



December 6, 2019

Dear Representatives:

On behalf of our over 4 million members and supporters, I write to express our support of the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019, HR 4 and ask that you vote for the bill as it moves to the House floor this week.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965, one of the country's most significant pieces of civil rights legislation, has come under attack in recent years. HR 4 will repair and rebuild this crucial bill, helping ensure that voter registration and voting access is readily available to Americans across the nation.

Adding barriers to voting threatens our democracy, along with our ability to address pressing issues like the climate crisis--an issue that we know disproportionately affects communities of color. These same communities have been harmed the most by the recent dilution of the Voting Rights Act. In 2013, the Supreme Court, in the misguided *Shelby* decision, stripped the Voting Rights Act of its ability to review and preclear voting changes, before they are implemented, in states and localities with a history of voter discrimination.

Since that decision, there has been a startling rise in discriminatory voter laws, ranging from cuts to early voting to restrictive voter identification requirements. In 2016 alone, 14 states passed new restrictive voter laws for the first time in their respective histories.¹ Almost half of these states would have previously been liable for review under the Voting Rights Act *before* their proposals went into effect.²

HR 4 would fight back against this new wave of restrictive voter laws by restoring preclearance coverage for states, localities, and political subdivisions with a history of voter discrimination and would increase transparency and public awareness for the late changes to voting and polling practices that are designed to confuse and deter American voters.

Throughout Sierra Club's history that spans over one hundred years, we have depended on our communities having an equal say in protecting our public lands, wildlife, water, and airways. We remain energized and committed to ensuring that no individual is deprived of their ability to impact the pivotal issues of our time by electing decision-makers that put their interests in front of polluting interests.

For all of the above reasons, I ask that you vote yes to the Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2019, HR 4.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Michael Brune". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael Brune
Executive Director

¹*Brennan Center for Justice. New Voting Restrictions in America. <https://www.brennancenter.org/new-voting-restrictions-america>*

²*The United State Department of Justice. Jurisdictions Previously Covered by Section 5. <https://www.justice.gov/crt/jurisdictions-previously-covered-section-5>*