

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1539

Affirming the commitment of the House of Representatives to defend the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and to oppose efforts to intimidate voters, suppress the vote, or interfere with free and fair elections.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2026

Ms. MEJIA (for herself, Mr. CLEAVER, Ms. RANDALL, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, and Mr. CLYBURN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary, and in addition to the Committee on House Administration, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Affirming the commitment of the House of Representatives to defend the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments to the Constitution and to oppose efforts to intimidate voters, suppress the vote, or interfere with free and fair elections.

Whereas the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution guarantees equal protection of the laws to all persons and establishes citizenship for all persons born or naturalized in the United States;

Whereas the Fifteenth Amendment to the Constitution guarantees that the right of citizens of the United States to

vote shall not be denied or abridged on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude;

Whereas these amendments were won through the sacrifice of formerly enslaved people, and later defended by generations of community leaders and organizers, including the marchers beaten on the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama;

Whereas the Supreme Court's 2013 decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* invalidated the Voting Rights Act's coverage formula that determined which States and localities were required to obtain Federal approval before changing their voting laws as unconstitutional, weakening the tools available to enforce the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments;

Whereas, in the years since that decision, States and localities have repeatedly adopted voting laws and practices that discriminate against voters based on their race, ethnicity, or language, as evidenced by court rulings against those entities;

Whereas, on April 29, 2026, the Supreme Court's decision in *Louisiana v. Callais* significantly narrowed section 2 of the Voting Rights Act, the primary tool for challenging racially discriminatory redistricting, by limiting the circumstances under which race may be considered in drawing congressional districts and making it more difficult to remedy maps that dilute the voting power of minority communities;

Whereas, on July 1, 2021, the Supreme Court's decision in *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee* also significantly narrowed the ability of voters to challenge discriminatory voting rules under section 2 of the Voting

Rights Act by establishing new considerations that make it more difficult to demonstrate that voting practices deny minority voters an equal opportunity to participate in the political process;

Whereas, in the months following *Louisiana v. Callais*, several States have redrawn congressional maps in ways that eliminate districts where minority communities' voters previously had the ability to elect their preferred candidates;

Whereas the Federal Government has long restricted armed presence at polling places, a restriction now under strain, in that—

(1) sending troops or armed men to polling places has been a Federal crime for more than 150 years, with a narrow exception for repelling armed enemies of the United States that has never once been invoked;

(2) officials in the executive branch have acknowledged their intention to deploy Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents or other armed Federal personnel to or near polling places during the 2026 elections; and

(3) immigration agents have already been reported confronting election workers near polling sites during 2026 primary elections;

Whereas the presence, or threatened presence, of troops, armed Federal agents, or immigration enforcement personnel at or near polling places can be a form of voter intimidation that falls most heavily on Black, Latino, immigrant, and other communities of color, and has no place in a free and fair election;

Whereas the Department of Justice has separately sought to compile a national database of voter registration information, in that—

(1) the Department of Justice has demanded unredacted voter rolls, including partial Social Security numbers and driver's license numbers, from nearly every State and the District of Columbia, and has sued dozens of States, led by officials of both parties, that refused to comply;

(2) as of August 2026, the Department of Justice has lost more than 20 consecutive court rulings in its effort to compel States to turn over this data; and

(3) the Department of Justice has arranged to check State voter data against a Department of Homeland Security immigration database that has been criticized for inaccuracies, raising the risk that eligible citizens will be wrongly flagged and removed from the rolls;

Whereas, in August 2026, the United States Postal Service finalized a rule that would impose new requirements on the transmission of mail-in and absentee ballots in Federal elections, including new envelope design, barcode, data-reporting, and verification requirements, under which the United States Postal Service must refuse to accept outbound Federal ballot mail that fails to satisfy such requirements;

Whereas implementation of the United States Postal Service's final rule remains subject to ongoing litigation as States and local jurisdictions are beginning to mail ballots for the 2026 general election, creating uncertainty for election officials and voters, and, if permitted to take effect, could—

(1) require election officials to rapidly redesign ballot envelopes, adopt new barcodes, submit voter information through an untested Federal portal, and comply with

new Federal procedures during the busiest period of election administration;

(2) result in the United States Postal Service refusing to deliver individual ballots or entire batches of ballots because of technical, printing, data-entry, or administrative errors outside the control of voters;

(3) prevent otherwise eligible voters from receiving their ballots in sufficient time to mark and return them before applicable deadlines; and

(4) disproportionately burden voters who rely most heavily on voting by mail, including seniors, individuals with disabilities, rural voters, and voters who cannot easily access an in-person polling location;

Whereas an anonymous United States Postal Service whistleblower with direct knowledge of the development of the United States Postal Service’s new ballot-mail system has alleged that—

(1) the Federal Ballot Mail Portal and related information technology systems were developed on a rushed timeline without sufficient testing, despite an undertaking of such complexity ordinarily requiring substantially more time;

(2) the United States Postal Service intends to apply a “zero-percent failure” standard under which a single ballot that fails barcode verification could cause an entire batch containing thousands or tens of thousands of ballots to be rejected and returned to election officials;

(3) voters whose ballots are included in rejected batches may not know that their ballots were never mailed until it is too late to obtain another ballot or vote in person; and

(4) these technological, operational, and verification failures could delay or prevent potentially millions of eli-

gible Americans from receiving mail-in ballots in time to exercise their right to vote in the 2026 general election;

Whereas, on September 14, 2026, the Supreme Court denied the Trump administration's request to stay a nationwide preliminary injunction blocking implementation of the United States Postal Service's final rule for the 2026 elections, leaving the rule blocked while litigation continues, in that—

(1) the Court concluded that the Government was unlikely to succeed on the merits of its challenge to the preliminary injunction and that the equitable factors did not favor emergency relief; and

(2) Justice Brett Kavanaugh, concurring in the denial, concluded that applying the rule to the 2026 elections would be arbitrary and capricious because State and local election officials do not have sufficient time to reasonably implement the new requirements before the elections;

Whereas the House of Representatives has repeatedly passed legislation that would require documentary proof of citizenship to register to vote in Federal elections and would effectively eliminate most online and mail voter registration, including by attaching this policy to unrelated must-pass legislation such as the National Defense Authorization Act, despite the fact that more than 21,300,000 eligible voters, including many poor and working-class voters and married people whose legal name no longer matches their birth certificate, lack ready access to a passport or certified birth certificate;

Whereas legislation has been introduced in Congress, including the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, the Protect Our Polls Act, and the Protecting Our De-

mocracy Act, which seek to restore Federal protections against discriminatory voting changes, to require congressional notification and an opportunity for disapproval before troops or armed Federal agents may be sent to polling places, to protect elections from abuses of executive power and to reinstate the coverage formula for the Voting Rights Act of 1965; and

Whereas section 5 of the Fourteenth Amendment and section 2 of the Fifteenth Amendment each expressly grant Congress the power to enforce the guarantees of those amendments through appropriate legislation, and the right to vote is preservative of all other rights: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) reaffirms its commitment to the full en-
3 forcement of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amend-
4 ments to the Constitution;

5 (2) condemns the deployment of troops, armed
6 Federal agents, or immigration enforcement per-
7 sonnel to or near polling places for any purpose
8 other than repelling an imminent armed attack, as
9 provided under existing law;

10 (3) calls on the Department of Homeland Secu-
11 rity to state clearly and in writing that Immigration
12 and Customs Enforcement will not conduct oper-
13 ations at or near polling places during the 2026 elec-
14 tions or any future election;

1 (4) opposes passage of the Safeguard American
2 Voter Eligibility Act, whether as standalone legisla-
3 tion or attached to unrelated legislation such as the
4 National Defense Authorization Act or a budget rec-
5 onciliation bill, or any legislation that would impose
6 a documentary proof of citizenship requirement for
7 voter registration;

8 (5) opposes the collection or compilation by any
9 Federal agency of a national database of confidential
10 voter registration information;

11 (6) supports restoring Federal preclearance
12 protections eliminated by the Supreme Court's deci-
13 sions in *Shelby County v. Holder*, and section 2 pro-
14 tections weakened by the Supreme Court's decision
15 in *Louisiana v. Callais* and *Brnovich v. Democratic*
16 National Committee;

17 (7) supports requiring States to provide public
18 notice, in a format accessible to voters with disabil-
19 ities, of polling place locations, accessibility, and the
20 availability of accessible voting machines, sufficiently
21 in advance of an election;

22 (8) opposes any effort by the executive branch
23 to declare a national emergency over elections, to
24 federalize the administration of elections, or to oth-
25 erwise use emergency or immigration enforcement

1 authority to interfere with the free exercise of the
2 right to vote;

3 (9) calls on Members of the House of Rep-
4 resentatives to reject voter intimidation and voter
5 suppression in all forms and to work to ensure that
6 every eligible voter, regardless of race, national ori-
7 gin, or income, can cast a ballot free from fear; and

8 (10) calls on the Speaker of the House to com-
9 mit, in writing, to promptly administering the oath
10 of office to any Member-elect, Delegate-elect, or
11 Resident Commissioner-elect upon their election,
12 consistent with the constitutional requirement that
13 duly elected Representatives be seated.

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