

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

July 27, 2020

The Honorable Lindsey O. Graham
Chairman
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Graham:

We write to request that you expeditiously schedule a hearing and a markup on the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act (S. 4263), which we introduced last week with the bipartisan support of 48 Senators, including all Democratic members of this committee.

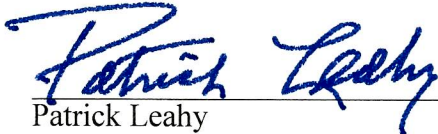
As you observed at last week's committee markup, the late, great Representative John Lewis "risked his life to make America a better place," including by fighting for genuine voting equality for all Americans. The single most important thing we can do to honor his legacy is to carry it forward – by advancing this bipartisan legislation that would restore the same voter protections Congressman Lewis risked his life to secure as part of the landmark Voting Rights Act of 1965.

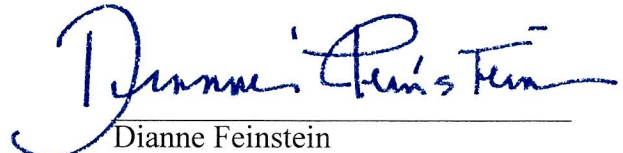
The need for this legislation could not be more urgent. After the 2013 *Shelby County v. Holder* decision gutted critical protections of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, states across the country have enacted a wide range of laws seriously restricting access to the ballot box with little to no federal oversight. These laws – some of which judges have struck down as blatantly unconstitutional – have systematically, and at times deliberately, disenfranchised minorities, the elderly, those with disabilities, the poor, and college students. Compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which threatens to even further restrict Americans' ability to cast their ballots, the progress and equality John Lewis fought so valiantly to achieve are at great risk.

The Senate Judiciary Committee must not stand idly by while the precious constitutional rights of so many Americans hang in the balance. The John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act would go far in restoring the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and curtailing some of the worst forms of voter suppression. We urge you to promptly hold a hearing and a markup to discuss, debate, and hopefully move this vital legislation out of committee.


The U.S. House of Representatives has already done its part by passing this legislation this past December. Now the Senate must do its job, and that begins here in the storied Senate Judiciary Committee. We cannot claim to honor the life of John Lewis if we refuse to carry on his life's work.

Sincerely,

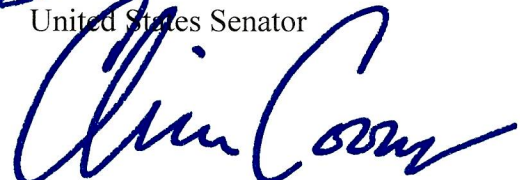

Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator


Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator

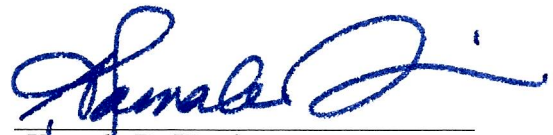

Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator


Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator


Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator


Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator


Cory A. Booker
United States Senator


Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator