



For Immediate Release

Tuesday, March 12, 2024

Media

media@naacpldf.org

LDF President and Director-Counsel Janai Nelson Testifies Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Rules and Administration

Legal Defense Fund (LDF) President and Director Counsel Janai Nelson testified before the U.S. Senate’s Committee on Rules and Administration about barriers facing Black voters and the dangerous attacks on voting rights and democracy ahead of the 2024 Presidential election.

As stated in her testimony, Ms. Nelson said: “Black Americans are heading into November with a shredded shield. As a result of *Shelby* and *Brnovic*, the Voting Rights Act is a shadow of its former self. Precisely when we need strong voting rights protections—in the face of rising authoritarianism, destructive court decisions, combined with inaction by Congress, have stripped them away.”

To read Ms. Nelson’s full testimony before the Senate as written [click here.](#)

[LDF’s work](#) to advance election protections, voting rights and combat racial gerrymandering is continues today as it has since the passage of the Voting Rights Act. Staff, attorneys, and allies are active on the ground and in courthouses across the country working to fortify hard earned wins and combat unrelenting attacks against the rights of Black voters. It is projected that the November election will see upward of [34 million Black eligible voters](#), a 7% increase over the 2020 election.

Ms. Nelson’s testimony comes one week following the 59th anniversary of Bloody Sunday – the march across Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama which led to the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1964, and as Ms. Nelson and advocates are asking Congress to pass to John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act which would protect voters from race-based discrimination, and the Freedom to Vote Act

which would set minimum standards for election administration so Americans' access to their most fundamental right doesn't depend upon where they happen to live.

###

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.