
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 526 Session of
2005

INTRODUCED BY SHAPIRO, KILLION, CLYMER, JOSEPHS, DeWEESE,
LEDERER, READSHAW, BEBKO-JONES, RAMALEY, BISHOP, CAPPELLI,
CRAHALLA, REICHLEY, LEH, BUXTON, MARKOSEK, PISTELLA, BELARDI,
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THOMAS, HERSHEY, BOYD, FRANKEL, MUNDY, BLACKWELL, CREIGHTON,
KOTIK, WHEATLEY, FREEMAN, E. Z. TAYLOR, FABRIZIO, COHEN,
B. SMITH, BARRAR, WANSACZ, JAMES, SAINATO, DENLINGER,
SIPTROTH AND PETRONE, NOVEMBER 22, 2005

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, NOVEMBER 22, 2005

A RESOLUTION

1 Memorializing the President and Congress of the United States to
2 reauthorize certain provisions of the Voting Rights Act of
3 1965.

4 WHEREAS, President Lyndon Baines Johnson signed the Voting
5 Rights Act of 1965 (VRA) on August 6, 1965; and

6 WHEREAS, This year marks the 40th anniversary of the VRA; and

7 WHEREAS, The Congress passed the VRA in response to the
8 tragic events of March 7, 1965, when more than 500 peaceful
9 civil rights demonstrators in Selma, Alabama, were tear-gassed
10 and beaten with billy clubs by Alabama state troopers; and

11 WHEREAS, Prior to enactment of the VRA, black voter
12 registration was dramatically lower than white voter
13 registration in every southern state; and

1 WHEREAS, Today there is much greater participation by all
2 minority groups in Federal and state elections as a result of
3 VRA provisions banning literacy tests and other discriminatory
4 measures; and

5 WHEREAS, The VRA provides language minority provisions which
6 have resulted in dramatic increases in voter participation
7 nationwide; and

8 WHEREAS, The Congress has voted to reauthorize key VRA
9 provisions on four separate occasions since 1970; and

10 WHEREAS, Presidents Nixon, Ford, Reagan and George H. W. Bush
11 each signed legislation renewing VRA provisions; and

12 WHEREAS, United States Attorney General Alberto Gonzales has
13 described the VRA as one of the most successful pieces of civil
14 rights legislation ever enacted; and

15 WHEREAS, Several key VRA provisions are set to expire in
16 2007; and

17 WHEREAS, The VRA provisions which expire in 2007 remain
18 critical tools for ensuring that discriminatory practices do not
19 reappear and that the right to vote is vigilantly protected; and

20 WHEREAS, There is strong bipartisan support for
21 reauthorization of the VRA provisions set to expire in 2007; and

22 WHEREAS, The values and traditions of our democracy will be
23 enhanced through swift and certain reauthorization of those
24 provisions; and

25 WHEREAS, The people of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and
26 all Americans want our elections to provide an equal opportunity
27 for full participation in our great democratic process;
28 therefore be it

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
30 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania memorialize the President and

1 Congress of the United States to reauthorize the VRA provisions
2 which are set to expire in 2007; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to
4 the President of the United States, to the presiding officers of
5 each house of Congress and to each member of Congress from
6 Pennsylvania.