

House Resolution 210

By: Representatives Scott of the 76th, Beverly of the 143rd, Smyre of the 135th, Mitchell of the 88th, Williams of the 168th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Urging Congress to enact the John Lewis Civil Rights Voting Act; and for other purposes.

2 WHEREAS, the history of the United States has been tarnished by discriminatory policies
3 that suppress minority voting rights and threaten the foundation of our democracy; and

4 WHEREAS, on March 7, 1965, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and John Lewis led a
5 peaceful march against voting inequality and were met with extreme violence, prompting a
6 public outcry that inspired Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act later that year; the
7 bipartisan legislation allowed direct federal oversight and protections of election processes
8 to prevent states from suppressing minority voters; and

9 WHEREAS, in 2013, a landmark Supreme Court decision weakened the Voting Rights Act
10 of 1965 by ending the preclearance process, which required jurisdictions with a history of
11 voting discrimination to submit changes to voting policies for federal approval before
12 implementing them; this limited the federal government's ability to deter voter suppression,
13 and North Carolina and Texas immediately passed voting changes that were previously
14 rejected for preclearance, which remained during several elections before federal courts later
15 determined that they were discriminatory; and

16 WHEREAS, United States Representatives Terri Sewell and John Lewis coauthored the
17 Voting Rights Advancement Act, which was renamed in honor of Congressman Lewis after
18 his passing; this bill would restore the protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 while
19 updating the coverage criteria to reflect current conditions and apply to all states; and

20 WHEREAS, the bill focuses the preclearance process on a set of discriminatory measures,
21 requires reasonable public notice for voting changes, and allows the attorney general to
22 request the presence of federal observers in places at risk of racial discrimination in voting;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, Congressman John Lewis dedicated his life to protecting Americans' right to
25 vote, and Congress should pass his legislation to prevent voter suppression and uphold our
26 nation's core value of equality.

27 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
28 the members of this body urge Congress to enact the John Lewis Civil Rights Voting Act.

29 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
30 and directed to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the
31 President of the United States, the Vice President of the United States, the Speaker of the
32 United States House of Representatives, and all members of the Georgia delegation to
33 Congress.