



Ecumenical Advocacy Days

Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act Leave Behind

We urge Congress to strengthen the voices of all people of the United States in our democracy. Every human has the God-given right to self-determination. To protect civil and human rights for all United States citizens, our nation must eliminate barriers to meaningful political engagement, especially barriers that disproportionately affect Black and brown citizens. Implementing vital democratic reforms necessary to a fully functioning and healthy democracy will help ensure justice for all and advance the common good.

Therefore, we call on the Senate to pass the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act (H.R. 5746).

The Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act (FTVA) addresses voter registration and voting access, election integrity and security, redistricting, campaign finance, and voting rights. This bill expands voter registration, establishes Election Day as a federal holiday, and limits removing voters from the voter rolls. It also includes provisions related to election security and sets criteria for congressional redistricting. It restores the preclearance section of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 by setting new criteria for political subdivisions to address voter suppression. Furthermore, it includes provisions related to federally protected activities at polling places and voting access on tribal lands.^[1]

The FTVA is a vital piece of legislation that would expand and ensure access to the sacred and unalienable right to vote. As people of faith, we believe all citizens have the right to participate in their democracy. A nation cannot call itself a democracy when millions of its citizens are unable to participate in it. We must acknowledge the historic barriers to voting that Black, indigenous, and people of color have faced and continue to face. This is a failure of our democracy that must be amended.

The Senate can help remove these barriers by passing the Freedom to Vote: John R. Lewis Act.

^[1] <https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/5746>