



John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (HR-4)

THE ISSUE

After the *Shelby v. Holder* Supreme Court decision that dismantled Section 4(b) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, voter suppression has increased nationwide with many anti-voting laws being passed. Currently there are multiple efforts nationwide to undermine voters including in the redistricting process, voter registration rules, and how people vote. Furthermore, there are current efforts to prevent private organizations from being able to sue state governments for anti-voter laws. With the claim that civil rights organizations have no right to take these cases to court. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act not only reaffirms the protections that were taken out of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but it provides new protections for voters as well.

THE ASK

Contact your Senator and voice your support for the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Contact your Representative and tell them that you support the introduction of this bill to the House of Representatives. July 17th is the John Lewis National Day of Action and we want to continue to champion voting rights.

HOW TO SUPPORT

Either send a letter (see the template below) or call your Congressional Members' office (see the phone script below) to elevate the importance of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.



WHAT ELSE CAN YOU DO?

Share on social media platforms, use the hashtags provided below, and share with your community members the need to elevate the urgency for Congress to act on this important piece of legislation.

QUESTIONS



Please email NCNW Advocacy & Policy Team members at pwhite@ncnw.org and twilliams@ncnw.org. We will assist you.

THE BACKGROUND OF THE JOHN LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act was introduced in the House of Representatives in 2021. During the 2020 Presidential Election the threat of COVID-19 saw many people choose to vote by mail. However, along with other anti-voting measures there were attempts to throw out these ballots with claims of voter fraud, however there was no evidence to support this. Despite these claims being disproved many people chose to continue to believe in this misinformation culminating in the January 6th assault on the Capitol to overturn the election. It became clear that more protections for voting needed to be put in place to protect our democracy. The bill originally passed in the House during the 117th Congress (2021-2022), but now needs to be reintroduced in the current 118th Congress.

THE ROLE OF AND IMPACT OF THE JOHN LEWIS VRAA



To address the voter suppression this country faces, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act restores the parts of the Voting Rights Act that were dismantled in the *Shelby v. Holder* decision. As well as, creates new protections and guidelines around voting giving more power to the Department of Justice to enforce voting protection. The John Lewis VRAA will not only protect voting rights but expand voting rights for those eligible to vote. Ensuring more security for our democratic process and that discriminatory anti-voter practices cannot continue.

THE PUSH FOR PASSAGE AND OUR ROLE AT NCNW

Voting Rights is one of the values that the National Council of Negro Women (NCNW) supports and cherishes in championing the voices of Black Women and their communities. Voting directly impacts the representation of Black families and communities in our political institutions. NCNW continues to be a vocal advocate for voting rights. The values and legacy of John Lewis are reflected in this act, these are the values of NCNW. Rep. Terri Sewell (D-AL-7) who introduced the bill in the House in the 117th Congress also shares these values.

We encourage you to join us in elevating the need to pass the John Lewis VRAA into law to protect the voting rights of American citizens. Please reach out to your US Senators and US House of Representatives Members to elevate your voice in the fight to protect your voting rights.

***Letter Template for Contacting Congressional Members**

Subject: **Pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**

Dear [Senator's or Representatives Name],

As your constituent, I am writing to urge your support for the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, a significant law that would have a major impact on protecting our rights. While this bill initially only passed the House, its reintroduction in the Senate means that there is still much support for this act. Protections for voting are necessary to protect our democratic process, and ensure that all Americans are represented fairly.

If Congress does not pass this act, not only will Americans continue to have their rights infringed upon, but our democracy will continue to face many threats. Fostering an environment of discrimination and underrepresentation.

[Personalize with a brief story about your experience with voting and how this act will help your community. For example - share that "Voting has allowed me to ensure I was fairly represented by someone who understands the needs of my family and community" or "Voter suppression puts my community at risk of not being represented by someone who does not accurately reflect the community I am in."]

This bill is not just about voting rights; it's about ensuring our community is fairly represented and that we are not being discriminated against.

Please consider the positive impact of this bill and support its passage.

Sincerely

[Your Name]

[Your address]

[Your Contact Information]

Phone Script for Contacting Congressional Members:

(Call the U.S Capitol Switchboard: (202)224-3121 and ask the operator to connect you to your Congressional Member - House and Senate)

Purpose of the call

Hello! My name is (First Name, Last Name) and I am a constituent of Representative _____ (or Senator _____). I'm calling today to urge (Member of Congress) to vote to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act.

Expression of Concern

"With voting rights constantly being under attack, it's urgent that Congress acts swiftly. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act provides protections to voting allowing for citizens to exercise their rights."

Request This Specific Action:

“Specifically, I ask that you prioritize:”

- “Passing this legislation into law and ensuring that attempts to undermine our rights are stopped immediately”

Personal or Community Impact (if applicable):

“In my community, many people feel underrepresented and feel as though their voting process has been made difficult by discriminatory voting laws. Especially for people who’s communities have not gotten the fair representation they need. [Share a personal story on how voting has and being fairly represented impacts your voice, as well as your community(Stories make a big impact).]

Closing: Reiterate the Request:

“Please pass this message on to [Congressperson’s Name] and let them know that their constituents are counting on them to protect their rights by passing the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. I am a proud member of the National Council of Negro Women... [and Name the Affiliate you belong to] and we strongly support the passage of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act. Thank you for your time.”

End Call

Suggested Social Media Graphics / Hashtags

Please post these social media graphics/hashtags on your social media platforms (Instagram, Facebook, etc.)

- “Join us in protecting our right to vote! Today, we are advocating for Congress to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act into law. Let’s make our voices heard!”
- “Voting is our right! Join us on Wednesday, July 17th to elevate our voices!”

Hashtag examples:

- #VotingIsOurRight!
- #JohnLewisVRAA
- #ProtectVotingNow!
- #PassJohnLewis
- #VotingIsDemocracy
- #ProtectOurRights!
- #SupportJohnLewisVRAA

Graphics

Notable Links

House site for office contacts: <https://www.house.gov/representatives/find-your-representative>

Senate site for office contacts: <https://www.senate.gov/senators/senators-contact.htm>