

United States. The group's purpose is to preserve and celebrate the culture of Croatia.

Cleveland's Croatian community is among the most robust in North America. Croatians have played a pivotal role in developing the businesses and industries which helped make Cleveland great. Their presence provided additional diversity to our growing city and members of the Croatian community have made valuable contributions to the area's athletics, arts, and music. In 1949, Cleveland was the first city to bring traditional Croatian song and dance together with the founding of the American-Croatian Singing Association.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in recognition of the Cleveland Junior Tamburitzans, just one of the many bright spots of Cleveland's Croatian community.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL
DEBT

HON. MIKE COFFMAN

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, today our national debt is \$14,973,228,608,405.04.

On January 6, 2009, the start of the 111th Congress, the national debt was \$10,638,425,746,293.80.

This means the national debt has increased by \$4,334,802,862,111.24 since then. This debt and its interest payments we are passing to our children and all future Americans.

CYBERSECURITY AWARENESS
MONTH

HON. JAMES R. LANGEVIN

OF RHODE ISLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize October as the eighth annual National Cybersecurity Awareness Month. The National Cyber Security Alliance, the Multi-State Information Sharing and Analysis Center, the Department of Homeland Security, and other organizations developed the "STOP. THINK. CONNECT." national awareness campaign to educate our citizens and help them stay safer online. It is vital that the public is engaged and aware of how to properly utilize security software in order to protect their social security numbers, financial information, health information, and other personal data. We must all work together and take responsibility for securing our own networks and computers to ensure that government systems, personal data and even critical infrastructure remain safe from attack.

Recently, Deputy Secretary of Defense William Lynn noted to *Foreign Affairs* magazine that our Nation is shifting its priorities in cyberspace, recognizing that attacks online can be as threatening as bullets and bombs. Additionally, the importance of cyber to not just our national security, but also our economic competitiveness, cannot be overstated. The vulnerabilities our Nation faces in cyberspace come from potential attacks against critical infrastructure, as described by Lee Hamilton in

his post 9/11 report, as well as from damage to our military readiness, as Secretary of Defense Panetta testified earlier this year. But our vulnerabilities also include the intellectual property that is a critical driver of our economy.

Cyber threats to our intellectual property are growing more numerous, sophisticated, and successful. As noted by a recent report from the National Counter Intelligence Executive, vital intellectual property is targeted and stolen in cyberspace every day as these threats become more damaging and extensive. While the cost of a data breach can run well into the millions, even that loss is dwarfed by the long term damage to America's ability to remain the world leader in innovation, especially in our high tech and defense sectors.

All of this should tell us that the status quo is not good enough. We need to redouble our efforts and tap into our creative and innovative spirit to address not just the threats of today, but the challenges of tomorrow as well. This will require better education and action from both industry and government, as we come together to strengthen our public-private partnership. But if we fail to leverage our own abilities and work through these challenges, our personal privacy, national security and economic competitiveness will be irreparably harmed.

I applaud the Department of Homeland Security for sponsoring this month of outreach. As a Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of the House Cybersecurity Caucus, I will continue to fight to deliver the latest tools and training to support both our national security infrastructure and the personal data of all Americans.

VOTER SUPPRESSION IN AMERICA

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with my fellow colleagues to urge this Congress to protect our access to the ballot, which has come under assault in several states across America.

The strongest sound that exists in a democratic society is the one voiced during our elections. However, I am troubled that over 5 million Americans are at risk of having their votes suppressed by laws that have turned back the clock on significant freedoms and accessibility achieved in many states before the 2010 elections.

Today, I stand in strong opposition to legislative tools that aim to repress the most important right to civic engagement and empowerment, the right to vote.

The impact of recent voter suppression laws is spiraling out of control, as evidenced by recent current events. For example, a 96-year-old Tennessee woman was denied a voter ID under Tennessee's new law because she was unable to locate her marriage certificate—even though she produced everything from a copy of her lease, voter registration card, birth certificate and a rent receipt. After voting for over 70 years in all but two elections, this was the first time her right to vote was suppressed.

Even our Nation's soldiers and war heroes have been disenfranchised by some of these new laws. Recently, an 86-year-old World War

II veteran had to pay for a voter photo ID, even though the state law required that the IDs be given free of charge. Another 91-year-old woman was reportedly unable to receive her ID because she was physically unable to stand in long and crowded lines at the DMV with her cane.

Students at the University of Wisconsin-Madison serve as a microcosm of college populations that now face extreme hurdles as their once-accepted student ID cards no longer qualify as acceptable forms of ID in several states. And news of a Florida teacher being unable to register several of her students—an act she customarily does every year as part of her educational curriculum on civic engagement highlights the civil penalties third party registrants face as they merely attempt to assist others become part of the political process.

This suppression is affecting all classes, races, and ages, and we owe it to the general public to join in their public outrage against these attacks, which threaten to move America backwards to a period in our history that was ugly, discriminatory and crippling.

At the core of all fundamental rights is the right to vote. As voting rights experts have noted, the recent stream of laws passed at the state level are a reversal of policies—both federal and state—that were intended to combat voter disenfranchisement and boost voter participation. That is why I sent a letter to the Chairman of the Judiciary Committee this week, asking that hearings be held to ensure that our federal laws in place to protect access to voting are being enforced.

Ensuring that every veteran, senior citizen, student—whether natural born or naturalized—has the right to vote should not be a partisan issue. It should be the very purpose of this Congress since it is a priority to our democracy. I urge every elected official who is a beneficiary of our electoral system, to support the protection of every American citizen's right to have access to voting.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COM-
MITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,

Washington, DC, October 31, 2011.

Hon. LAMAR SMITH,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN SMITH: We write to request a hearing to address the wave of recent changes in state voting laws that make it more difficult for Americans to cast a ballot. A recent report released by the Brennan Center for Justice entitled "Voting Law Changes in 2012" has concluded that more than 5 million voters could be impacted by the recently enacted legislation. The provisions that present the most serious concerns include:

Provisions that limit voting by requiring the presentation of photo identification:

Laws that exclude the most common forms, of identification (e.g., student IDs and Social Security cards), yet offer no alternate identification procedures for eligible voters.

Changes requiring proof of citizenship as a condition for voter registration:

Limitations or outright elimination of early voting opportunities.

Barriers to first time voters such as the elimination of same day registration and limitations on voter mobilization efforts.

These changes in state voting laws raise serious constitutional concerns under both the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and the Fifteenth Amendment. For example, requiring citizens to expend significant funds to obtain a photo

ID to vote runs afoul of the prohibition on poll taxes set out by *Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections*. The Supreme Court in *Crawford v. Marion Co. Election Board* noted that elderly, persons born out of the state, persons with economic limitations, homeless people, and even people with religious objections to being photographed may be burdened by photo ID laws. We are also concerned that these prohibitions violate the spirit and the letter of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, the Help America Vote Act, and the National Voter Registration Act.

The Brennan Center Report found that these changes in state election regulations will have a particularly significant impact on minority voters. The report concluded that African American and Hispanic voters were more likely to take advantage of early voting opportunities and register to vote through the types of voter registration drives now curtailed or eliminated by the new laws.

Most critically, the Report noted that many of the new voter identification laws do not allow voters to present many forms of identification frequently used by minorities, the elderly, and the young. For example, the new Texas law allows for the use of a concealed carry gun permit to vote, but fails to recognize student IDs, Texas Veterans' Administration identification and even Congressional identification. Further, Texas citizens must also spend \$22 to obtain a birth certificate or up to \$145 to obtain a passport to present the documentation necessary to acquire a form of ID required to cast a ballot.

Numerous examples of the anti-democratic impact of these new laws have already come to our attention. A 96-year-old woman was denied a voter ID under Tennessee's new law even though she has voted in all but two elections over the last 70 years and produced a rent receipt, a copy of her lease, her voter registration card, and her birth certificate. Because her birth certificate had her maiden name, Dorothy Alexander, rather than her married name, officials demanded her marriage certificate which she did not have. Another 91-year-old woman in Tennessee was unable to receive her ID because she was physically unable to stand in the long and crowded lines at the DMV with her cane. Two days ago, we learned of an 80-year-old United States veteran and retired print shop worker who had to pay for a voter photo ID. A young voting age citizen seeking a free ID in Wisconsin was questioned by a Wisconsin DMV employee about how much money he had in his bank account and how much activity his bank account experienced. It has also been reported that in Wisconsin, the state's DMVs have been charging citizens improperly for an ID because employees were instructed not to clarify for citizens that the ID's were free.

Assertions that these broad restrictions are needed to counter pervasive voter fraud do not appear to be supported by the evidence. For example, studies have found that only 24 people were convicted of, or pled guilty to, illegal voting at the federal level between the two Presidential and Congressional elections leading up to the 2008 elections. Moreover, only 19 instances of ineligible voting were determined at the state level.

The right to vote is the foundation of all our other rights. In view of the gravity of this situation, we urge you to schedule hearings soon to address an issue so critical to our democracy. As voting rights experts have noted, the recent stream of laws passed at the state level are a reversal of policies—both federal and state—that were intended to combat voter disenfranchisement and boost voter participation. Ensuring the right

to vote should not be a partisan issue; rather it is the very linchpin of our democracy.

Sincerely,

JOHN CONYERS, JR.,
Ranking Member,
Committee on the Judiciary.

JERROLD NADLER,
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on the Constitution.

BRENNAN CENTER FOR JUSTICE, NEW YORK
UNIVERSITY SCHOOL LAW

OVERVIEW: VOTING LAW CHANGES IN 2012

A shift that could change the electoral landscape is underway—the tightening of restrictions on who can vote and how Americans can vote. Going into the 2012 elections, there will be millions of Americans who will find that since 2008, there are new barriers that could prevent them from voting.

SUMMARY

In the first three quarters of 2011, state governments across the country have suddenly enacted an array of new laws and policies making it harder to vote. Some states require voters to show government-issued photo identification, often of a type that as many as one in ten voters do not have. Other states have cut back on early voting, a hugely popular innovation used by millions of Americans. Two states reversed earlier reforms and once again disenfranchised millions who have past criminal convictions but who are now taxpaying members of the community. Still others made it much more difficult for citizens to register to vote, a prerequisite for voting.

These new restrictions fall most heavily on young, minority, and low-income voters, as well as on voters with disabilities. This wave of changes may sharply tilt the political terrain for the 2012 election. Already 19 new laws and two new executive actions are in place. At least 42 bills are still pending, and at least 68 more were introduced but failed. Already, it is clear that:

These new laws could make it significantly harder for more than five million eligible voters to cast ballots in 2012.

The states that have already cut back on voting rights will provide 171 electoral votes in 2012—63 percent of the 270 needed to win the presidency.

Of the 12 likely battleground states, as assessed by an August Los Angeles Times analysis of Gallup polling, five have already cut back on voting rights (and may pass additional restrictive legislation), and two more are currently considering new restrictions.

States have changed their laws so rapidly that no single analysis has assessed the overall impact. It is too early to exactly quantify how the changes will impact voter turnout, but we know they will be a hindrance to many voters at a time when the United States continues to turn out less than two thirds of its eligible citizens in presidential elections and less than half in midterm elections.

Read the full report, *Voting Law Changes in 2012*, by the Brennan Center's Wendy R. Weiser and Lawrence Norden.

MORE THAN 5 MILLION VOTERS IMPACTED?

We estimate more than 5 million voters could be affected by the new laws, based on six key numbers.

1. 3.2 million voters affected by new photo ID laws. New photo ID laws for voting will be in effect for the 2012 election in five states (Kansas, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Wisconsin), which have a combined citizen voting age population of just under 29 million. 3.2 million (11 percent) of those potential voters do not have state-issued photo ID. Rhode Island voters are excluded from this

count, because Rhode Island's new law's requirements are significantly less onerous than those in the other states.

2. 240,000 additional citizens and potential voters affected by new proof of citizenship laws. New proof of citizenship laws will be in effect in three states (Alabama, Kansas, Tennessee), two of which will also have new photo ID laws. Assuming conservatively that those without proof of citizenship overlap substantially with those without state-issued photo ID, we excluded those two states. The citizen voting age population in the remaining state (Alabama) is 3.43 million; 240,000 (7 percent) of those potential voters do not have documentary proof of citizenship.

3. 202,000 voters registered in 2008 through voter registration drives that have now been made extremely difficult or impossible under new laws. Two states (Florida and Texas) passed laws restricting voter registration drives, causing all or most of those drives to stop. In 2008, 2.13 million voters registered in Florida and, very conservatively, at least 8.24 percent or 176,000 of them did so through drives. At least 501,000 voters registered in Texas, and at least 5.13 percent or 26,000 of them did so via drives.

4. 60,000 voters registered in 2008 through Election Day voter registration where it has now been repealed. Maine abolished Election Day registration. In 2008, 60,000 Maine citizens registered and voted on Election Day.

5. One to two million voters who voted in 2008 on days eliminated under new laws rolling back early voting. The early voting period was cut by half or more in three states (Florida, Georgia and Ohio). In 2008, nearly 8 million Americans voted early in these states. An estimated 1 to 2 million voted on days eliminated by these new laws.

6. At least 100,000 disenfranchised citizens who might have regained voting rights by 2012. Two states (Florida and Iowa) made it substantially more difficult or impossible for people with past felony convictions to get their voting rights restored. Up to one million people in Florida could have benefited from the prior practice based on the rates of restoration in Florida under the prior policy, 100,000 citizens likely would have gotten their rights restored by 2012. Other voting restrictions passed this year that are not included in this estimate.

THE WAVE OF NEW LAWS

Photo ID laws. At least thirty-four states introduced legislation that would require voters to show photo identification in order to vote. Photo ID bills were signed into law in seven states: Alabama, Kansas, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Wisconsin. By contrast, before the 2011 legislative session, only two states had ever imposed strict photo ID requirements. The number of states with laws requiring voters to show government-issued photo identification has quadrupled in 2011. To put this into context, 11 percent of American citizens do not possess a government-issued photo ID; that is over 21 million citizens.

Proof of citizenship laws. At least twelve states introduced legislation that would require proof of citizenship, such as a birth certificate, to register or vote. Proof of citizenship laws passed in Alabama, Kansas, and Tennessee. Previously, only two states had passed proof of citizenship laws, and only one had put such a requirement in effect. The number of states with such a requirement has more than doubled.

Making voter registration harder. At least thirteen states introduced bills to end highly popular Election Day and same-day voter registration, limit voter registration mobilization efforts, and reduce other registration opportunities: Maine passed a law eliminating Election Day registration, and Ohio

ended its weeklong period of same-day voter registration. Florida, Illinois and Texas passed laws restricting voter registration drives, and Florida and Wisconsin passed laws making it more difficult for people who move to stay registered and vote.

Reducing early and absentee days. At least nine states introduced bills to reduce their early voting periods, and four tried to reduce absentee voting opportunities. Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Tennessee, and West Virginia succeeded in enacting bills reducing early voting.

Making it harder to restore voting rights. Two states—Florida and Iowa—reversed prior executive actions that made it easier for citizens with past felony convictions to restore their voting rights, affecting hundreds of thousands of voters. In effect, both states now permanently disenfranchise most citizens with past felony convictions.

IN HONOR OF MRS. GAI HOA RYAN

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Mrs. Gia Hoa Ryan as she celebrates her 40th anniversary since coming to America from Vietnam in 1971.

Born in Vietnam, Mrs. Ryan worked as a secretary and interpreter for the United States during the Vietnam War. She immigrated to the United States in 1971. Since immigrating, Mrs. Ryan has been an active community leader in the Greater Cleveland area. She is a teacher and lecturer of Asian culture, food, and society. She has been active with the Lorain International Festival, and hosted the 1995 Festival which honored Vietnam and the Vietnamese people. Mrs. Ryan also served as the coordinator for the Asian Community Project at Bridgeway from 1997 to 2003. This Project provided mental health care to hundreds of Asian, Vietnamese, Laotian, and Cambodian families.

Mrs. Ryan has truly been a leader to Cleveland's Asian community. She started the Asian Women's Support Group in early 1980s. In 1993, she created the Friendship Foundation of American Vietnamese. The organization has provided humanitarian services to the people of Vietnam by furnishing scholarships, building houses and schools, providing medical services, educational materials, food and clothing, and raising funds for the poor. She has also founded the Asian Community Mental Health Services as part of the West Side Community Health Center to provide mental health services for Asian families, senior citizens, and young people. Furthermore, in 2005, Mrs. Ryan established the Sai Gon Plaza. The Plaza serves as a community center in Northern Ohio for Asians, immigrants and various community groups. Mrs. Ryan has sponsored forty members of her family who have come from Vietnam and helped them establish homes and businesses.

Mrs. Ryan has also served on many community boards including the Lorain County Community Alcoholism Board, various boards in the Detroit-Shoreway area, and the Mayor's Community Relations Board of the City of Cleveland. Most importantly she has raised her two children, Lynda Mia Ryan Shea and Thomas Joseph Ryan.

Mr. Speaker and colleagues, please join me in honoring Mrs. Ryan as she celebrates her 40th anniversary since coming to America. Her advocacy work continues to improve countless lives both in Cleveland and Vietnam.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GUS M. BILIRAKIS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, November 3rd, I missed rollcall vote 823, for unavoidable reasons. Had I been present, I would have voted as follows:

Rollcall vote No. 823, "no" (Velázquez of New York Part A Amendment No. 4).

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LUIS V. GUTIERREZ

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. GUTIERREZ. Mr. Speaker, on November 1, 2011, I was unavoidably absent for votes in the House chamber. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcall votes 816 and 817.

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FERNDALE AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce in recognition of its 75th anniversary.

Beginning in 1934 as a small, localized Chamber, the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce has grown over the last 75 years to become one of the most innovative business organizations in Oakland County with nearly 300 members, ranging from sole proprietorships to the local offices of Fortune 500 companies.

Prior to the incorporation of the City of Ferndale, the first acknowledgement of a "Board of Commerce" was made in the minutes of a Village of Ferndale commission meeting in 1918. Comprised of local businessman, known as the Ferndale Boosters, the group worked to promote programs for the betterment of the business community.

On May 14, 1936 the "Ferndale Board of Commerce" was officially incorporated as a non-profit in the State of Michigan. The organization became the "Ferndale Chamber of Commerce" sometime between 1951 and 1965. In 2009, to reflect the growing geographic diversity of its membership, the Board of Directors of the Ferndale Chamber of Commerce voted to change the name to the "Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce." This name change became official in 2010 and is more reflective of the Chamber's current membership, which includes 40 percent non-Ferndale businesses, a large number coming from sur-

rounding communities such as the Oak Park and Pleasant Ridge.

As the Chamber notes, many of its goals and ambitions following its creation in 1936 after the Great Depression have been revived as the State of Michigan recovers from its deep recession. As a testament to the Chamber's ability to evolve and strengthen with time, they have partnered with a number of neighboring Chambers to form collaborative relationships that capitalize on the strengths of each Chamber. Today, as in 1936, they are a strong advocate for the betterment of the businesses, communities and residents they serve.

The Chamber's mission over the last 75 years has been simple: to support the interests of businesses and the community through dynamic member-driven partnerships and activities.

I have witnessed firsthand the success the Chamber has with accomplishing this goal. From morning coffee hours and after hour events for member networking, to educational workshops and large, community-wide events such as the Hilton Fall Festival, the Chamber remains a vital part of the community it serves. As we have all worked together to move Oakland County forward, the Chamber has been on the forefront working with multiple partners across the community toward common goals, such as rapid transit along the Woodward Avenue corridor.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the Ferndale Area Chamber of Commerce in recognition of its 75th anniversary and wishing them many more years of effective service to the Oakland County business community.

IN HONOR OF MR. CHUCK COLLIER

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, November 4, 2011

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor and memory of radio D.J. Chuck Collier, a man who entertained Cleveland's country music fans with tunes and colored commentary for decades.

Mr. Collier was born on May 6, 1946 in Greenfield and raised in New Vienna, Ohio. He attended New Kenton High School, where he was his class president. During his time at the University of Cincinnati, he began his career in radio with a job at WSRW in Hillsboro, Ohio in 1963. His graduation brought new opportunities, and he began working at WMWN in Wilmington, WONE in Dayton, WSAI in Cincinnati and WCBS in New York. The dedication it took to handle all of these jobs led to Mr. Collier landing a career at WGAR. For forty years Mr. Collier was WGAR's premiere radio personality for country music, adult contemporary music and AM programming. While WGAR has changed its programming over the years, Chuck kept listeners tuning in throughout the changes.

In 2005, the Ohio Radio-TV Broadcasters inducted Mr. Collier into their Hall of Fame. His fame over the radio brought him the National Association of Broadcasters' Marconi Award as Large Market Radio Personality of the Year in 2007. In 2009, an especially rewarding year for Mr. Collier, he was inducted into the Country Music Radio Hall of Fame.