THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT IS STILL NEEDED

IS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT STILL NEEDED? YES.

2006
Congress voted overwhelmingly to reauthorize the Voting Rights Act. The Senate voted **98**-0 and the House **390**-33.

2009
The U.S. Supreme Court recognized that racial discrimination in voting is **"not ancient history."**

2012
Section 5 **blocks** statewide discriminatory measures in Florida, Texas and South Carolina.

IS SECTION 5 OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT STILL IMPORTANT? YES.

WHAT IS SECTION 5?

SECTION 5 IS THE HEART OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Under this provision, states and localities that have demonstrated a chronic record of racial discrimination in voting ("Covered areas") must secure federal approval before making any voting changes.

Section 5 has stopped over 1,000 discriminatory voting changes since 1982. Those jurisdictions that have not engaged in voting discrimination for the previous 10 years are allowed to remove themselves from Section 5 preclearance requirements. 190 jurisdictions have successfully "bailed out" of Section 5 coverage.

VOTE

Congress carefully considered the evidence – **15K pages of it** – and an overwhelming majority supported it.

All lower courts have **upheld** Section 5 against constitutional challenges.

The Court has upheld the constitutionality of Section 5 on **four separate occasions** since its passage in 1965.

During the signing ceremony for the reauthorization of the Voting Rights Act in 1982, Ronald Reagan said:

"As I've said before, the right to vote is the crown jewel of American liberties, and we will not see its luster diminished."

The U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia recognized that:

"The 21st century problem of voting discrimination remains more prevalent in those jurisdictions that have historically been subjected to the preclearance requirement."

SECTION 5 PROTECTS VOTERS IN THE PLACES WHERE VOTING DISCRIMINATION IS THE WORST

WHAT IS SECTION 2?

Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act allows citizens nationwide to file suit only after discriminatory voting changes are in place. Section 5 is much more effective. It stops the changes before they can harm voters. Without Section 5, individuals must find lawyers and extensive resources to challenge discriminatory laws on a case-by-case basis.

The vast majority of successful cases brought under the nationwide Section 2 voter protection measure are from parts of the country covered by Section 5.

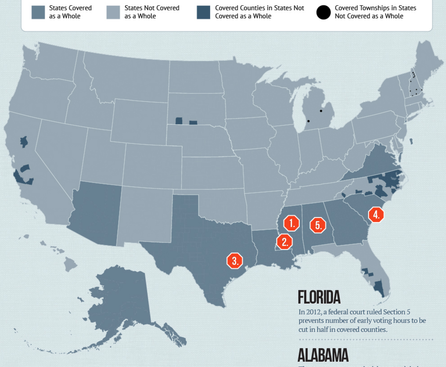
COVERED PLACES	VS.	NON-COVERED PLACES
SUCCESSFUL SECTION 2 VOTING DISCRIMINATION CASES: 81%		SUCCESSFUL SECTION 2 VOTING DISCRIMINATION CASES: 19%
POPULATION: > 25%		POPULATION: < 75%
PER CAPITA SUCCESS RATE: 12		PER CAPITA SUCCESS RATE: 1

81% CASES There were 4 times as many successful Section 2 cases in the covered jurisdictions

25% POPULATION Only one-quarter of Americans live in the covered jurisdictions.

WHERE IS THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT STILL PROTECTING AMERICANS' RIGHT TO VOTE?

States Covered as a Whole | States Not Covered as a Whole | Covered Counties in States Not Covered as a Whole | Covered Townships in States Not Covered as a Whole



1. KILMICHAEL, MS
After the Census indicated that Black candidates could be elected for the first time, and an unprecedented number of Black candidates registered for election, white officials attempted to cancel local elections.

2. MCCOMB, MS
Section 5 protected voters in a minority neighborhood without public transportation from having to walk four miles to cast their ballots.

3. WALLER COUNTY, TX
Waller County attempted to reduce early voting at polling places near an historically Black university and threatened to criminally prosecute students for "illegal voting," after two Black students announced their intent to run for office.

4. SPARTANBURG COUNTY, SC
Section 5 prevented the disbanding of an elected government body when minority candidates won.

5. SHELBY COUNTY, AL
The city of Calera, AL, located in Shelby County, improperly redrew the boundaries of its city council districts, changing the composition of the city's lone Black council member's district from 70.9% registered Black voters to just 29.5%. The city then illegally held an election without approval, causing the councilman to lose his council seat. Because of Section 5, Calera was required to redraw the district lines and conduct a new election, allowing the council member to regain his seat.

The federal appeals court ruled in this case: "After thoroughly scrutinizing the record and given that overt racial discrimination persists in covered jurisdictions notwithstanding decades of Section 5 preclearance, we, like the district court, are satisfied that Congress's judgment deserves judicial deference."

FLORIDA
In 2012, a federal court ruled Section 5 prevents number of early voting hours to be cut in half in covered counties.

ALABAMA
Three years ago, state legislators and their cronies were caught on wiretaps talking about a "trigger plan" for redistricting. They referred to Black voters as "aboriginees" and "y'all's Indians."

TEXAS
Every single one of Texas's initial state legislative redistricting plans has been rejected as discriminatory since 1980.

Section 5 stopped a discriminatory photo ID measure in 2012 that would have permitted concealed gun licenses but not student photo IDs to be accepted.

MISSISSIPPI
During the 1990 redistricting cycle, members of the Mississippi State Legislature referred to a redistricting plan favored by African Americans as the "nigger plan." During the 1980 redistricting cycle, the chair of Georgia's redistricting committee referred to majority-Black districts as "nigger districts."

SOUTH CAROLINA
Thanks to Section 5, a court ruled in 2012 voters can still vote if they have a "reasonable impediment" to lacking a photo-ID.

A FULL & FREE AMERICAN DEMOCRACY DEPENDS UPON THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT.

THE SUPREME COURT MUST UPHOLD THE VRA,

SO THAT **ALL CITIZENS** CAN EXERCISE THEIR RIGHT TO VOTE!

SECTION 5? YES

VOTE

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