

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Introduces John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and her colleagues, led by Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT), introduced the bipartisan *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act*, which as a reintroduction of the *Voting Rights Advancement Act* would restore the landmark *Voting Rights Act* and help preserve the legacy of John Lewis – one of America’s civil rights heroes.

“John Lewis showed us the best of the human spirit, as he worked with hope in his heart to change America and bring liberty and justice for all. It’s now up to all of us to carry on John’s spirit and continue his important work, including protecting and expanding the right to vote,” **said Senator Baldwin**. “After the *Voting Rights Act* was signed into law more than 50 years ago, we’re still seeing ongoing efforts to make it harder for Americans to vote. I am proud to join with my colleagues in the Senate to do right by John Lewis and work together to end voting discrimination so we can guarantee that all Americans have equal access to the polls.”

Calling on Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-KY) to allow a vote on this vital bipartisan legislation, Senator Leahy said: “John called voting ‘the most powerful nonviolent tool we have to create a more perfect union.’ He was right. And that’s why we cannot stand idly by while states engage in flagrant suppression schemes to take this tool away from marginalized communities. The House already passed the companion to the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* in December. Now we must do our part. We cannot claim to honor the life of John Lewis if we refuse to carry on his life’s work.”

In 2013, the Supreme Court’s *Shelby County v. Holder* decision gutted critical voter

protections within the *Voting Rights Act*, crippling the federal government's ability to prevent discriminatory changes to state voting laws and procedures. In the wake of Shelby County, states across the country unleashed a torrent of voter suppression schemes that have systematically disenfranchised minority voters. These patently discriminatory efforts to restrict access to the ballot box undermine the progress and equality that John Lewis fought hard over the decades to achieve, from his time as a civil rights movement leader to his tenure in Congress. The *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* would restore and modernize the *Voting Rights Act*, as well as provide the federal government with other critical tools to combat what has become a full-fledged assault on Americans' right to vote.

In addition to Baldwin and Leahy, the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* is cosponsored by Senators Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Doug Jones (D-AL), Chuck Schumer (D-NY), Lisa Murkowski (R-AK), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Chris Coons (D-DE), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Bob Casey (D-PA), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Jack Reed (D-RI), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Tina Smith (D-MN), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Ed Markey (D-MA), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Patty Murray (D-WA), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), Ron Wyden (D-OR), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Angus King (I-ME), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Mark Warner (D-VA), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Tom Carper (D-DE), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Bob Menendez (D-NJ), Tom Udall (D-NM), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Jon Tester (D-MT), Gary Peters (D-MI), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), and Joe Manchin (D-WV).

The full text of the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* can be found [here](#).

A summary of the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* can be found [here](#).

An online version of this release is available [here](#).