

National Civil Rights Organizations Issue Statement Following U.S. Senate Failure to Take up Critical Voter Rights Legislation

Washington, DC (June 23, 2021) - Yesterday, the Senate failed to advance *S. 1. The For the People Act* to a full floor debate. By doing so, it failed to protect the most fundamental tenet of our democracy—the right to vote. This legislation is not a partisan issue—it is an American issue. *The For the People Act* would protect the coveted right of this nation’s citizens to have a voice in our democracy.

Since the November 2020 elections, 48 state legislatures across the country have proposed or passed hundreds of anti-voter bills aimed at thwarting the electoral process and making it more difficult for all voters, particularly those voters who are people of color, to cast their ballots freely, safely and equally. *The For The People Act* would serve as the counterweight to these restrictive state laws by protecting and expanding access to voting for millions who are being disenfranchised.

As more state and local jurisdictions propose and pass anti-voter laws, the need for federal legislative intervention could not be more urgent. We stand solidly in our commitment to demand the Senate pass legislation to protect voters from partisan barriers to the ballot box and ensure their participation in American democracy.

The Senate must pass a strong *For the People Act* to establish critical election reforms, including lowering barriers to registration, expanding early voting and vote-by-mail, restricting the impact of voter identification requirements, ensuring ample notice of polling place changes, and protecting against discriminatory purging of voter rolls.

If the Senate cannot pass national voting rights protections with 60 votes, we urge it to reform the filibuster and pass the *For the People Act* with a simple majority. Our nation urgently needs this voting rights legislation because our democracy is at stake.

This statement was co-authored by:

Melanie Campbell, president and CEO, [The National Coalition on Black Civic Participation](#)

Damon Hewitt, president and executive director, [Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law](#)

Sherrilyn Ifill, president and director-counsel, [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. \(LDF\)](#)

Wade Henderson, interim president and CEO, [The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights](#)

Johnetta Betsch Cole, Ph.D., national chair and president, [National Council of Negro Women](#)

Marc Morial, president and CEO, [National Urban League](#)

Rev. Al Sharpton, founder & president, [National Action Network](#)

Derrick Johnson, president & CEO, [NAACP](#)

###

Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. 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. 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 NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#).