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**LDF Issues Statement on Senate Introduction of the
John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**

Today, the United States Senate introduced the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA), a major piece of legislation aimed at protecting our democracy and the voting rights of all Americans.

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

“We welcome today’s Senate introduction of the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act — a vital and urgently-needed piece of legislation that rightfully bears the name of one of this country’s civil rights heroes and indefatigable voting rights activists.

“The full restoration of the Voting Rights Act is crucial to ensure that every eligible voter has equal access to the ballot box and has their vote counted. It is beyond time for Congress to uphold its constitutional duty to safeguard voting rights and protect against voter suppression — and today’s introduction of the VRAA is an important first step toward fulfilling this fundamental obligation.

“Among other urgently needed provisions, the VRAA establishes a new geographic preclearance framework that requires jurisdictions with a recent history of racial discrimination in voting to submit proposed changes in voting for federal review and approval *before* they are implemented, requires federal review of specific voting practices known to be used to discriminate against voters of color, restores voters’ ability to challenge racial discrimination in court, and mandates greater nationwide transparency of voting law and policy changes.

“We are at a critical juncture in this democracy — one in which the voting rights of Black people and other members of historically marginalized communities are again being chipped away. These attacks, which were amplified after two Supreme Court decisions significantly weakened the Voting Rights Act, have now further metastasized in the form of suppressive state legislation that frequently targets voters of color — a direct response to historic Black voter turnout in the 2020 election. This trajectory will undoubtedly continue if federal voting rights protections are not restored and expanded.

“LDF will continue working with our civil rights partners and congressional offices to ensure that this important legislation sufficiently meets the threats posed by today’s voter suppression tactics. We applaud the Senate for taking this critical step toward protecting Americans’ right to vote freely and unencumbered by racial discrimination — and we look forward to supporting the advancement and ultimate passage of the VRAA.”

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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](#).