



**For Immediate Release**  
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**LDF Issues Statement on House Passage of H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**

Today, the United States House of Representatives passed H.R. 4, the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, an urgently needed measure that would help protect the right to vote. Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) issued the following statement in response:

“We applaud the House of Representatives for passing this vital piece of legislation – the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA). This bill comes at a critical time for our democracy, which remains under siege from ongoing and unrelenting efforts to limit the sacred right to vote, particularly for Black voters and other voters of color whose access to the ballot box has historically required Congressional protection.

“From 1970 to 2006, the Voting Rights Act was extended by presidents and members of Congress of both political parties – including by a 396-33 margin just 15 years ago. Today’s vote, however, passed solely along party lines with no Republicans voting in favor of H.R. 4. The absence of bipartisan support speaks volumes about the peril of the democratic moment in which we now find ourselves.

“Indeed, this moment is as grave as the harrowing times in the 1960s, when the blood of some of our nation’s bravest — including the Honorable John Lewis, namesake of the VRAA — was spilled in the fight to secure the right to vote for Black citizens. Those champions of our democracy called on Congress to act assertively and urgently in its defense. We do the same today, as do Americans across the political spectrum who support the Voting Rights Act and want Congress to work together to restore it to full strength.

“We are disappointed in the failure of House Republicans to meet this moment and support the passage of this essential bill. It suggests that the progress of the VRAA in the Senate will be uniquely challenging, especially if there are those in the chamber who continue to elevate a Senate rule – the filibuster – over the constitutional right of racial minorities to participate equally and meaningfully in the political process.

“The VRAA is crucial to restoring the Voting Rights Act and strengthening the fundamental freedom of every citizen to access the ballot box and have their vote counted. It would require federal review of specific voting practices known to be used to discriminate against voters of color, establish new review and approval criteria for preventing racial discrimination in voting, restore voters’ ability to challenge racial discrimination in court, and mandate greater nationwide transparency of voting law and policy changes, among other provisions.

“We applaud the House today for taking another step in the process to protect Americans’ rights to vote freely and without racial discrimination, and we demand that our elected

leaders in Congress bring every power to bear to ensure the full passage of the VRAA this year. There is absolutely no time to waste.”

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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](#).*