

By: Reynolds

H.C.R. No. 33

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

1 WHEREAS, The history of the United States has been tarnished
2 by discriminatory policies that suppress minority voting rights and
3 threaten the foundation of our democracy; and

4 WHEREAS, On March 7, 1965, civil rights activists the
5 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and John Lewis led a peaceful
6 march against voting inequality and were met with extreme violence;
7 this event prompted a public outcry and inspired Congress to pass
8 the Voting Rights Act later that year; the bipartisan legislation
9 allowed direct federal oversight and protections of election
10 processes to prevent states from suppressing minority voters; and

11 WHEREAS, In 2013, a landmark Supreme Court decision weakened
12 the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by ending the preclearance process,
13 which required jurisdictions with a history of voting
14 discrimination to submit changes to voting policies for federal
15 approval before implementing them; this limited the federal
16 government's ability to deter voter suppression, and North Carolina
17 and Texas immediately passed voting changes that were previously
18 rejected for preclearance; these laws remained during several
19 elections before federal courts later determined that they were
20 discriminatory; and

21 WHEREAS, U.S. Representatives Terri Sewell and John Lewis
22 coauthored the Voting Rights Advancement Act, which was renamed in
23 honor of Congressman Lewis after his passing; this bill would
24 restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 while

1 updating the coverage criteria to reflect current conditions and
2 apply to all states; furthermore, the bill focuses the preclearance
3 process on a set of discriminatory measures, requires reasonable
4 public notice for voting changes, and allows the attorney general
5 to request the presence of federal observers in places at risk of
6 racial discrimination in voting; and

7 WHEREAS, Congressman John Lewis dedicated his life to
8 protecting Americans' right to vote, and Congress should pass his
9 legislation to prevent voter suppression and uphold our nation's
10 core value of equality; now, therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, That the 88th Legislature of the State of Texas
12 hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the United States to pass
13 the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act; and, be it further

14 RESOLVED, That the Texas secretary of state forward official
15 copies of this resolution to the president of the United States, to
16 the president of the Senate and the speaker of the House of
17 Representatives of the United States Congress, and to all the
18 members of the Texas delegation to Congress with the request that
19 this resolution be entered in the Congressional Record as a
20 memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.