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LDF Issues Statement on Department of Justice Suit Against Texas for Discriminatory District Maps

Today, the United States Department of Justice (DOJ) filed suit against the State of Texas, alleging that new congressional and state-level legislative districts passed by the Texas Legislature engaged in unlawful discrimination. “In enacting its 2021 Congressional and House plans,” the DOJ suit holds, “[Texas] has again diluted the voting strength of minority Texans.” Moreover, the suit alleges, the process through which Texas devised the new districts was “extraordinarily rapid and opaque.”

In response, Sherrilyn Ifill, President and Director-Counsel of the [NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.](#) (LDF), issued the following statement:

“We are encouraged to see the Department of Justice once again stepping up to protect the voting and civil rights of all Americans. As LDF has argued repeatedly, the 2021 redistricting cycle is [a pivotal moment for the future of multiracial democracy in America](#), but time to stop the worst offenses to the principle of equality and civil rights is running out, as the 2022 primary elections begin in March.

“As the DOJ’s lawsuit establishes, this is far from the first time that lawmakers in Texas have shown themselves more interested in maintaining their power, and white supremacy, than in preserving democracy. And these redistricting abuses are not limited to state and congressional legislative maps. [In multiple letters](#) to the Waller County, Texas, Commissioners Court, LDF urged policymakers to adopt alternative maps that were fair, equitable, and did not run afoul of the Constitution. Officials in Waller County rejected our calls to protect the rights of Black voters and other voters of color.

“We encourage the DOJ to continue to take a broad and expansive view of redistricting in state and local jurisdictions throughout the country.

“Finally, we would be remiss if we did not note that unchecked redistricting abuse is flourishing in large measure because of the Supreme Court’s disastrous ruling in 2013’s *Shelby County v. Holder*, which gutted the DOJ’s ability to request ‘preclearance’ of proposed district changes from states and locales with a documented history of discrimination. The best and most enduring solution to this

problem would be for Congress to finally pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the Freedom to Vote Act — essential voting rights legislation urgently needed to preserve democracy in the United States.”

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Founded in 1940, the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc. (LDF) is the nation's first civil and human rights law organization. LDF has been completely separate from the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) since 1957—although LDF was originally founded by the NAACP and shares its commitment to equal rights. LDF's Thurgood Marshall Institute is a multi-disciplinary and collaborative hub within LDF that launches targeted campaigns and undertakes innovative research to shape the civil rights narrative. In media attributions, please refer to us as the NAACP Legal Defense Fund or LDF. Follow LDF on [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), and [Facebook](#).