NHMC Applauds the House of Representatives for Defending Voting Rights and Passing H.R. 4, the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021

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Los Angeles, CA - In response to continuous attacks on voting rights across the country and Supreme Court decisions that further weakened voting rights protections under the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (VRA), today the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4, the *John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2021 . The National Hispanic Media Coalition (NHMC) commends the House for passing legislation to protect free and fair elections, and restore and strengthen protections against racial discrimination targeting Latinx and BIPOC voters.*

In honor of the late civil rights leader and Congressman, John R. Lewis, who dedicated his career and, at times, risked his life to safeguard the right to vote, H.R. 4 defends fundamental voting rights for all–particularly for historically marginalized communities. H.R. 4 would restore and bolster preclearance requirements for states and localities that have a history of discrimination, and create a new "practice-based preclearance" system to review new laws and policies in all states and localities that discriminate against voters. The bill also establishes new standards to guide courts on how to consider discrimination claims and strengthens enforcement by the U.S. Department of Justice, and allows for the challenge of voting laws that have yet to be implemented or used in an election. Additionally, H.R. 4 helps prevent "vote dilution" and protects congressional representation by codifying the ability to challenge discriminatory redistricting proposals. This is critical given that the recent 2020 Census will be used for redistricting purposes to redraw local, state, and federal district maps for the next decade.

As this legislation now heads to the Senate, NHMC urges Senators to support H.R. 4 to protect Latinx and BIPOC voters from discrimination, and safeguard our democratic elections. In the words of the great John R. Lewis, "When you see something that is not right, not fair, not just, you have to speak up. You have to say something; you have to do something." Once the Senate returns from August recess, it is imperative that we create some "good trouble" and fight for a more equitable and just tomorrow.

Yours in the Movement,

Brenda Victoria Castillo
President & CEO
National Hispanic Media Coalition

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