do everything to ensure a free and fair process and an accurate outcome.

That is the responsibility, according to the Constitution, of the States. We don't need Federal Government lawyers or the DOJ to be weaponized against States' efforts to make these reforms with respect to voter ID, mail-in ballot eligibility, and other integrity reform measures.

Madam Speaker, let's stick to the Constitution. Let's uphold it. Let's protect the States' right to secure and improve election integrity for our citizens and our electoral process in this great country.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR).

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Madam Speaker, over the past decades when officials in Florida tried to restrict access to the ballot box, the Voting Rights Act provided protections for all Floridians to cast their vote.

Maybe they limited hours of voting, or didn't provide timely notice to changes in polling places, or didn't provide clear ballot language, but the Voting Rights Act was there. But, unfortunately, the U.S. Supreme Court gutted the Voting Rights Act and after that State officials moved to enact other discriminatory practices to keep certain people and people of color from casting ballots.

It is wrong. So it is vitally important that the Congress adopt the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act to make sure voting is fair, especially in places where voting discrimination has been historically prevalent.

As John Lewis said: When you see something that is not right and not fair, you have to speak up. You have to say something. You have to do something. And that is what we are going to do today. I say to Representative SEWELL, We are going to cast a reinvigorated Voting Rights Act. And I urge my colleagues to vote ''yes.''

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. RODNEY DAVIS).

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, a foundational dependency of any democracy sustaining is its citizens having confidence in the outcome of its elections. Simply put, if people don't have faith in elections, democracy doesn't work.

According to a recent Gallup poll, America's confidence in our elections has decreased by 20 percent since 2009. Ensuring that our elections are run in a way that makes it easy to vote and hard to cheat increases confidence. A common best practice to ensure election integrity are voter IDs, a way for people to prove they are who they say they are.

For Democrats to equate this with the poll taxes of the early 20th century is a ludicrous, false equivalency. According to the Honest Elections Project, 77 percent of all Americans support voter ID requirements, including 75 percent of independents, 64 percent of African Americans, and 76 percent of low-income voters.

Knowing that, what does the majority do? They include language in H.R. 4 that would restrict commonsense voter ID requirements and require the judicial branch to consider voter ID laws as evidence of voter suppression, and by extension, racism. That doesn't restore faith in elections.

H.R. 4, as introduced, would require preapproval by an unaccountable election czar in the Biden DOJ before any State or locality under preclearance could enact popular, commonsense voter ID laws. H.R. 4 goes even further, requiring almost a dozen States to have their existing voter ID laws examined by the Biden DOJ before they can continue to be enforced.

These are the same election integrity laws that have been in place for years. This is a partisan power grab of maintaining control.

Madam Speaker, if we adopt the motion to recommit, we will instruct the Committee on the Judiciary to consider my amendment to H.R. 4 to strike from the bill the provisions that penalize State and local governments who implement commonsense voter ID requirements.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to insert the text of my amendment in the RECORD immediately prior to the vote on the motion to recommit.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield 45 seconds to the distinguished gentlewoman from Georgia (Ms. WILLIAMS).

Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today in the spirit of my predecessor, Congressman John Lewis.

Congressman Lewis taught us that when you see something that is not fair, not just, not right, you have a moral obligation to find a way to get in the way.

The voter suppression laws that have been enacted across the country and what is happening in my home State of Georgia is the very definition of the good trouble that John Lewis taught us to get into, to push back against.

We might not be counting jelly beans in a jar but make no mistake, they seek the same purpose: to stop people who look like me from accessing their right to vote.

We all have an opportunity to get in the way today by voting ''yes'' on the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

If my colleagues ever wondered what they would have done during the civil rights movement, this is your opportunity to find out. Our democracy is on the line.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, we have one final Speaker who will close for us, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. JOHNSON of Louisiana. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The American people can see clearly what is happening here. Democrats in the Congress are more focused on taking Federal control over the election processes in Republican-led States than addressing the ongoing catastrophe that the Biden administration has created in Afghanistan, at our southern border, with inflation, and the ongoing pandemic. There are so many things that should be occupying our time and, yet, they are using it for this.

The cry of voter suppression is not only untrue, but as Mr. ARRINGTON said so well here just a few moments ago, it is also divisive and dangerous. We need to speak truth, as Mr. HOYER said a little while ago, and we are.

We had six hearings in the Constitution, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties Subcommittee since January on this. I am the ranking Republican there. Not a scintilla of evidence was presented that said that voters are being suppressed, that the election integrity laws that are being passed by the States, pursuant to their constitutional authority, are in any way inappropriate. To the contrary, they are expanding access to the ballot. As we have said so many times, as I close, it has never been easier in America to vote.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. CLYBURN), the distinguished majority whip.

Mr. CLYBURN. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Madam Speaker, I want to take this time to thank my colleagues in this august body for the civility that we have demonstrated here as we approach this final vote.

I want to thank the Democrats, every single one of whom cosponsored this legislation. I am hopeful that this can be a bipartisan result. I think all of us know that our country has a history of voter suppression and voter denial. I think all of us are quite aware of recent efforts being made in many States. Forty-nine have passed laws that are called restrictive by objective analyses that have been made. These laws are not needed. These laws are very creative instruments that will be used if not checked to suppress the vote.

We all heard a recent candidate having lost an election call upon election officials to: Just find me the number of votes that I need to win this election. If that is not voter suppression, I would like to know how we would define it.

So I want to thank all of us for what we have done here today, and I hope that this result can be a bipartisan one.

Mr. NADLER. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JOHNSON of Texas. Madam Speaker, it is my honor to rise today in support of H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. I'd like to thank Congresswoman SEWELL, a daughter of Selma, for introducing this bill and for being a fierce and relentless advocate of the right to vote.

How wonderful is it, Madam Speaker, that this bill bears the name of our late colleague, one of the greatest Americans to ever walk these halls, Congressman John Lewis. His legacy—and the legacies of other civil rights leaders who dedicated their lives to ensuring free, fair, and equitable access to the polls—lives on through this legislation.

For Texans, this fight for voting rights is personal. We have witnessed, over the past several months, a systematic and antiquated effort to strip the right to vote away from millions across the state. This effort is built upon the decades and decades of unfair voting practices in the history of Texas. In fact, I remember having to pay a poll tax when I voted in my first election in Dallas. And although these new efforts are not as blatant as a poll tax, they are equally as obstructive.

Texas is Just one of many states battling waves of restrictive voting legislation spurred by Republican majorities at the local level. These attempts at our rights are not new—and neither is the vigorous, concerted opposition to them. From Martin Luther King, Jr. and John Lewis's march on Bloody Sunday to the Texas Democrats risking arrest to filibuster the passage of these laws, there are always people who are willing to fight. And as long as there are generations of people who are willing to fight, our cause will never perish.

But now, Madam Speaker, it's time for Congress to meet the moment. We must pass H.R. 4—not only because it would prohibit the implementation of strict voter requirements and reductions in polling locations and hours; not only because it would restore the originals provisions and intent of the Voting Rights Act; but because it is also fundamentally the right thing to do in our democracy.

As a proud cosponsor of H.R. 4, I would urge all of my colleagues, Democrat and Republican, to support this legislation and, in doing so, express your support of the right to vote for all Americans.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Madam Speaker, we are living through a 21st century assault on the right to vote—the likes of which we haven't seen since Jim Crow.

Without a doubt, it's the most significant test of our democracy since the Civil War—and future generations will never forgive us if we don't meet this moment.

Meeting this moment requires us to act—and we need the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

The right to vote is sacred, the cornerstone of our Republic. But like Franklin Roosevelt warned—our Republic, if we can keep it.

Today's vote is a referendum on how willing we are to stand by our oath—the oath we took to protect our democracy.

We must keep it.

Our democracy depends on how we vote today.

Vote to protect the future of this country.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia). Pursuant to House Resolution 601, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

MOTION TO RECOMMIT

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I have a motion to recommit at the desk.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion to recommit.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. Rodney Davis of Illinois moves to recommit the bill H.R. 4 to the Committee on the Judiciary.

The material previously referred to by Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois is as follows:

Page 7, strike lines 10 through 17.

Page 26, strike line 19 and all that follows through line 18 on page 27.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 2(b) of rule XIX, the previous question is ordered on the motion to recommit.

The question is on the motion to recommit.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the noes appeared to have it.

Mr. RODNEY DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 212, nays 218, not voting 1, as follows:

[Roll No. 259]

YEAS—212

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Katko
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kim (CA)
Kinzinger
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
Meijer
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunes
Obernolte
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reed
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Young
Zeldin

NAYS—218

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gallego
Garamendi
Garcia (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Ross

Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—1

Costa

□ 1637

Messrs. BROWN, HOYER, KIND, Ms. TITUS, and Mr. TRONE changed their vote from ''yea'' to ''nay.''

Messrs. SESSIONS, GRAVES of Louisiana, BABIN, ARRINGTON, and REED changed their vote from ''nay'' to ''yea.''

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aderholt (Moolenaar)
Amodei (Balderson)
Barragán (Raskin)
Blumenauer (Bonamici)
Bowman (Omar)
Brownley (Clark (MA))
Buchanan (Dunn)
Calvert (Garcia (CA))
Cárdenas (Correa)
Cuellar (Green (TX))
Curtis (Moore (UT))
Davids (KS) (Kim (NJ))
DeFazio (Brown)
DeGette (Blunt Rochester)
DeSaulnier (Thompson (CA))
Deutch (Rice (NY))
Diaz-Balart (Cammack)
Duncan (Babin)
Emmer (Cammack)
Escobar (Garcia (TX))
Fleischmann (Bilirakis)
Frankel, Lois (Clark (MA))
Garbarino (Miller-Meeks)
Garamendi (Sherman)
Gibbs (Smucker)
Gomez (Raskin)
Granger (Cole)
Grijalva (Stanton)
Hagedorn (Meuser)
Harshbarger (Kustoff)
Herrera Beutler (Simpson)
Horsford (Kilmer)
Jayapal (Raskin)
Johnson (TX) (Jeffries)
Katko (Malliotakis)
Kelly (IL) (Clarke (NY))
Khanna (Lee (CA))
Kind (Connolly)
Kirkpatrick (Stanton)
Lawson (FL) (Evans)
Leger Fernandez (Aguilar)
Luetkemeyer (Long)
Maloney, Carolyn B. (Clarke (NY))
Maloney, Sean (Jeffries)
McEachin (Wexton)
McHenry (Budd)
McNerney (Huffman)
Meijer (Moore (UT))
Meng (Jeffries)
Moore (AL) (Brooks)
Moulton (McGovern)
Mullin (Lucas)
Napolitano (Correa)
Nehls (Jackson)
Newman (Casten)
Nunes (Garcia (CA))
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Kuster)
Pocan (Raskin)
Porter (Wexton)
Pressley (Omar)
Reed (Arrington)
Reschenthaler (Meuser)
Rodgers (WA) (Joyce (PA))
Roybal-Allard (Aguilar)
Ruiz (Correa)
Rush (Underwood)
Salazar (Cammack)
Sánchez (Aguilar)
Scott, David (Cartwright)
Sires (Pallone)
Steel (Obernolte)
Stefanik (Meuser)
Steube (Cammack)
Stevens (Dingell)
Stewart (Owens)
Strickland (Larsen (WA))
Thompson (PA) (Meuser)
Timmons (Cammack)
Titus (Connolly
Tonko (Pallone)
Torres (CA) (Correa)
Trone (Connolly)
Vargas (Correa)
Velázquez (Clarke (NY))
Wagner (Long)
Walorski (Baird)
Watson Coleman (Pallone)
Welch (McGovern)
Wilson (FL) (Hayes)
Young (Malliotakis)

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER). The question is on passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mrs. FISCHBACH. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to section 3(s) of House Resolution 8, the yeas and nays are ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 219, nays 212, not voting 1, as follows:

[Roll No. 260]

YEAS—219

Adams
Aguilar
Allred
Auchincloss
Axne
Barragán
Bass
Beatty
Bera
Beyer
Bishop (GA)
Blumenauer
Blunt Rochester
Bonamici
Bourdeaux
Bowman
Boyle, Brendan F.
Brown
Brownley
Bush
Bustos
Butterfield
Carbajal
Cárdenas
Carson
Carter (LA)
Cartwright
Case
Casten
Castor (FL)
Castro (TX)
Chu
Cicilline
Clark (MA)
Clarke (NY)
Cleaver
Clyburn
Cohen
Connolly
Cooper
Correa
Courtney
Craig
Crist
Crow
Cuellar
Davids (KS)
Davis, Danny K.
Dean
DeFazio
DeGette
DeLauro
DelBene
Delgado
Demings
DeSaulnier
Deutch
Dingell
Doggett
Doyle, Michael F.
Escobar
Eshoo
Espaillat
Evans
Fletcher
Foster
Frankel, Lois
Gallego
Garamendi
García (IL)
Garcia (TX)
Golden
Gomez
Gonzalez, Vicente
Gottheimer
Green, Al (TX)
Grijalva
Harder (CA)
Hayes
Higgins (NY)
Himes
Horsford
Houlahan
Hoyer
Huffman
Jackson Lee
Jacobs (CA)
Jayapal
Jeffries
Johnson (GA)
Johnson (TX)
Jones
Kahele
Kaptur
Keating
Kelly (IL)
Khanna
Kildee
Kilmer
Kim (NJ)
Kind
Kirkpatrick
Krishnamoorthi
Kuster
Lamb
Langevin
Larsen (WA)
Larson (CT)
Lawrence
Lawson (FL)
Lee (CA)
Lee (NV)
Leger Fernandez
Levin (CA)
Levin (MI)
Lieu
Lofgren
Lowenthal
Luria
Lynch
Malinowski
Maloney, Carolyn B.
Maloney, Sean
Manning
Matsui
McBath
McCollum
McEachin
McGovern
McNerney
Meeks
Meng
Mfume
Moore (WI)
Morelle
Moulton
Mrvan
Murphy (FL)
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal
Neguse
Newman
Norcross
O'Halleran
Ocasio-Cortez
Omar
Pallone
Panetta
Pappas
Pascrell
Payne
Pelosi
Perlmutter
Peters
Phillips
Pingree
Pocan
Porter
Pressley
Price (NC)
Quigley
Raskin
Rice (NY)
Ross
Roybal-Allard
Ruiz
Ruppersberger
Rush
Ryan
Sánchez
Sarbanes
Scanlon
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schneider
Schrader
Schrier
Scott (VA)
Scott, David
Sewell
Sherman
Sherrill
Sires
Slotkin
Smith (WA)
Soto
Spanberger
Speier
Stansbury
Stanton
Stevens
Strickland
Suozzi
Swalwell
Takano
Thompson (CA)
Thompson (MS)
Titus
Tlaib
Tonko
Torres (CA)
Torres (NY)
Trahan
Trone
Underwood
Vargas
Veasey
Vela
Velázquez
Wasserman Schultz
Waters
Watson Coleman
Welch
Wexton
Wild
Williams (GA)
Wilson (FL)
Yarmuth

NAYS—212

Aderholt
Allen
Amodei
Armstrong
Arrington
Babin
Bacon
Baird
Balderson
Banks
Barr
Bentz
Bergman
Bice (OK)
Biggs
Bilirakis
Bishop (NC)
Boebert
Bost
Brady
Brooks
Buchanan
Buck
Bucshon
Budd
Burchett
Burgess
Calvert
Cammack
Carl
Carter (GA)
Carter (TX)
Cawthorn
Chabot
Cheney
Cline
Cloud
Clyde
Cole
Comer
Crawford
Crenshaw
Curtis
Davidson
Davis, Rodney
DesJarlais
Diaz-Balart
Donalds
Duncan
Dunn
Ellzey
Emmer
Estes
Fallon
Feenstra
Ferguson
Fischbach
Fitzgerald
Fitzpatrick
Fleischmann
Fortenberry
Foxx
Franklin, C. Scott
Fulcher
Gaetz
Gallagher
Garbarino
Garcia (CA)
Gibbs
Gimenez
Gohmert
Gonzales, Tony
Gonzalez (OH)
Good (VA)
Gooden (TX)
Gosar
Granger
Graves (LA)
Graves (MO)
Green (TN)
Greene (GA)
Griffith
Grothman
Guest
Guthrie
Hagedorn
Harris
Harshbarger
Hartzler
Hern
Herrell
Herrera Beutler
Hice (GA)
Higgins (LA)
Hill
Hinson
Hollingsworth
Hudson
Huizenga
Issa
Jackson
Jacobs (NY)
Johnson (LA)
Johnson (OH)
Johnson (SD)
Jordan
Joyce (OH)
Joyce (PA)
Katko
Keller
Kelly (MS)
Kelly (PA)
Kim (CA)
Kinzinger
Kustoff
LaHood
LaMalfa
Lamborn
Latta
LaTurner
Lesko
Letlow
Long
Loudermilk
Lucas
Luetkemeyer
Mace
Malliotakis
Mann
Massie
Mast
McCarthy
McCaul
McClain
McClintock
McHenry
McKinley
Meijer
Meuser
Miller (IL)
Miller (WV)
Miller-Meeks
Moolenaar
Mooney
Moore (AL)
Moore (UT)
Mullin
Murphy (NC)
Nehls
Newhouse
Norman
Nunes
Obernolte
Owens
Palazzo
Palmer
Pence
Perry
Pfluger
Posey
Reed
Reschenthaler
Rice (SC)
Rodgers (WA)
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rose
Rosendale
Rouzer
Roy
Rutherford
Salazar
Scalise
Schweikert
Scott, Austin
Sessions
Simpson
Smith (MO)
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Smucker
Spartz
Stauber
Steel
Stefanik
Steil
Steube
Stewart
Taylor
Tenney
Thompson (PA)
Tiffany
Timmons
Turner
Upton
Valadao
Van Drew
Van Duyne
Wagner
Walberg
Walorski
Waltz
Weber (TX)
Webster (FL)
Wenstrup
Westerman
Williams (TX)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman
Womack
Young
Zeldin

NOT VOTING—1

Costa

□ 1910

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MEMBERS RECORDED PURSUANT TO HOUSE RESOLUTION 8, 117TH CONGRESS

Aderholt (Moolenaar)
Amodei (Balderson)
Barragán (Raskin)
Blumenauer (Bonamici)
Bowman (Omar)
Brownley (Clark (MA))
Buchanan (Dunn)
Calvert (Garcia (CA))
Cárdenas (Correa)
Cuellar (Green (TX))
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Deutch (Rice (NY))
Diaz-Balart (Cammack)
Duncan (Babin)
Emmer (Cammack)
Escobar (Garcia (TX))
Fleischmann (Bilirakis)
Frankel, Lois (Clark (MA))
Garbarino (Miller-Meeks)
Garamendi (Sherman)
Gibbs (Smucker)
Gomez (Raskin)
Granger (Cole)
Grijalva (Stanton)
Hagedorn (Meuser)

Harshbarger (Kustoff)
Herrera Beutler (Simpson)
Horsford (Kilmer)
Jayapal (Raskin)
Johnson (TX) (Jeffries)
Katko (Malliotakis)
Kelly (IL) (Clarke (NY))
Khanna (Lee (CA))
Kind (Connolly)
Kirkpatrick (Stanton)
Lawson (FL) (Evans)
Leger Fernandez (Aguilar)
Luetkemeyer (Long)
Maloney, Carolyn B. (Clarke (NY))
Maloney, Sean (Jeffries)
McEachin (Wexton)
McHenry (Budd)
McNerney (Huffman)
Meijer (Moore (UT))
Meng (Jeffries)
Moore (AL) (Brooks)
Moulton (McGovern)
Mullin (Lucas)
Napolitano (Correa)
Nehls (Jackson)
Newman (Casten)
Nunes (Garcia (CA))
Payne (Pallone)
Pingree (Kuster)
Pocan (Raskin)
Porter (Wexton)
Pressley (Omar)
Reed (Arrington)
Reschenthaler (Meuser)
Rodgers (WA) (Joyce (PA))
Roybal-Allard (Aguilar)
Ruiz (Correa)
Rush (Underwood)
Salazar (Cammack)
Sánchez (Aguilar)
Scott, David (Cartwright)
Sires (Pallone)
Steel (Obernolte)
Stefanik (Meuser)
Steube (Cammack)
Stevens (Dingell)
Stewart (Owens)
Strickland (Larsen (WA))
Thompson (PA) (Meuser)
Timmons (Cammack)
Titus (Connolly)
Tonko (Pallone)
Torres (CA) (Correa)
Trone (Connolly)
Vargas (Correa)
Velázquez (Clarke (NY))
Wagner (Long)
Walorski (Baird)
Watson Coleman (Pallone)
Welch (McGovern)
Wilson (FL) (Hayes)
Young (Malliotakis)

□ 1915

## ELECTING A MEMBER TO CERTAIN STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. HUDSON. Madam Speaker, by direction of the Republican Conference, I offer a privileged resolution and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 602

*Resolved*, That the following named Member be, and is hereby, elected to the following standing committees of the House of Representatives:

COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY: Mr. Ellzey.

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS' AFFAIRS: Mr. Ellzey.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## EMERGENCY REPATRIATION ASSISTANCE FOR RETURNING AMERICANS ACT

Mr. DANNY K. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Ways and Means and the Committee on the Budget be discharged from further consideration of the bill (H.R. 5085) to amend section 1113 of the Social Security Act to provide authority for increased payments for temporary assistance to United States citizens returned from foreign countries, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5085

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the ''Emergency Repatriation Assistance for Returning Americans Act''.

**SEC. 2. INCREASE IN AGGREGATE PAYMENTS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1113(d) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1313(d)) is amended by striking ''fiscal year 2020, the total amount of such assistance provided during such fiscal year shall not exceed $10,000,000'' and inserting ''fiscal years 2021 and 2022, the total amount of such assistance provided during each such fiscal year shall not exceed $10,000,000''.

(b) EMERGENCY DESIGNATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The amounts provided by the amendment made by this section are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4(g) of the Statutory Pay-As-You-Go Act of 2010 (2 U.S.C. 933(g)).

(2) DESIGNATION IN SENATE.—In the Senate, this section and the amendment made by this section are designated as an emergency requirement pursuant to section 4001(a)(1) of S. Con. Res. 14 (117th Congress), the concurrent resolution on the budget for fiscal year 2022.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## RECOGNIZING THE SERVICE OF RICHARD ''DICK'' LAMM

(Mr. PERLMUTTER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PERLMUTTER. Madam Speaker, on behalf of Congressman CROW, Congressman NEGUSE, and myself, I rise today to recognize and honor Richard ''Dick'' Lamm, the former Governor of Colorado from 1975 to 1987.

Governor Lamm was a tremendous leader and public servant for our great State of Colorado. He passed away on July 29, 2021. As a three-term Governor, he was one of the longest-serving Governors in Colorado history.

Governor Lamm was born in Wisconsin and moved to Denver in 1962. He served as a State representative from 1966 to 1974, where he rose to the position of assistant minority leader. During that time, he sponsored and helped pass several pieces of noteworthy legislation, including the Nation's first abortion law in 1967, ensuring women access to critical healthcare, including abortion services in cases of rape or incest.

In 1987, he began his first term as Governor of Colorado and went on to serve for 12 years, earning support from people across the State with his nononsense attitude and strong commitment to equality, education, and the environment.

Before holding office, Governor Lamm served as a first lieutenant in the United States Army and worked as an attorney and a certified public accountant. After leaving office, he coordinated and co-directed the University of Denver Institute for Public Policy Studies.

Above all else, Dick Lamm was a devoted husband and loving father. He stayed active in politics and kept up with Colorado news until his death. While Colorado has been blessed with many great leaders throughout its history, few rise to the caliber and reputation of Dick Lamm.

## SOCIALISM IN AMERICA

(Mr. CAWTHORN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CAWTHORN. Madam Speaker, you have squandered the inheritance of a generation today. You have governed with abandon and exchanged financial assurance for instant gratification.

Today, you didn't pass a budget plan. You passed a death wish for America. It is easy for you to sit up there and authorize $68 trillion over the next 10 years because you will never have to shoulder the financial burden of your actions.

Your road map for our future is a highway to hell. You have exchanged the American Dream for a socialist nightmare.

To the American people: You have been lied to. Your taxes will be raised because of the actions of Democrats today.

I shudder to think of what our country, our city on a hill, our beacon of freedom, will look like in a generation when we deliver a Nation devoid of treasure to our children.

We will give account one day for our actions in this Congress. Madam Speaker, if we hand over a bankrupt legacy to our children, your actions today will be indicted, and you will be without excuse. Madam Speaker, you are walking around with my generation's checkbook, and we want it back.

## BUILDING BACK BETTER

(Mr. SOTO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. SOTO. Madam Speaker, the American people have spoken. It is time to build back better.

Today's historic vote shows that President Biden and the Democratic Congress are united and that we are keeping our promises to the American people who put us in office.

Today, we move forward on the bipartisan infrastructure package to rebuild our Nation. Today, we move forward on the Build Back Better reconciliation bill to invest in American families. And today, we move forward on restoring the Voting Rights Act to protect our democracy.

It is not a moment too soon. Florida's Ninth Congressional District is the fastest growing district in the Nation, 40 percent growth, as I represent 955,000 constituents.

Whether it is central Florida or across the Nation, it is time to upgrade America's roads, bridges, ports, airports, rural broadband, clean water, and resilient and renewable energy. It is time to make childcare costs and