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LDF Applauds the Introduction of Michigan Voting Rights Act in Michigan Legislature

Yesterday, Michigan legislators introduced Senate Bills [401](#), [402](#), [403](#), and [404](#) (“Michigan Voting Rights Act” or “MIVRA”), a comprehensive [state voting rights act](#) that will expand access and strengthen protections against voting discrimination for communities of color throughout the state. The introduction of the Michigan Voting Rights Act this session marks a first step towards adopting the most comprehensive set of protections for voters of color in Michigan's history, building on best practices in state voting rights acts across the country.

The historic proposed legislation incorporates several components that work to strengthen access to the ballot box and prevent discrimination, including:

- Addressing vote dilution — which occurs in unfair districts that weaken or drown out Black and Brown voters’ voices — and confronting barriers that deny voting opportunities in a way that is efficient and effective for both voters and local governments within the state.
- Launching a “preclearance” program that requires local governments with records of discrimination to prove that certain voting changes won’t harm voters of color before they can go into effect.
- Expanding language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency so every eligible voter can participate effectively.
- Implementing a central public repository for election and demographic data with the goal of fostering transparent, evidence-based practices in election administration.

If adopted, the MIVRA will become one of the country’s most comprehensive state-level voting rights acts, with Michigan joining states like [Connecticut](#) and [New York](#) that have enacted wide-ranging protections, and building upon efforts in California, Oregon, Virginia, and Washington. Michigan joins [multiple states](#) that are currently considering adopting a state voting rights act.

In response to the news, Senior Policy Counsel Adam Lioz issued the following statement:

“We commend state policymakers in Michigan for the introduction of the Michigan Voting Rights Act. This strong package of legislation will strengthen and safeguard the right to vote for Black voters and other voters of color across the state. We applaud Secretary of State Jocelyn Benson and lead sponsor Senator Darrin Camilleri, for their vision and leadership in crafting these critical protections for Michigan voters. This crucial step towards protecting and expanding voting access is a significant milestone not only in Michigan, but for the entire nation

in building a more inclusive democracy. We look forward to working with these voting rights champions to strengthen this proposal even further.

“While Congress remains stagnant in addressing current threats to voting equality, and as other states are passing restrictive laws that roll back this fundamental right, Michigan is now leading by example in seeking to protect residents from unequal access to the ballot. The MIVRA, with its key provisions — including protections against voter suppression and dilution, as well as a strong preclearance program — will give Black and Brown voters strong tools to overcome discriminatory barriers that too often push them to the sidelines of our democracy.

“If enacted, the MIVRA will make Michigan a national leader by serving a critical local need. We look forward to continuing to work with Michigan lawmakers, policymakers, advocates, and community leaders to further strengthen and enact this essential package of bills this session.”

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*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.*