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(Original Signature of Member)

116TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES.

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Expressing support for the designation of the month of September as  
“National Voting Rights Month”.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. VEASEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the  
Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

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# RESOLUTION

Expressing support for the designation of the month of  
September as “National Voting Rights Month”.

Whereas voting is one of the single most important rights  
that can be exercised in our democracy;

Whereas over the course of history, various voter suppression  
laws in the United States have hindered, and even pro-  
hibited, certain individuals and groups from exercising  
this right;

Whereas during the 19th and early 20th centuries, many Na-  
tive Americans and Americans who were born abroad,  
many individuals who did not speak or write English, and  
many who were formerly subjected to slavery, were de-

nied full citizenship and prevented from voting by English literacy tests;

Whereas since the 1870s, minority groups such as African Americans in the South suffered from the oppressive effects of Jim Crow laws designed to prevent political, economic, and social mobility;

Whereas African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and other underrepresented groups were subject to violence, poll taxes, literacy tests, all-White primaries, property ownership tests, and grandfather clauses that sought to suppress their right to vote;

Whereas members of the aforementioned groups and others are currently, in some cases, subject to intimidation, voter roll purges, bans on former prisoners from voting, and financial barriers that act effectively as modern day poll taxes;

Whereas in 1965, Congress passed the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to protect the rights of African Americans and other traditionally disenfranchised groups to vote, among other reasons;

Whereas in 2013, in the landmark *Shelby County v. Holder* case, the Supreme Court invalidated section 4 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, dismantling the preclearance provision in the law that protected voters in States and units of local governments that historically have suppressed the rights of minorities to vote;

Whereas since the preclearance provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 have been vacated, among other effects, many States' gerrymandered districts have gone unchallenged or have become less likely to be invalidated by the courts;

Whereas these gerrymandered districts have been found to have a discriminatory impact on traditionally disenfranchised minorities through tactics that include “cracking”, diluting their voting power across many districts, and “packing”, concentrating minority voters’ power in one district to reduce their voting power in other districts;

Whereas the courts have found the congressional and, in some cases, State legislative district maps in Texas, North Carolina, Florida, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Maryland, Wisconsin, and other States to be gerrymandered districts that were created to favor some groups over others;

Whereas the *Shelby County v. Holder* Supreme Court decision calls on Congress to update the formula in the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to better match current data;

Whereas in at least 23 States, some form of restrictive voting law has been instituted since 2013;

Whereas these restrictive voting laws encompass cutbacks in early voting, voter roll purges, placement of faulty equipment in minority communities, requirement of photo identification, and elimination of same-day registration;

Whereas these policies could outright disenfranchise or make voting much more difficult for more than 80 million minority, elderly, poor, and disabled voters, among other groups;

Whereas in 2016 alone, discriminatory laws in North Carolina, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and Texas were ruled to violate voters’ rights and were overturned by the courts;

Whereas the COVID–19 public health emergency has only exacerbated the state of elections and voters’ access to the ballot;

Whereas the lack of fair and safe election policies threaten minority communities, which have been disproportionately impacted and disenfranchised due to the COVID–19 pandemic, and their access to the ballot;

Whereas tackling the challenges of administrating upcoming elections requires increasing the accessibility of vote-by-mail and other limited contact options to ensure the protection of voters’ health and safety amid a global pandemic;

Whereas as voting by mail becomes a safer and a more accessible option for voters to exercise their Constitutional right to vote during these unprecedented times, a fully functional and reliable United States Postal Service is of paramount importance in successfully conducting elections;

Whereas Congress must work to combat any attempts to dismantle or underfund the United States Postal Service and thereby obstruct the passage of the mail as blatant tactics of voter suppression and election interference;

Whereas there is much more work to be done to ensure all Americans have the right to vote through free, fair, and accessible elections;

Whereas National Voter Registration Day is September 22;  
and

Whereas the month of September would be an appropriate month to designate as “National Voting Rights Month” and ensure our democracy includes all of us through the registration of voters and awareness of elections: Now, therefore, be it

1        *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

1           (1) supports the designation of “National Voting Rights Month”;

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3           (2) encourages all people in the United States  
4 to uphold the right of every American to exercise his  
5 or her sacred and fundamental right to vote;

6           (3) commemorates the 100th anniversary of the  
7 House passage of the 19th Amendment, which guaranteed  
8 women the right to vote, and the legacy of  
9 generations of suffragists that fought to protect  
10 women’s rights at the ballot;

11           (4) encourages Congress to pass—

12           (A) H.R. 1 (S. 949), the For the People  
13 Act of 2019, to increase voters’ access to the  
14 ballot, end gerrymandering, create automatic  
15 voter registration, limit the power of restrictive  
16 voter ID laws, make critical investments in election  
17 infrastructure and technology, and address  
18 corruption in campaign finance and ethics;

19           (B) H.R. 4 (S. 4263), the John R. Lewis  
20 Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2020, to restore  
21 the protections of the Voting Rights Act  
22 of 1965 that prohibit discriminatory voting  
23 practices, remove barriers to voting, and provide  
24 protections for minority voters in States  
25 with a history of voting discrimination;

1 (C) H.R. 7427, the ACCESS Act, to en-  
2 sure every eligible American voter is able to ex-  
3 ercise their right to vote safely and securely  
4 during a declared state of emergency by guar-  
5 anteeing no-excuse absentee voting, expanding  
6 early voting, requiring state emergency plan-  
7 ning for voting during a state of emergency,  
8 mandating emergency vote-by-mail and same-  
9 day voter registration, and accommodations for  
10 voters on Indian lands;

11 (D) H.R. 8015 (S.4527), the Delivering  
12 for America Act, to prohibit the United States  
13 Postal Services from making changes to oper-  
14 ations or levels of service from those that were  
15 in effect on January 1, 2020, establish require-  
16 ments for the processing of election mail, and  
17 provide additional funding for the Postal Serv-  
18 ice Fund;

19 (E) H.R. 2722, the Securing America's  
20 Federal Elections (SAFE) Act, to provide fund-  
21 ing for States to improve the administration of  
22 elections, including enhancement of technology,  
23 election security, replacing antiquated voting  
24 systems, and meeting new standards for admin-  
25 istering elections; and

1 (F) other voting rights legislation that  
2 seeks to advance voting rights and protect  
3 United States elections;

4 (5) recommends that our Nation's public  
5 schools and universities develop an academic cur-  
6 riculum under which students would learn about the  
7 importance of voting, how to register to vote, where  
8 to vote, and the different forms of voting; in addi-  
9 tion to teaching the history of voter suppression in  
10 America before and after the Voting Rights Act of  
11 1965, and current measures that have been passed  
12 to restrict the vote;

13 (6) encourages the Postal Service to issue a  
14 special John Lewis stamp during the month of Sep-  
15 tember to honor his life and legacy and commitment  
16 to voting rights, and to remind Americans about  
17 how ordinary citizens risked their lives, marched,  
18 and participated in our great democracy so all  
19 Americans would have the fundamental right to vote;  
20 and

21 (7) invites Congress to allocate the requisite  
22 funds needed for public service announcements on  
23 television, radio, newspapers, magazines, social  
24 media, billboards, buses, and other forms of media  
25 to remind Americans when elections are being held,

- 1 share important registration deadlines, and to urge
- 2 people to get out and vote.