

LWVUS ADVOCACY AND LITIGATION PRESENTS

September 15th, 2021

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act Deep Dive

A deep dive into key legislation to restore the Voting Rights Act



Credit: Action Network

Agenda

Join us for an
advocacy adventure!

- Housekeeping, community norms
- History of the Voting Rights Act
- Supreme Court Cases
- State of Play/ History of VRAA
- Review of JLVRAA
- Compare two VRAA's
- Compare Democracy Bills
- Questions

Housekeeping

- If you are not speaking, please mute yourself to minimize sound issues.
- Make sure you identify yourself (name, your Local League, & pronouns) when asking questions
- **We will be monitoring the chat box.** If you have any questions or thoughts throughout the call, please feel free to drop them in the chat box.

Community Norms



Bring your full self and limit distractions



Use the chat box to add thoughts, experiences, and/or questions



What is learned here, leaves here



No one knows everything, together we know a lot



Don't yuck my yum



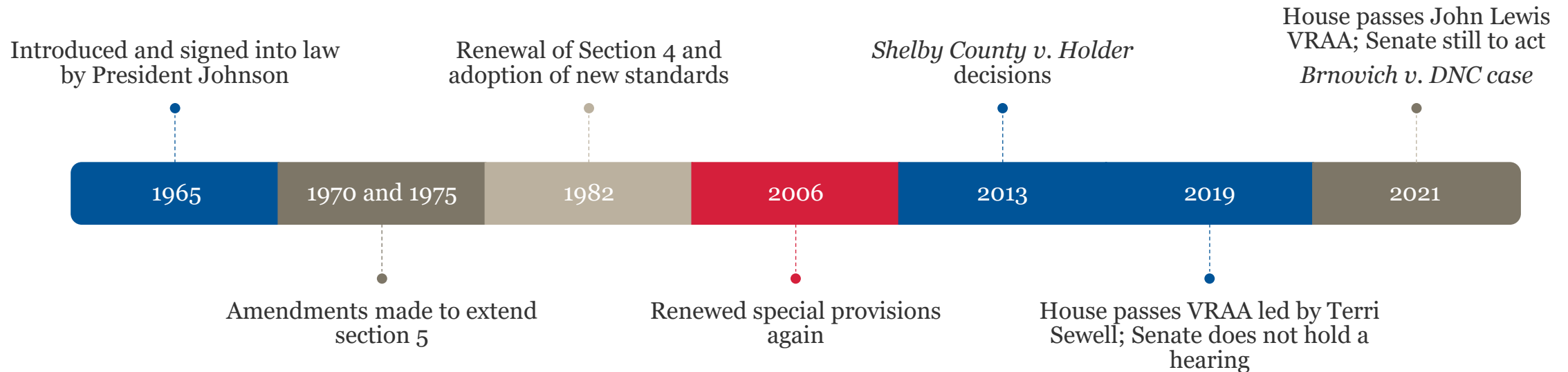
Oops, ouch, and educate



Assume best intentions

POLL!!!

A quick history of the VRA



Shelby County v Holder

States Covered by Section 5 at the time of the Shelby County Decision

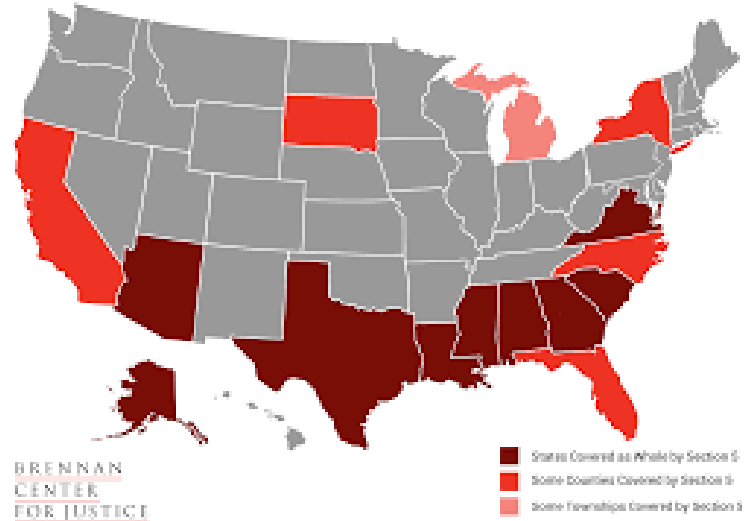


Image from Brennan Center for Justice

- Case involved a challenge to Section 4(b)'s coverage formula and Section 5 preclearance enforcement of the VRA
- The Court held that the coverage formula was unconstitutional and could no longer be used to put states and jurisdictions under preclearance
- The Court put it on Congress to develop a new updated formula that was based on current data and practices.
- The VRAA would implement a new coverage formula

Brnovich v DNC



Image from William & Mary University

- Case challenging two Arizona laws that involving an out of precinct voting policy and ban on ballot collection by third parties as racially discriminatory policies under Section 2 of the VRA
- The Court upheld both Arizona laws
- The holding established new factors to be considered in Section 2 cases
- Under the new VRAA, Section 2 would reestablish the right to bring a lawsuit challenging the discriminatory intent or results of an election law.

State of Play



Credit: VOX

First Introduced in 2015 during the 114th Congress

First passed the house in 2019 during the 116th Congress

Throughout 2021 the House Judiciary Committee and Senate Rules & Administration Committee held voting rights hearings

House came back from Recess and passed the JLVRAA on August 24th

Currently in Senate

POLL!!!

John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act Overview



Creating new review and approval criteria for preventing racial discrimination

Redefining Voting Rights Violations

Reestablishing Federal Review and Approval

Overview Cont.

- **Restoring the Ability to Challenge Racial Discrimination in Court**
- **Increasing Transparency**



The 2019 VRAA vs. 2021 VRAA

What stays the same:

- Responds to *Shelby decision*
- Redefines voting rights violations
- Transparency provisions
- Assign observers

What's different:

- Directly responds to the *Brnovich* decision



Telling
the
difference
between

John Lewis VRAA

For the People Act

Freedom to Vote Act

Take Action

Take Action: Tell President Biden to Champion Federal Voting Rights Reforms

The Biden-Harris Administration rose into office only after the historic 2020 election achieved record-shattering voter participation and necessary expansions to voter access during a deadly pandemic. But now those very same expansive innovations and reforms for voting are under direct assault across the country. The nation is on the precipice of sliding back into an era of Jim Crow, a racial caste system that legitimized anti-blackness and thwarted multiculturalism. Yet the Biden-Harris administration has used few of the tools at its disposal to champion federal voting rights reforms.

Now is not the time to back down, but to surge forward. Federal voting rights protections cannot wait and are vital to saving the soul of our democracy. The League is calling for the White House to harness its substantial power and influence to lead the fight for voting rights reforms that will:

- Look out for a Freedom to Vote Action Alert

Questions?