JOHN R. LEWIS VOTING RIGHTS ADVANCEMENT ACT OF 2021

SPEECH OF

HON. KWEISI MFUME

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, August 24, 2021

Mr. MFUME. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of a measure on which I am a proud original cosponsor—H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021. Named for my friend and classmate from the 100th Congress, Congressman John Lewis, H.R. 4 honors America's promise to keep our democracy open to all—regardless of gender, income, race, color, or creed.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 are some of the most consequential acts of Congress passed in our lifetime. The Voting Rights Act was a needed countermeasure to the voter suppression efforts emanating across many states as a part of America's ''Jim Crow'' era.

The Voting Rights Act required preclearance of changes and adjustments made to voting laws by certain states and local jurisdiction—jurisdictions with long and demonstrated histories of discrimination. The jurisdictions captured by the preclearance designation are said to be subject to the ''coverage formula.''

In 2013, the Supreme Court struck down the ''coverage formula'' of the Voting Rights Act in many respects. The Court's rationale, with which I disagree, was the discrimination targeted by the original Voting Rights Act is outdated and is no longer relevant. It's a play on the notion of ''my ancestors discriminated against you, not me'' so there is no allowable remedy for that discrimination and its vestiges.

The John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act updates the coverage formula component of the Voting Rights Act, using data, testimony, and evidence captured by the House Committee on Administration through various hearings and briefings. Over the course of 13 hearings in two Congresses, including six just this year, the House Judiciary Committee built a substantial record demonstrating the continuing and current need for preclearance protections. Additionally, the House Administration Committee's Elections Subcommittee conducted numerous hearings and issued a report on ''Voting In America: Ensuring Free And Fair Access To The Ballot.''

The combined record shows that in the absence of a preclearance requirement, a number of states swiftly passed voter suppression laws, including many state and local jurisdictions that had previously been subject to preclearance before the 2013 Supreme Court decision. For example, within 24 hours of the ruling, Texas and North Carolina reinstated voter ID laws, which were later held to be intentionally racially discriminatory. These court rulings, however, came too late for many minority voters. In both states, their discriminatory laws were in effect for three years before being struck down, including during the 2014 midterm elections.

In short, without preclearance, these states were able to hold elections under discriminatory rules that banned minority citizens' ability to vote, and those citizens had no remedy for the harm they suffered. The onslaught of voter suppression targeting minority citizens has continued unabated.

Today, Americans face the worst voter suppression campaign in America since Jim Crow. State lawmakers have introduced over 400 voter suppression bills in 49 states this year alone. And at least 18 states enacted 30 laws that restrict access to the ballot, with likely many more on the way. These laws suppress the vote—they make mail voting and early voting more difficult, reduce availability at polling places, unleash a flurry of faulty voter purges, and exacerbate barriers at poll stations for Americans with disabilities, among other blatant suppression tactics.

Now, with H.R. 4, the House is restoring the preclearance protection with a new formula, which is ironclad constitutionally and which will make significant progress to restore the purpose of the Voting Right Act: ''banish the blight of racial discrimination in voting.''

As Members of Congress, our duty lies in upholding our democracy and serving the American people. Our nation provides the opportunity for its people to amplify their voices at the ballot box. The United States Constitution allows us to correct any underlying issue that poses a threat to this fundamental right.

I urge my colleagues to cast their vote in favor of this critical measure and to protect every citizen's vote from the wave of voter suppression laws flooding our Nation. Americans deserve nothing less than the ability to participate freely in our nation's political process.

INTRODUCTION OF THE WHITE HOUSE ACCOUNTABILITY FOR DIVERSITY ACT

HON. J. LUIS CORREA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 3, 2021

Mr. CORREA. Madam Speaker, this year's census result shows that the United States population is more ethnically diverse than before. There are many taxpayers whose first language is not English.

Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, and French are among the most spoken languages in the United States. People benefit tremendously from having different options to access their government and receive information that may impact their lives. This is why it is imperative that the White House and federal agencies continue to be accessible to all taxpayers.

Therefore, I am reintroducing the White House Accountability for Diversity Act. It is vital for all Americans to be able to follow issues that affect their lives. This legislation will allow for content to be translated into Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, Vietnamese, French, and any other language deemed necessary by the Office of Management and Budget. This will ensure that all taxpayers have the option of accessing up-to-date information in their preferred language.

HONORING MR. ARMAND GARCIA

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 3, 2021

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor Brother Armand Garcia in celebration of his 90th birthday on Sunday, August 29.

The 11th child of Ramon and Soledad Garcia, Brother Armand was born and raised in East Los Angeles. After graduating from Los Angeles College High School, he entered the Christian Brothers Novitiate at Mont La Salle, where he strengthened his deep relationship with God. He graduated in 1957 with his bachelor's in education from St. Mary's College and went on to teach at Sacred Heart High School in San Francisco. He then spent three years as the Director at the St. Joseph Boys Boarding School, and in 1964, he was sent to the Philippines to work at Bacolod High School.

After obtaining his master's in linguistics from the University of Madrid in 1968, Brother Armand became the principal at La Salle High School in Bacolod, Philippines, where he continued to selflessly serve communities in need. He was later honored as The Adopted Son of Bacolod Occidental after being assigned to serve at De La Salle University and the East Asian Pastoral Institute in Manila. In 1977 Brother Armand was sent to Tijuana, Mexico, where he created a successful volunteer-based school as well as the Centro La Salle Tijuana BC Foundation. This foundation grew into the Instituto Miguel-Hidalgo, Inc. Today, the foundation educates thousands of students in Tijuana, emulating the best of Christian Brothers' educational achievements.

It is evident that Brother Armand has been an incredible teacher, mentor, and leader throughout his life of service. He was both a board member and honoree of the Napa Peace Table and the founder of the Instituto Latino De Adultos Foundation, which helps Napa Latinos succeed in their careers. He is described as a master teacher, innovator, community leader, and compassionate spiritual guide in every community he has lived and worked in. Brother Armand is turning 90 years old on Sunday, August 29th. He will be celebrating his birthday surrounded by family and friends at Mont La Salle in Napa.

Madam Speaker, there is no doubt Brother Armand Garcia is truly a model citizen and an exemplary civil servant. Therefore, it is fitting and proper that we honor him here today.

TRIBUTE IN MEMORY OF WAYLAND ROGERS

HON. HAROLD ROGERS

OF KENTUCKY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 3, 2021

Mr. ROGERS of Kentucky. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to my brother, Wayland Douglas Rogers, as we approach the first anniversary of his passing on September 9, 2020.

Wayland was a special addendum from Santa, making his familial debut on December 26, 1941. We had a wonderful childhood, growing up in rural Wayne County, Kentucky. Music was always important to my family, but it was apparent early on that Wayland was gifted in that aspect. While we knew he was extremely talented, as we watched him lead the Wayne County High School marching band as drum major, we never dreamed he'd one day be nominated for a Grammy award.

Wayland went on to study music at the University of Kentucky, Wichita State University,

Northwestern University and the Mozarteum in Salzburg, Austria. He served as artistic director/conductor of The Camerata Singers of Lake Forest, Illinois, and music director at North Shore Unitarian Church in Deerfield, Illinois. He held faculty appointments at Northwestern University, DePaul University, Loyola University/Chicago, and Western Kentucky University, among other schools.

Wayland's compositions garnered accolades from The Leeds University Liturgical Choir Competition, The Roger Wagner Center Choral Competition, Meistersingers Choral Competition, The Chautauqua Chamber Singers Award, The Illinois American Choral Directors Association Choral Composition Competition, The Vincent B. Silliman Anthem Award and the Thornesian Prize from Chichester, England. In 1986 his recording of Mozart with the Chicago Symphony Winds received a Grammy nomination for best chamber music, losing to Yo-Yo Ma.

Wayland's voice was a gift to his family. Although he never had children of his own, he made a point of staying close with his nieces and nephews, and they adored him. His rich baritone voice graced many a family wedding and funeral.

Wayland didn't limit his magnificent voice to song. He was of the strong conviction that all people are created equal, and he used his voice to speak out against societal inequalities and injustices.

His greatest legacy, though, will be the talented musicians whose careers he helped shape and will continue to help shape long after he's gone. He loved to nurture talent, and throughout his career, Wayland offered guidance, motivation, and support to many young artists. With that goal in mind, before his death Wayland endowed a scholarship with the University of Kentucky's School of Music. I and the rest of his family look forward to following the careers of the recipients of the Wayland Rogers Scholarship for Excellence in the Performance of Art Song.

Through his music and the University of Kentucky School of Music scholarship that bears his name, Wayland's voice will continue for generations. But for his family and friends, his compassion, zest for life, and love of everything beautiful will sing in our hearts forever. Rest in peace, dear brother.

RECOGNIZING CONSTITUTION WEEK

HON. TOM RICE

OF SOUTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, September 3, 2021

Mr. RICE of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Constitution Week and the Theodosia Burr Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina.

It is a privilege and duty of the American people to commemorate the two hundred thirty-fourth anniversary of the drafting of the Constitution of the United States of America by the Constitutional Convention. As citizens of this great nation, we must reaffirm the ideals the Framers of the Constitution had in 1787.

Public Law 915 guarantees the issuing of a proclamation each year by the President of the Unites States of America designating September 17 through 23 as Constitution Week. It is fitting and proper to officially recognize this magnificent document and the anniversary of its creation.

Madam Speaker, I join the Theodosia Burr Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution and the American people in recognizing September 17 through September 23, 2021 as Constitution Week and honor the Framers for their contributions.