

Excluded From Democracy: The Impact of Recent State Voting Law Changes

**2 PM Monday, November 14th
2226 Rayburn House Office**

Confirmed Member Participants: Judiciary Committee Ranking Member John Conyers, Jr., Democratic Whip Steny Hoyer, Committee on House Administration Ranking Member Robert Brady, Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution Ranking Member Jerrold Nadler, Congressman Keith Ellison, Congressman Steve Cohen, Congresswoman Sheila Jackson Lee and Congressman Hank Johnson

Dear Colleague:

We would like to invite all Members to participate in (and staff to attend) a voting forum we are sponsoring titled "Excluded From Democracy: The Impact of Recent State Voting Law Changes," on **Monday, November 14, 2011 at 2:00 pm in the Rayburn House Office Building Room 2226**. The forum will explore the wave of recent changes in state voting laws that impairs the ability of millions of Americans to vote. According to a recent report by the Brennan Center for Justice, entitled, "Voting Law Changes in 2012," more than 5 million Americans could lose the ability to vote as a result of these recently enacted state laws, including:

- Provisions that limit voting by requiring the presentation of photo identification.
- Laws that exclude the most common forms of identification (e.g., student IDs and Social Security cards), yet offer no alternate identification procedures for eligible voters.
- Changes requiring proof of citizenship as a condition for voter registration.
- Limitations or outright elimination of early voting opportunities.
- Barriers to first time voters, such as the elimination of same day registration and limitations on voter mobilization efforts.

Participants in Monday's forum will include:

Ben Jealous, President and CEO, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP is this nation's foremost civil rights group and is dedicated to ensuring a society in which all individuals have equal rights without discrimination based on race. For over a century, the NAACP has been at the forefront of civil rights issues and continues to advocate for voting right protections and equal access to the ballot box.

Lee and Phyllis Campbell, Smyrna, Tennessee. Under Tennessee's new voter laws, all registered voters may apply for a free voter ID if they lack other valid forms of photo identification. But when the Campbells applied for free IDs at their local DMV they were initially charged. Though cognizant of their rights under the new law, the

Campbells' still had to wrangle with DMV staff for hours until they were finally furnished their free voter IDs.

Elisabeth MacNamara, President, League of Women Voters. The League of Women Voters is a non-partisan civil society groups that over the course of its history has registered thousands of voters. However in Florida, the League of Women Voters suspended new voter registration drives for fear of running afoul of the state's new laws restricting such activities.

Lawrence Norden, Brennan Center for Justice, co-author of the report "Voting Law Changes in 2012". The Brennan Center for Justice is a non-partisan public policy and law institute that focuses on fundamental issues of democracy and justice. Recently, the Center issued a highly cited report that concluded that as many as 5 million voters may be disenfranchised under the new voting laws enacted by states across the country.

Laura Murphy, Director, American Civil Liberties Union Washington Legislative Office. The ACLU works daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties guaranteed by law, including voting rights. The ACLU has litigated voting rights cases across the country and their staff is familiar with the legal and constitutional issues presented by the new changes to state voting laws.

Barbara R. Arnwine, Executive Director, Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. The Lawyers Committee is a nonpartisan, non-profit organization formed to involve the private bar in providing legal services to address racial discrimination. Through its work, the Lawyers Committee is familiar with the potential hurdles created by the new state voting laws and the historic challenges minority communities have faced in order to participate in our democracy.

Matthew Segal, co-founder and President of OUR TIME and former Executive Director of Student Association for Voter Empowerment (SAVE). Our Time is a national non-profit network focused on advancing the rights and opportunities of young Americans. Our Time advocates on behalf of students who may face additional challenges to voting under recent changes in state laws. For example, under Texas' new voter ID requirements, a conceal and carry permit is considered a valid form of voter identification but a student ID furnished by a university is not.

Members are encouraged to participate and staff are welcome to attend the forum to learn about the impact of these new voting laws. If you have questions or would like to RSVP, please contact Michelle Millben in the House Judiciary Committee's Democratic staff, at x5-6906 or e-mail at Michelle.Millben@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

/s/

John Conyers, Jr.
Ranking Member
Committee on the Judiciary

/s/

Steny H. Hoyer
Democratic Whip

/s/

Robert A. Brady
Ranking Member
Committee on House Administration

/s/

Jerrold Nadler
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on the Constitution

/s/

Robert C. "Bobby" Scott
Member of Congress

/s/

Melvin L. Watt
Member of Congress

/s/

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress

/s/

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

/s/

Steve Cohen
Member of Congress

/s/

Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress

/s/

Pedro R. Pierluisi
Member of Congress

/s/

Judy Chu

Member of Congress

/s/

Keith Ellison

Member of Congress

/s/

Rush D. Holt

Member of Congress

/s/

Charles A. Gonzalez

Member of Congress

/s/

John Lewis

Member of Congress

/s/

Emanuel Cleaver

Member of Congress

/s/

Marcia L. Fudge

Member of Congress

/s/

Michael M. Honda

Member of Congress