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December 3, 2019

U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the members of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), I write in support of the Voting Rights Advancement Act (VRAA, H.R. 4). The VRAA is an important first step to restoring voting rights protections and the Voting Rights Act (VRA) of 1965.

Signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson, the VRA of 1965 was landmark legislation necessary to secure the right to vote for every citizen. It ensured that state and local governments would not deny any American the equal right to vote based on race, color or membership in a minority language group.

The U.S. Supreme Court's 2013 ruling in *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* undermined the VRA, and eliminated the significant requirement for states and localities with a well-documented history of discrimination to "pre-clear" any new changes to voting practices and procedures. As a result, those with a history of voter disenfranchisement would no longer have to get approval from the Department of Justice or a court to show that their laws do not have a discriminatory purpose or effect. The results have been devastating and pose a significant blow to the protections provided in the VRA. In the wake of the decision, over three dozen state legislatures have enacted new onerous restrictions on voter access. These recent actions include onerous voter ID laws, restrictions on early voting, and excessive purges of voter registration lists, all of which subsequently make voting less accessible, less transparent, more difficult, and challenging for many voters.

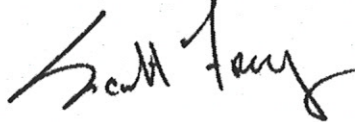
H.R. 4 is needed to restore fairness. It establishes a new coverage formula based on repeated voting rights violations over the preceding 25 years of a state's political subdivisions. It also responds to nationwide discrimination and requires "practice-based preclearance" for known disenfranchisement strategies that disproportionately target communities of color.

**American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO**

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The VRA is one of our nation's most important civil rights laws. It is central to any effort to build a representative democracy where citizens can exercise their most basic right to vote. I strongly urge you to support H.R. 4 when it comes before the House of Representatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scott Frey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Scott" and last name "Frey" clearly distinguishable.

Scott Frey  
Director of Federal Government of Affairs

SF:KLS:rf