

By: Reynolds

H.C.R. No. 1

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; moreover, restrictive voting measures proliferated  
21 after the 2020 election, and as of June 21, 2021, 17 states enacted  
22 28 new laws that suppress access to the vote; and

23 WHEREAS, U.S. Representatives Terri Sewell and John Lewis  
24 coauthored the Voting Rights Advancement Act, which was renamed in

1 honor of Congressman Lewis after his passing; this bill would  
2 restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 while  
3 updating the coverage criteria to reflect current conditions and  
4 apply to all states; furthermore, the bill focuses the preclearance  
5 process on a set of discriminatory measures, requires reasonable  
6 public notice for voting changes, and allows the Attorney General  
7 to request the presence of federal observers in places at risk of  
8 racial discrimination in voting; and

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

13 RESOLVED, That the 87th Legislature of the State of Texas,  
14 3rd Called Session, hereby respectfully urge the Congress of the  
15 United States to pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act;  
16 and, be it further

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