

U.S. Sen. Baldwin: Joins introduction of John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act

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Washington, D.C. — U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) joined the introduction of legislation to restore the landmark *Voting Rights Act* (VRA) and stop the spreading scourge of voter suppression. The legislation – *the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* – is named after an icon of the Civil Rights movement, the late Congressman John Lewis, and reflects an update to legislation introduced in the last Congress.

In the wake of the Supreme Court's damaging *Shelby County* decision in 2013 – which crippled the federal government's ability under the 1965 Voting Rights Act to prevent discriminatory changes to voting laws and procedures – states across the country have unleashed a torrent of voter suppression schemes that have systematically disenfranchised tens of thousands of American voters. The Supreme Court's more recent *Brnovich* decision earlier this year delivered yet another blow to the VRA, by making it significantly harder for plaintiffs to win lawsuits under the landmark law against discriminatory voting laws or procedures.

“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 the right to vote,” **said Senator Baldwin.** “This summer we celebrated the 56th anniversary of the *Voting Rights Act of 1965*. That historic step forward for our country is reminder that Congress does indeed have a role and responsibility at the federal level to stop voter suppression efforts and remove barriers to the constitutionally protected right to vote. Voting rights are the foundation of our democracy and our democracy works best when all our voices can be heard. That is

why I will keep working to pass the *John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act* and the *Freedom to Vote Act* so that we strengthen our democracy and put power in the hands of the people.”

The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act is endorsed by the following leading civil rights organizations: Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund (MALDEF), Asian Americans Advancing Justice (AAJC), the Brennan Center for Justice, and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

U.S Senator Patrick Leahy (D-VT) lead 48 Senate cosponsors on this legislation including Senator Baldwin, Majority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY), and Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Raphael Warnock (D-GA), Jon Ossoff (D-GA), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Cory Booker (D-NJ), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Maria Cantwell (D-WA), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Tom Carper (D-DE), Bob Casey (D-PA), Chris Coons (D-DE), Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Martin Heinrich (D-NM), John Hickenlooper (D-CO), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Tim Kaine (D-VA), Mark Kelly (D-AZ), Angus King (I-ME), Amy Klobuchar (D-MN), Ben Ray Luján (D-NM), Ed Markey (D-MA), Robert Menendez (D-NJ), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Chris Murphy (D-CT), Patty Murray (D-WA), Alex Padilla (D-CA), Gary Peters (D-MI), Jack Reed (D-RI), Jacky Rosen (D-NV), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Brian Schatz (D-HI), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ), Tina Smith (D-MN), Debbie Stabenow (D-MI), Jon Tester (D-MT), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Mark Warner (D-VA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

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

A section-by-section analysis of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act can be found [here](#).

An online version of this release can be found [here](#).