



For Immediate Release
Friday, June 3, 2022

LDF Media
212-965-2200 / media@naacpldf.org

LDF Urges Governor Hochul to Immediately Sign the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York into Law

Yesterday, by a supermajority vote of 106-43, the New York State Assembly joined with the New York State Senate and passed the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Act of New York, a transformative bill that will increase access to the vote for millions of New Yorkers, set a new standard for empowering Black and Brown voters, and model pro-voting rights legislation for the rest of the country. The bill — which builds on the best parts of the federal Voting Rights Act as well as other state-level voting rights acts in states such as California, Washington, Oregon, and Virginia — now awaits the signature of New York Governor Kathy Hochul before becoming law.

“LDF commends Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Speaker Carl Heastie, Senator Zellnor Myrie, and Assemblymember Latrice Walker for the superb leadership they showed by guiding this critical piece of legislation through the Senate and Assembly, respectively,” said Legal Defense Fund (LDF) President and Director-Counsel Janai S. Nelson.

“As the late John R. Lewis — whose dedication to establishing a truly inclusive and functional democracy in the U.S served as an inspiration for so many of the people who worked to support this legislation — once noted, the right to vote is ‘precious, almost sacred.’ It is now left for Governor Hochul, who supported 2021’s federal-level reform legislation, to seal this victory for democracy by signing the bill into law.”

While Governor Hochul has not yet publicly confirmed that she will sign this specific legislation, she has previously expressed support for strengthening voting rights — such as in her 2022 [State of the State: A New Era for New York](#) report, which calls for New York to “Enact a State-Level Voting Rights Act.”

“While some state lawmakers today are doing everything they can to restrict the vote and dilute the political power of Black communities and the communities of other people of color,” said LDF Director of Policy Lisa Cylar Barrett, “it is greatly encouraging to see that lawmakers in the State of New York are responding to their own constituents by strengthening and securing every New Yorker’s right to vote — no matter where they live, what they look like, or where they came from.”

###

Founded in 1940, the [Legal Defense Fund](#) (LDF) is the nation’s first civil rights law organization. LDF’s Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the Legal Defense Fund or

LDF. Please note that LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights.