

For Immediate Release

Friday, March 25, 2022

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New York Civil Rights Groups Commend State Senate for Pro-Voter Budget Proposal

As organizations dedicated to protecting all New Yorkers' freedom to vote, we commend the New York State Senate for including the funds needed to implement and enforce the John R. Lewis Voting Rights of New York (NYVRA) ([S.1046A/A.6678A](#)) in its 2022 budget proposal.

Once the NYVRA is passed into law, every eligible voter in the Empire State, regardless of their race or the language they speak, will enjoy strong protections for their access to the ballot and their ability to exercise their fundamental right to vote. The NYVRA will:

- Launch a "preclearance" program requiring local governments with a record of discrimination to prove that certain voting changes won't harm voters of color *before* they can go into effect.
- Provide new legal tools to fight discriminatory voting rules in court.
- Expand language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency.
- Create strong protections against voter intimidation, deception, or obstruction.
- Instruct state judges to interpret election laws in a pro-voter way whenever possible.
- Create a central hub for election data and demographic information that New Yorkers can use to fight for accessible elections.

In sharp contrast with state-level policymakers elsewhere in the country who are trying to make voting even harder, New York's State Senate has made significant progress toward establishing New York as a leading example of how state- and local-level policymakers can work with their constituents to revitalize our democracy.

Now that the State Senate has made this important down-payment, we look forward to working with Governor Hochul, as well as lawmakers in the State Senate and Assembly, to ensure that this game-changing legislation is soon passed into law.

This statement was signed by the following organizations:

- LatinoJustice PRLDEF
- NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.
- New York Civil Liberties Union
- New York Public Interest Research Group
- Stand Up America

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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](#).