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LDF Issues Statement Commending Connecticut Lawmakers for Advancing State-Level Voting Rights Act

Last night, state lawmakers in Connecticut passed out of committee Senate Bill 471 (“S.B. 471”), a state-level Voting Rights Act that seeks to expand access to the freedom to vote and strengthen voter protections for communities of color throughout the state.

In response, [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.](#) (LDF) Policy Counsel Steven Lance released the following statement:

“LDF applauds Connecticut lawmakers for passing a strong state voting rights act out of committee today. By taking this crucial step, Connecticut policymakers are proving that, despite inaction in Washington, D.C., and attacks on voting rights in other states, people throughout this country can still push to defend and strengthen democracy in the states where they reside.

“In Connecticut, for example, voters of color face some of the most restrictive voting laws in the nation. S.B. 471 would address many of these unfair barriers by:

- Launching 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.
- Providing new legal tools to fight discriminatory voting rules in court.
- Expanding language assistance for voters with limited English proficiency.
- Creating strong protections against voter intimidation, deception, or obstruction.
- Establishing a central hub for election data and demographic information that Connecticut residents can use to fight for accessible elections.

“In sharp contrast with state-level policymakers elsewhere in the country who are imposing unjustified and often-discriminatory barriers to the franchise, the Connecticut General Assembly has now made significant progress toward establishing the Nutmeg State as a leading example of how state- and local-level policymakers can work with their constituents to revitalize our democracy.

“Now that S.B. 471 has passed out of committee, we look forward to working with Governor Lamont, as well as lawmakers in the General Assembly, to ensure that this game-changing legislation is soon passed into law.”

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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](#).