

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 758

Designating a “National Month of Voter Registration”.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 2, 2012

Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. HOYER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania, Mr. NADLER, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Ms. CHU, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Ms. BROWN of Florida, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. CARSON of Indiana, Mr. CLARKE of Michigan, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. COHEN, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. FILNER, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas, Mr. GUTIERREZ, Ms. HAHN, Mr. HONDA, Mr. HOLT, Mr. ISRAEL, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. ZOE LOFGREN of California, Mr. MCGOVERN, Ms. MOORE, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PINGREE of Maine, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. RUSH, Ms. LINDA T. SÁNCHEZ of California, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. SERRANO, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. TOWNS, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WILSON of Florida, and Mr. GRIJALVA) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Designating a “National Month of Voter Registration”.

Whereas the United States has overcome the stains of State-sponsored voting discrimination, which included State voting qualifications such as property ownership, religious qualifications, grandfather clauses, poll taxes, and literacy tests, designed to exclude from voting racial minorities, poorer voters, and certain religious groups;

Whereas the courts have struck down these State practices because the State laws conflict with the Constitution;

Whereas the Congress has continuously moved to expand the franchise of voting;

Whereas the 13th amendment, the 14th amendment, the 15th amendment, the 19th amendment, the 23d Amendment, the 24th amendment, and the 26th amendment were enacted by Congress to protect minorities, poorer voters, women, the elderly, and youth from voting discrimination;

Whereas in 1965, the Congress passed the Voting Rights Act in order to remedy past discrimination in voting and protect vulnerable citizens from practices that infringe on the right to vote or elect a candidate of their choice;

Whereas in 1993, the Congress passed the National Voter Registration Act to declare protections around the voting process, increase the number of citizens who register to vote, and encourage governments to protect the integrity of the electoral process;

Whereas in 2002, in response to the controversy surrounding the 2000 Presidential Election, the Congress passed the Help America Vote Act that provided new standards for voting systems, created an independent Commission to assist with the administration of Federal Elections, and established minimum standards for States and local governments who administer Federal elections;

Whereas the Congress reauthorized the Voting Rights Act five times, most recently in 2006, recognizing the need for continued enforcement against State practices in voting that discriminate or disenfranchise vulnerable citizens;

Whereas since 2010, some States have enacted voting changes that are reminiscent of historic State-sponsored voting discrimination;

Whereas some States have already disenfranchised some American youth, elderly citizens, and former Members of Congress through strict voting changes;

Whereas some States still continue to disenfranchise American citizens living and working in our communities with past criminal convictions;

Whereas Members of Congress and notable civil rights organizations have studied these laws and calculated that they will have a grave impact on millions of voting eligible minority, elderly, youth, and poor voters seeking to register to vote and vote on election day;

Whereas since March 12, 2012, two State courts in Wisconsin have ruled that Wisconsin's voter ID law was "unconstitutional" under Wisconsin law, holding that "a government that undermines the very foundation of its existence—the people's inherent, pre-constitutional right to vote—imperils its legitimacy as a government by the people, for the people, and especially of the people";

Whereas representatives and political leaders in States like New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, and Florida have made public admissions about how certain laws in their States were designed to put a dent in the democratic process;

Whereas without a response from the Congress, millions of American voters may be subjected to State actions that will harm the franchise;

Whereas the month of September would be an appropriate month to commemorate a national focus on the impor-

tance of every citizen being registered and empowered to vote;

Whereas every voting eligible citizen should, during the month of September, register to vote, verify that their name, address, and other personal information matches what is on record at their State or local board of elections, confirm that they have everything in hand that is required on election day to vote, and confirm the polling place they will be voting at in November; and

Whereas States should abolish all restrictive forms of voter ID that disenfranchise vulnerable voting eligible citizens, comply with the National Voter Registration Act and protect the voting rights of public assistance and disability clients during an economic downturn; and stop misguided, discriminatory, and inaccurate purging programs that have the risk of purging eligible citizen voters: Now, therefore be it

1 *Resolved*, That there be designated a “National
2 Month of Voter Registration” to encourage every voting
3 age citizen to register to vote, confirm their voting infor-
4 mation is correct with their local board of elections, con-
5 firm they have everything in hand that is required on elec-
6 tion day to vote, and to confirm their polling place for
7 election day. The President is authorized and requested
8 to issue a proclamation for each of these months, calling
9 upon the people of the United States to observe those
10 months with appropriate programs, ceremonies, and ac-
11 tivities.

