

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 14

To amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 5, 2025

Ms. SEWELL (for herself, Mr. JEFFRIES, Ms. CLARK of Massachusetts, Mr. AGUILAR, Mr. LIEU, Mr. NEGUSE, Ms. CLARKE of New York, Mr. ESPAILLAT, Ms. MENG, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. MORELLE, Mr. VEASEY, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Ms. WILLIAMS of Georgia, Mr. FIGURES, Ms. ADAMS, Mr. AMO, Ms. ANSARI, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Ms. BALINT, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Mrs. BEATTY, Mr. BELL, Mr. BERA, Mr. BEYER, Mr. BISHOP, Ms. BONAMICI, Mr. BOYLE of Pennsylvania, Ms. BROWN, Ms. BROWNLEY, Ms. BUDZINSKI, Ms. BYNUM, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. CARSON, Mr. CARTER of Louisiana, Mr. CASAR, Mr. CASE, Mr. CASTEN, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. CASTRO of Texas, Mrs. CHERFILUS-McCORMICK, Ms. CHU, Mr. CISNEROS, Mr. CLEAVER, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. COHEN, Mr. CONAWAY, Mr. CONNOLLY, Mr. CORREA, Mr. COSTA, Mr. COURTNEY, Ms. CRAIG, Ms. CROCKETT, Mr. CROW, Mr. CUELLAR, Ms. DAVIDS of Kansas, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. DAVIS of North Carolina, Ms. DEAN of Pennsylvania, Ms. DEGETTE, Ms. DELAURO, Ms. DELBENE, Mr. DELUZIO, Mr. DESAULNIER, Ms. DEXTER, Mrs. DINGELL, Mr. DOGGETT, Ms. ELFRETH, Ms. ESCOBAR, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mr. FIELDS, Mrs. FLETCHER, Mr. FOSTER, Mrs. FOUSHEE, Ms. LOIS FRANKEL of Florida, Ms. FRIEDMAN, Mr. FROST, Mr. GARAMENDI, Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois, Mr. GARCIA of California, Ms. GARCIA of Texas, Ms. GILLEN, Mr. GOLDEN of Maine, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. GOMEZ, Mr. VICENTE GONZALEZ of Texas, Ms. GOODLANDER, Mr. GOTTHEIMER, Mr. GRAY, Mr. GREEN of Texas, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. HARDER of California, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. HERNÁNDEZ, Mr. HIMES, Mr. HORSFORD, Ms. HOULAHAN, Mr. HOYER, Ms. HOYLE of Oregon, Mr. HUFFMAN, Mr. IVEY, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Ms. JACOBS, Ms. JAYAPAL, Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia, Ms. JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. KAMLAGER-DOVE, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. KEATING, Ms. KELLY of Illinois, Mr. KENNEDY of New York, Mr. KHANNA, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. LANDSMAN, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Mr. LARSON of Connecticut, Mr. LATIMER, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Ms. LEE of Nevada, Ms. LEGER FERNANDEZ, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. LICCARDO, Ms. LOFGREN, Mr. LYNCH, Mr. MAGAZINER, Mr. MANNION, Ms. MAT-

SUI, Mrs. McBATH, Ms. McBRIDE, Mrs. McClain Delaney, Ms. McClellan, Ms. McCollum, Ms. McDonald Rivet, Mr. McGarvey, Mr. McGovern, Mrs. McIver, Mr. MEEKS, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. MFUME, Mr. MIN, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. MORRISON, Mr. MOSKOWITZ, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. MRVAN, Mr. MULLIN, Mr. NADLER, Mr. NEAL, Mr. NORCROSS, Ms. NORTON, Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ, Mr. OLSZEWSKI, Ms. OMAR, Mr. PALLONE, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. PAPPAS, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. PEREZ, Mr. PETERS, Ms. PETTERSEN, Ms. PINGREE, Ms. PLASKETT, Mr. POCAN, Ms. POU, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mr. QUIGLEY, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. RANDALL, Mr. RILEY of New York, Ms. RIVAS, Ms. ROSS, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. RYAN, Ms. SALINAS, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. SCHNEIDER, Ms. SCHOLTEN, Ms. SCHRIER, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SHERMAN, Ms. SHERRILL, Ms. SIMON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SORENSEN, Mr. SOTO, Ms. STANSBURY, Mr. STANTON, Ms. STEVENS, Ms. STRICKLAND, Mr. SUBRAMANYAM, Mr. SUOZZI, Mr. SWALWELL, Mrs. SYKES, Mr. TAKANO, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi, Mr. THOMPSON of California, Ms. TITUS, Ms. TLAIB, Ms. TOKUDA, Mr. TONKO, Mrs. TORRES of California, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mrs. TRAHAN, Mr. TRAN, Ms. UNDERWOOD, Mr. VARGAS, Mr. VASQUEZ, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Mr. VINDMAN, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN, Mr. WHITESIDES, and Ms. WILSON of Florida) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to revise the criteria for determining which States and political subdivisions are subject to section 4 of the Act, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
 2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “John R. Lewis Voting
 5 Rights Advancement Act of 2025”.

1 **SEC. 2. VOTE DILUTION, DENIAL, AND ABRIDGMENT**
2 **CLAIMS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 2(a) of the Voting Rights
4 Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301(a)) is amended—

5 (1) by inserting after “applied by any State or
6 political subdivision” the following: “for the purpose
7 of, or”; and

8 (2) by striking “as provided in subsection (b)”
9 and inserting “as provided in subsection (b), (c), (d),
10 or (f)”.

11 (b) VOTE DILUTION.—Section 2(b) of such Act (52
12 U.S.C. 10301(b)) is amended—

13 (1) by inserting after “A violation of subsection
14 (a)” the following: “for vote dilution”;

15 (2) by inserting after the period at the end the
16 following: “For the purposes of this subsection.”;

17 (3) by adding at the end the following new
18 paragraphs:

19 “(1) To prevail in demonstrating that a rep-
20 resentational, districting, or apportionment scheme
21 results in vote dilution, a plaintiff shall, as a thresh-
22 old matter, establish that—

23 “(A) the members of the protected class
24 are sufficiently numerous and geographically
25 compact to constitute a majority in a single-
26 member district;

1 “(B) the members of the protected class
2 are politically cohesive; and

3 “(C) the residents of that district who are
4 not the members of the protected class usually
5 vote sufficiently as a bloc to enable them to de-
6 feat the preferred candidates of the members of
7 the protected class.

8 “(2) Upon a plaintiff establishing the required
9 threshold showing under paragraph (1), a court shall
10 conduct a totality of the circumstances analysis with
11 respect to a claim of vote dilution to determine
12 whether there was a violation of subsection (a),
13 which shall include the following factors:

14 “(A) The extent of any history of official
15 voting discrimination in the State or political
16 subdivision that affected the right of members
17 of the protected class to register, to vote, or
18 otherwise to participate in the political process.

19 “(B) The extent to which voting in the
20 elections of the State or political subdivision is
21 racially polarized.

22 “(C) The extent to which the State or po-
23 litical subdivision has used voting practices or
24 procedures that tend to enhance the oppor-
25 tunity for discrimination against the members

1 of the protected class, such as unusually large
2 election districts, majority vote requirements,
3 anti-single shot provisions, or other qualifica-
4 tions, prerequisites, standards, practices, or
5 procedures that may enhance the opportunity
6 for discrimination against the members of the
7 protected class.

8 “(D) If there is a candidate slating proc-
9 ess, whether the members of the protected class
10 have been denied access to that process.

11 “(E) The extent to which members of the
12 protected class in the State or political subdivi-
13 sion bear the effects of discrimination, both
14 public or private, in such areas as education,
15 employment, health, housing, and transpor-
16 tation, which hinder their ability to participate
17 effectively in the political process.

18 “(F) Whether political campaigns have
19 been characterized by overt or subtle racial ap-
20 peals.

21 “(G) The extent to which members of the
22 protected class have been elected to public office
23 in the jurisdiction.

24 “(3) In conducting a totality of the cir-
25 cumstances analysis under paragraph (2), a court

1 may consider such other factors as the court may
2 determine to be relevant, including—

3 “(A) whether there is a significant lack of
4 responsiveness on the part of elected officials to
5 the particularized needs of the members of the
6 protected class, including a lack of concern for
7 or responsiveness to the requests and proposals
8 of the members of the protected class, except
9 that compliance with a court order may not be
10 considered evidence of responsiveness on the
11 part of the jurisdiction; and

12 “(B) whether the policy underlying the
13 State or political subdivision’s use of such vot-
14 ing qualification, prerequisite to voting, or
15 standard, practice or procedure is tenuous.

16 In making this determination, a court shall consider
17 whether the qualification, prerequisite, standard,
18 practice, or procedure in question was designed to
19 advance and materially advances a valid and sub-
20 stantiated State interest.

21 “(4) A class of citizens protected by subsection
22 (a) may include a cohesive coalition of members of
23 different racial or language minority groups.”; and

24 (4) VOTE DENIAL OR ABRIDGEMENT.—Section
25 2 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10301), as amended by

1 subsections (a) and (b), is further amended by add-
2 ing at the end the following:

3 “(c)(1) A violation of subsection (a) resulting in vote
4 denial or abridgment is established if the challenged quali-
5 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure—

6 “(A) results or will result in members of a pro-
7 tected class facing greater costs or burdens in par-
8 ticipating in the political process than other voters;
9 and

10 “(B) the greater costs or burdens are, at least
11 in part, caused by or linked to social and historical
12 conditions that have produced or produce on the
13 date of such challenge discrimination against mem-
14 bers of the protected class.

15 In determining the existence of a burden for pur-
16 poses of subparagraph (A), the absolute number or
17 the percent of voters affected or the presence of vot-
18 ers who are not members of a protected class in the
19 affected area shall not be dispositive, and the af-
20 fected area may be smaller than the jurisdiction to
21 which the qualification, prerequisite, standard, prac-
22 tice, or procedure applies.

23 “(2) The challenged qualification, prerequisite, stand-
24 ard, practice, or procedure need only be a but-for cause

1 of the discriminatory result described in paragraph (1) or
2 perpetuate a pre-existing burdens or costs.

3 “(3)(A) The factors that are relevant to a totality of
4 the circumstances analysis with respect to a claim of vote
5 denial or abridgement pursuant to this subsection include
6 the following:

7 “(i) The extent of any history of official voting-
8 related discrimination in the State or political sub-
9 division that affected the right of members of the
10 protected class to register, to vote, or otherwise to
11 participate in the political process.

12 “(ii) The extent to which voting in the elections
13 of the State or political subdivision is racially polar-
14 ized.

15 “(iii) The extent to which the State or political
16 subdivision has used photographic voter identifica-
17 tion requirements, documentary proof of citizenship
18 requirements, documentary proof of residence re-
19 quirements, or other voting practices or procedures,
20 beyond those required by Federal law, that impair
21 the ability of members of the minority group to par-
22 ticipate fully in the political process.

23 “(iv) The extent to which minority group mem-
24 bers bear the effects of discrimination, both public
25 or private, in areas such as education, employment,

1 health, housing, and transportation, which hinder
2 their ability to participate effectively in the political
3 process.

4 “(v) The use of overt or subtle racial appeals ei-
5 ther in political campaigns or surrounding adoption
6 or maintenance of the challenged practice.

7 “(vi) The extent to which members of the mi-
8 nority group have been elected to public office in the
9 jurisdiction, provided that the fact that the minority
10 group is too small to elect candidates of its choice
11 shall not defeat a claim of vote denial or abridgment.

12 “(vii) Whether there is a lack of responsiveness
13 on the part of elected officials to the particularized
14 needs of minority group members, including a lack
15 of concern for or responsiveness to the requests and
16 proposals of the group, except that compliance with
17 a court order may not be considered evidence of re-
18 sponsiveness on the part of the jurisdiction.

19 “(viii) Whether the policy underlying the State
20 or political subdivision’s use of the challenged quali-
21 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
22 dure is tenuous. In making a determination under
23 this clause, a court shall consider whether the quali-
24 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
25 dure in question was designed to advance and mate-

1 rially advances a valid and substantiated State inter-
2 est.

3 “(ix) Subject to paragraph (4), such other fac-
4 tors as the court may determine to be relevant.

5 “(B) The factors described in subparagraph (A), indi-
6 vidually and collectively, shall be considered as a means
7 of establishing that a voting practice amplifies the effects
8 of past or present discrimination in violation in subsection
9 (a).

10 “(C) A plaintiff need not show any particular com-
11 bination or number of factors to establish a violation of
12 subsection (a).

13 “(4) The factors that are relevant to a totality of the
14 circumstances analysis with respect to a claim of vote de-
15 nial or abridgement do not include the following:

16 “(A) The degree to which the challenged quali-
17 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
18 dure has a long pedigree or was in widespread use
19 at some earlier date.

20 “(B) The use of an identical or similar quali-
21 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
22 dure in other States or jurisdictions.

23 “(C) The availability of other forms of voting
24 unimpacted by the challenged qualification, pre-
25 requisite, standard, practice, or procedure to all

1 members of the electorate, including members of the
2 protected class, unless the jurisdiction is simulta-
3 neously expanding such other practices to eliminate
4 any disproportionate burden imposed by the chal-
5 lenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice,
6 or procedure.

7 “(D) Unsubstantiated defenses that the quali-
8 fication, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
9 dure is necessary to address criminal activity.

10 “(d)(1) A violation of subsection (a) for the purpose
11 of vote denial or abridgement is established if the chal-
12 lenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or
13 procedure is intended, at least in part, to dilute minority
14 voting strength or to deny or abridge the right of any cit-
15 izen of the United States to vote on account of race, color,
16 or in contravention of the guarantees set forth in section
17 4(f)(2).

18 “(2) Discrimination on account of race, color, or in
19 contravention of the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2)
20 need only be one purpose of a qualification, prerequisite,
21 standard, practice, or procedure to demonstrate a violation
22 of subsection (a).

23 “(3) A qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice,
24 or procedure intended to dilute minority voting strength
25 or to make it more difficult for minority voters to cast

1 a ballot that will be counted violates this subsection even
2 if an additional purpose of the qualification, prerequisite,
3 standard, practice, or procedure is to benefit a particular
4 political party or group.

5 “(4) The context for the adoption of the challenged
6 qualification, prerequisite, standard, practice, or proce-
7 dure, including actions by official decisionmakers before
8 the challenged qualification, prerequisite, standard, prac-
9 tice, or procedure, may be relevant to a violation of this
10 subsection.

11 “(5) Claims under this subsection require proof of a
12 discriminatory impact but do not require proof of a viola-
13 tion pursuant to subsection (b) or (c).

14 “(e) For purposes of this section, the term ‘affected
15 area’ means any geographic area, in which members of
16 a protected class are affected by a qualification, pre-
17 requisite, standard, practice, or procedure allegedly in vio-
18 lation of this section, within a State (including any Indian
19 lands).”.

20 **SEC. 3. RETROGRESSION.**

21 Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52
22 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), as amended by section 2 of this
23 Act, is further amended by adding at the end the fol-
24 lowing:

1 “(f) A violation of subsection (a) is established when
2 a State or political subdivision enacts or seeks to admin-
3 ister any qualification or prerequisite to voting or stand-
4 ard, practice, or procedure with respect to voting in any
5 election that has the purpose of or will have the effect
6 of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the United
7 States on account of race or color, or in contravention of
8 the guarantees set forth in section 4(f)(2), to participate
9 in the electoral process or elect their preferred candidates
10 of choice. This subsection applies to any action taken on
11 or after January 1, 2021, by a State or political subdivi-
12 sion to enact or seek to administer any such qualification
13 or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice or proce-
14 dure.

15 “(g) Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (f),
16 final decisions of the United States District Court of the
17 District of Columbia on applications or petitions by States
18 or political subdivisions for preclearance under section 5
19 of any changes in voting prerequisites, standards, prac-
20 tices, or procedures, supersede the provisions of subsection
21 (f).”.

22 **SEC. 4. VIOLATIONS TRIGGERING AUTHORITY OF COURT**
23 **TO RETAIN JURISDICTION.**

24 (a) TYPES OF VIOLATIONS.—Section 3(c) of the Vot-
25 ing Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10302(c)) is amended

1 by striking “violations of the fourteenth or fifteenth
 2 amendment” and inserting “violations of the 14th or 15th
 3 Amendment, violations of this Act, or violations of any
 4 Federal law that prohibits discrimination in voting on the
 5 basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority
 6 group,”.

7 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3(a) of
 8 such Act (52 U.S.C. 10302(a)) is amended by striking
 9 “violations of the fourteenth or fifteenth amendment” and
 10 inserting “violations of the 14th or 15th Amendment, vio-
 11 lations of this Act, or violations of any Federal law that
 12 prohibits discrimination in voting on the basis of race,
 13 color, or membership in a language minority group,”.

14 **SEC. 5. CRITERIA FOR COVERAGE OF STATES AND POLIT-**
 15 **ICAL SUBDIVISIONS.**

16 (a) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL
 17 SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO SECTION 4(a).—

18 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(b) of the Voting
 19 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(b)) is amend-
 20 ed to read as follows:

21 “(b) DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL
 22 SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO REQUIREMENTS.—

23 “(1) EXISTENCE OF VOTING RIGHTS VIOLA-
 24 TIONS DURING PREVIOUS 25 YEARS.—

1 “(A) STATEWIDE APPLICATION.—Sub-
2 section (a) applies with respect to a State and
3 all political subdivisions within the State during
4 a calendar year if—

5 “(i) fifteen or more voting rights vio-
6 lations occurred in the State during the
7 previous 25 calendar years;

8 “(ii) ten or more voting rights viola-
9 tions occurred in the State during the pre-
10 vious 25 calendar years, at least one of
11 which was committed by the State itself
12 (as opposed to a political subdivision with-
13 in the State); or

14 “(iii) three or more voting rights vio-
15 lations occurred in the State during the
16 previous 25 calendar years and the State
17 itself administers the elections in the State
18 or political subdivisions in which the voting
19 rights violations occurred.

20 “(B) APPLICATION TO SPECIFIC POLITICAL
21 SUBDIVISIONS.—Subsection (a) applies with re-
22 spect to a political subdivision as a separate
23 unit during a calendar year if three or more
24 voting rights violations occurred in the subdivi-
25 sion during the previous 25 calendar years.

1 “(2) PERIOD OF APPLICATION.—

2 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Except as provided in
3 subparagraph (B), if, pursuant to paragraph
4 (1), subsection (a) applies with respect to a
5 State or political subdivision during a calendar
6 year, subsection (a) shall apply with respect to
7 such State or political subdivision for the pe-
8 riod—

9 “(i) that begins on January 1 of the
10 year in which subsection (a) applies; and

11 “(ii) that ends on the date which is 10
12 years after the date described in clause (i).

13 “(B) NO FURTHER APPLICATION AFTER
14 DECLARATORY JUDGMENT.—

15 “(i) STATES.—If a State obtains a de-
16 claratory judgment under subsection (a),
17 and the judgment remains in effect, sub-
18 section (a) shall no longer apply to such
19 State pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) unless,
20 after the issuance of the declaratory judg-
21 ment, paragraph (1)(A) applies to the
22 State solely on the basis of voting rights
23 violations occurring after the issuance of
24 the declaratory judgment.

1 “(ii) POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS.—If a
2 political subdivision obtains a declaratory
3 judgment under subsection (a), and the
4 judgment remains in effect, subsection (a)
5 shall no longer apply to such political sub-
6 division pursuant to paragraph (1), includ-
7 ing pursuant to paragraph (1)(A) (relating
8 to the statewide application of subsection
9 (a)), unless, after the issuance of the de-
10 claratory judgment, paragraph (1)(B) ap-
11 plies to the political subdivision solely on
12 the basis of voting rights violations occur-
13 ring after the issuance of the declaratory
14 judgment.

15 “(3) DETERMINATION OF VOTING RIGHTS VIO-
16 LATION.—For purposes of paragraph (1), a voting
17 rights violation occurred in a State or political sub-
18 division if any of the following applies:

19 “(A) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATION OF
20 THE 14TH OR 15TH AMENDMENT.—Any final
21 judgment, or any preliminary, temporary, or de-
22 claratory relief (that was not reversed on ap-
23 peal), in which the plaintiff prevailed or a court
24 of the United States found that the plaintiff
25 demonstrated a likelihood of success on the

1 merits or raised a serious question with regard
2 to race discrimination, in which any court of
3 the United States determined that a denial or
4 abridgement of the right of any citizen of the
5 United States to vote on account of race, color,
6 or membership in a language minority group
7 occurred, or that a voting qualification or pre-
8 requisite to voting or standard, practice, or pro-
9 cedure with respect to voting created an undue
10 burden on the right to vote in connection with
11 a claim that the law unduly burdened voters of
12 a particular race, color, or language minority
13 group, in violation of the 14th or 15th Amend-
14 ment, anywhere within the State or subdivision.

15 “(B) JUDICIAL RELIEF; VIOLATIONS OF
16 THIS ACT.—Any final judgment, or any prelimi-
17 nary, temporary, or declaratory relief (that was
18 not reversed on appeal) in which the plaintiff
19 prevailed or a court of the United States found
20 that the plaintiff demonstrated a likelihood of
21 success on the merits or raised a serious ques-
22 tion with regard to race discrimination, in
23 which any court of the United States deter-
24 mined that a voting qualification or prerequisite
25 to voting or standard, practice, or procedure

1 with respect to voting was imposed or applied
2 or would have been imposed or applied any-
3 where within the State or subdivision in a man-
4 ner that resulted or would have resulted in a
5 denial or abridgement of the right of any citizen
6 of the United States to vote on account of race,
7 color, or membership in a language minority
8 group, in violation of subsection 4(e) or 4(f) or
9 section 2, 201, or 203 of this Act.

10 “(C) FINAL JUDGMENT; DENIAL OF DE-
11 CLARATORY JUDGMENT.—In a final judgment
12 (that was not been reversed on appeal), any
13 court of the United States has denied the re-
14 quest of the State or subdivision for a declara-
15 tory judgment under section 3(c) or section 5,
16 and thereby prevented a voting qualification or
17 prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or
18 procedure with respect to voting from being en-
19 forced anywhere within the State or subdivision.

20 “(D) OBJECTION BY THE ATTORNEY GEN-
21 ERAL.—The Attorney General has interposed
22 an objection under section 3(c) or section 5,
23 and thereby prevented a voting qualification or
24 prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or
25 procedure with respect to voting from being en-

1 forced anywhere within the State or subdivision.
2 A violation per this subsection has not occurred
3 where an objection has been withdrawn by the
4 Attorney General, unless the withdrawal was in
5 response to a change in the law or practice that
6 served as the basis of the objection. A violation
7 under this subsection has not occurred where
8 the objection is based solely on a State or polit-
9 ical subdivision's failure to comply with a proce-
10 dural process that would not otherwise con-
11 stitute an independent violation of this act.

12 “(E) CONSENT DECREE, SETTLEMENT, OR
13 OTHER AGREEMENT.—A consent decree, settle-
14 ment, or other agreement was adopted or en-
15 tered by a court of the United States or con-
16 tained an admission of liability by the defend-
17 ants, which resulted in the alteration or aban-
18 donment of a voting practice anywhere in the
19 territory of such State or subdivision that was
20 challenged on the ground that the practice de-
21 nied or abridged the right of any citizen of the
22 United States to vote on account of race, color,
23 or membership in a language minority group in
24 violation of subsection 4(e) or 4(f) or section 2,
25 201, or 203 of this Act, or the 14th or 15th

1 Amendment. An extension or modification of an
2 agreement as defined by this subsection that
3 has been in place for ten years or longer shall
4 count as an independent violation. If a court of
5 the United States finds that an agreement itself
6 as defined by this subsection denied or abridged
7 the right of any citizen of the United States to
8 vote on account of race, color, or membership in
9 a language minority group, violated subsection
10 4(e) or 4(f) or section 2, 201, or 203 of this
11 Act, or created an undue burden on the right
12 to vote in connection with a claim that the con-
13 sent decree, settlement, or other agreement un-
14 duly burdened voters of a particular race, color,
15 or language minority group, that finding shall
16 count as an independent violation.

17 “(F) MULTIPLE VIOLATIONS.—Each vot-
18 ing qualification or prerequisite to voting or
19 standard, practice, or procedure with respect to
20 voting, including each redistricting plan, found
21 to be a violation by a court of the United States
22 pursuant to subsection (a) or (b), or prevented
23 from enforcement pursuant to subsection (c) or
24 (d), or altered or abandoned pursuant to sub-
25 section (e) shall count as an independent viola-

1 tion. Within a redistricting plan, each violation
2 found to discriminate against any group of vot-
3 ers based on race, color, or language minority
4 group shall count as an independent violation.

5 “(4) TIMING OF DETERMINATIONS.—

6 “(A) DETERMINATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS
7 VIOLATIONS.—As early as practicable during
8 each calendar year, the Attorney General shall
9 make the determinations required by this sub-
10 section, including updating the list of voting
11 rights violations occurring in each State and po-
12 litical subdivision for the previous calendar
13 year.

14 “(B) EFFECTIVE UPON PUBLICATION IN
15 FEDERAL REGISTER.—A determination or cer-
16 tification of the Attorney General under this
17 section or under section 8 or 13 shall be effec-
18 tive upon publication in the Federal Register.”.

19 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 4(a)
20 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)) is amended—

21 (A) in paragraph (1), in the first sentence
22 of the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by
23 striking “any State with respect to which” and
24 all that follows through “unless” and inserting
25 “any State to which this subsection applies dur-

1 ing a calendar year pursuant to determinations
2 made under subsection (b), or in any political
3 subdivision of such State (as such subdivision
4 existed on the date such determinations were
5 made with respect to such State), though such
6 determinations were not made with respect to
7 such subdivision as a separate unit, or in any
8 political subdivision with respect to which this
9 subsection applies during a calendar year pur-
10 suant to determinations made with respect to
11 such subdivision as a separate unit under sub-
12 section (b), unless”;

13 (B) in paragraph (1) in the matter pre-
14 ceding subparagraph (A), by striking the second
15 sentence;

16 (C) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “(in
17 the case of a State or subdivision seeking a de-
18 claratory judgment under the second sentence
19 of this subsection)”;

20 (D) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking “(in
21 the case of a State or subdivision seeking a de-
22 claratory judgment under the second sentence
23 of this subsection)”;

24 (E) in paragraph (3), by striking “(in the
25 case of a State or subdivision seeking a declara-

1 tory judgment under the second sentence of this
2 subsection)”;

3 (F) in paragraph (5), by striking “(in the
4 case of a State or subdivision which sought a
5 declaratory judgment under the second sentence
6 of this subsection)”;

7 (G) by striking paragraphs (7) and (8);
8 and

9 (H) by redesignating paragraph (9) as
10 paragraph (7).

11 (b) CLARIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF
12 LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—Section 4(a)(1) of such
13 Act (52 U.S.C. 10303(a)(1)) is amended by striking “race
14 or color,” and inserting “race, color, or in contravention
15 of the guarantees of subsection (f)(2),”.

16 (c) ADMINISTRATIVE BAILOUT.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 4 of the Voting
18 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303) is amended
19 by adding at the end the following:

20 “(g) ADMINISTRATIVE BAILOUT.—

21 “(1) DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY.—

22 “(A) IN GENERAL.—After making a deter-
23 mination under subsection (b)(1)(A) that the
24 provisions of subsection (a) apply with respect
25 to a State and all political subdivisions within

1 the State, the Attorney General shall determine
2 if any political subdivision of the State is eligi-
3 ble for an exemption under this subsection, and
4 shall publish, in the Federal Register, a list of
5 all such political subdivisions. Any political sub-
6 division included on such list is not subject to
7 any requirement under section 5 until the date
8 on which any application under this section has
9 been finally disposed of or no such application
10 may be made.

11 “(B) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing
12 in this subsection may be construed to pro-
13 vide—

14 “(i) that the determinations made
15 pursuant to the creation of the list shall
16 have any binding or preclusive effect; or

17 “(ii) that inclusion on the list—

18 “(I) constitutes a final deter-
19 mination by the Attorney General that
20 the listee is eligible for an exemption
21 pursuant to this subsection or that, in
22 the case of the listee, the provisions of
23 subparagraphs (A) through (F) of
24 subsection (a)(1) are satisfied; or

1 “(II) entitles the listee to any ex-
2 emption pursuant to this subsection.

3 “(2) ELIGIBILITY.—A political subdivision that
4 submits an application under paragraph (3) shall be
5 eligible for an exemption under this subsection only
6 if, during the ten years preceding the filing of the
7 application, and during the pendency of such appli-
8 cation—

9 “(A) no test or device referred to in sub-
10 section (a)(1) has been used within such polit-
11 ical subdivision for the purpose or with the ef-
12 fect of denying or abridging the right to vote on
13 account of race or color or in contravention of
14 the guarantees of subsection (f)(2);

15 “(B) no final judgment of any court of the
16 United States, other than the denial of declara-
17 tory judgment under this section, has deter-
18 mined that denials or abridgements of the right
19 to vote on account of race or color have oc-
20 curred anywhere in the territory of such polit-
21 ical subdivision or that denials or abridgements
22 of the right to vote in contravention of the
23 guarantees of subsection (f)(2) have occurred
24 anywhere in the territory of such subdivision
25 and no consent decree, settlement, or agreement

1 has been entered into resulting in any abandon-
2 ment of a voting practice challenged on such
3 grounds; and no declaratory judgment under
4 this section shall be entered during the pend-
5 ency of an action commenced before the filing
6 of an action under this section and alleging
7 such denials or abridgements of the right to
8 vote;

9 “(C) no Federal examiners or observers
10 under this Act have been assigned to such polit-
11 ical subdivision;

12 “(D) such political subdivision and all gov-
13 ernmental units within its territory have com-
14 plied with section 5 of this Act, including com-
15 pliance with the requirement that no change
16 covered by section 5 has been enforced without
17 preclearance under section 5, and have repealed
18 all changes covered by section 5 to which the
19 Attorney General has successfully objected or as
20 to which the United States District Court for
21 the District of Columbia has denied a declara-
22 tory judgment;

23 “(E) the Attorney General has not inter-
24 posed any objection (that has not been over-
25 turned by a final judgment of a court) and no

1 declaratory judgment has been denied under
2 section 5, with respect to any submission by or
3 on behalf of the plaintiff or any governmental
4 unit within its territory under section 5, and no
5 such submissions or declaratory judgment ac-
6 tions are pending; and

7 “(F) such political subdivision and all gov-
8 ernmental units within its territory—

9 “(i) have eliminated voting procedures
10 and methods of election which inhibit or
11 dilute equal access to the electoral process;

12 “(ii) have engaged in constructive ef-
13 forts to eliminate intimidation and harass-
14 ment of persons exercising rights protected
15 under this Act; and

16 “(iii) have engaged in other construc-
17 tive efforts, such as expanded opportunity
18 for convenient registration and voting for
19 every person of voting age and the appoint-
20 ment of minority persons as election offi-
21 cials throughout the jurisdiction and at all
22 stages of the election and registration
23 process.

24 “(3) APPLICATION PERIOD.—Not later than 90
25 days after the publication of the list under para-

1 graph (1), a political subdivision included on such
2 list may submit an application, containing such in-
3 formation as the Attorney General may require, for
4 an exemption under this subsection. The Attorney
5 General shall provide notice in the Federal Register
6 of such application.

7 “(4) COMMENT PERIOD.—During the 90-day
8 period beginning on the date that notice is published
9 under paragraph (3), the Attorney General shall give
10 interested persons an opportunity to submit objec-
11 tions to the issuance of an exemption under this
12 subsection to a political subdivision on the basis that
13 the political subdivision is not eligible under para-
14 graph (2) to the Attorney General. During the 1
15 year period beginning on the effective date of this
16 subsection, such 90-day period shall be extended by
17 an additional 30 days. The Attorney General shall
18 notify the political subdivision of each objection sub-
19 mitted and afford the political subdivision an oppor-
20 tunity to respond.

21 “(5) DETERMINATION AS TO OBJECTIONS.—In
22 the case of a political subdivision with respect to
23 which an objection has been submitted under para-
24 graph (4), the following shall apply:

1 “(A) CONSIDERATION OF OBJECTIONS.—

2 The Attorney General shall consider and re-
3 spond to each such objection (and any response
4 of the political subdivision thereto) during the
5 60-day period beginning on the day after the
6 comment period under paragraph (4) concludes.

7 “(B) JUSTIFIED OBJECTIONS.—If the At-
8 torney General determines that any such objec-
9 tion is justified, the Attorney General shall pub-
10 lish notice in the Federal Register denying the
11 application for an exemption under this sub-
12 section.

13 “(C) UNJUSTIFIED OBJECTIONS.—If the
14 Attorney General determines that no objection
15 submitted is justified, each person that sub-
16 mitted such an objection may, not later than 90
17 days after the end of the period established
18 under subparagraph (A), file, in the District
19 Court of the District of Columbia, an action for
20 judicial review of such determination in accord-
21 ance with chapter 7 of title 5, United States
22 Code.

23 “(6) EXEMPTION.—The Attorney General may
24 issue an exemption, by publication in the Federal
25 Register, from the application of the provisions of

1 subsection (a) with respect to a political subdivision
2 that—

3 “(A) is eligible under paragraph (2); and

4 “(B) with respect to which no objection
5 under was submitted under paragraph (4) or
6 determined to be justified under paragraph (5).

7 “(7) JUDICIAL REVIEW.—Except as otherwise
8 explicitly provided in this subsection, no determina-
9 tion under this subsection shall be subject to review
10 by any court, and all determinations under this sub-
11 section are committed to the discretion of the Attor-
12 ney General.

13 “(8) SAVINGS CLAUSE.—If a political subdivi-
14 sion was not subject to the application of the provi-
15 sions of subsection (a) by reason of a declaratory
16 judgment entered prior to the effective date of this
17 subsection, and such political subdivision has not
18 violated any eligibility requirement set forth in para-
19 graph (2) at any time thereafter, then that political
20 subdivision shall not be subject to the requirements
21 of subsection (a).”.

22 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—

23 (A) IN GENERAL.—Section 4(a)(1) of the
24 Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
25 10303(a)(1)), as amended by this Act, is fur-

1 ther amended by inserting after “the United
2 States District Court for the District of Colum-
3 bia issues a declaratory judgment under this
4 section” the following: “, or, in the case of a
5 political subdivision, the Attorney General
6 issues an exemption under subsection (g)”.

7 (B) EXPIRATION OF TIME LIMIT.—On the
8 date that is 1 year after the effective date of
9 this subsection, section 4(g)(3) of the Voting
10 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10303(g)(3)) is
11 amended by striking “During the 1 year period
12 beginning on the effective date of this sub-
13 section, such 90-day period shall be extended by
14 an additional 30 days.”. For purposes of any
15 periods under such section commenced as of
16 such date, the 90-day period shall remain ex-
17 tended by an additional 30 days.

18 **SEC. 6. DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL SUB-**
19 **DIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE FOR**
20 **COVERED PRACTICES.**

21 The Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et
22 seq.) is further amended by inserting after section 4 the
23 following:

1 **“SEC. 4A. DETERMINATION OF STATES AND POLITICAL**
2 **SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE**
3 **FOR COVERED PRACTICES.**

4 “(a) PRACTICE-BASED PRECLEARANCE.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State and each polit-
6 ical subdivision shall—

7 “(A) identify any newly enacted or adopted
8 law, regulation, or policy that includes a voting
9 qualification or prerequisite to voting, or a
10 standard, practice, or procedure with respect to
11 voting, that is a covered practice described in
12 subsection (b); and

13 “(B) ensure that no such covered practice
14 is implemented unless or until the State or po-
15 litical subdivision, as the case may be, complies
16 with subsection (c).

17 “(2) DETERMINATIONS OF CHARACTERISTICS
18 OF VOTING-AGE POPULATION.—

19 “(A) IN GENERAL.—As early as prac-
20 ticable during each calendar year, the Attorney
21 General, in consultation with the Director of
22 the Bureau of the Census and the heads of
23 other relevant offices of the government, shall
24 make the determinations required by this sec-
25 tion regarding voting-age populations and the
26 characteristics of such populations, and shall

1 publish a list of the States and political subdivi-
2 sions to which a voting-age population char-
3 acteristic described in subsection (b) applies.

4 “(B) PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REG-
5 ISTER.—A determination or certification of the
6 Attorney General under this paragraph shall be
7 effective upon publication in the Federal Reg-
8 ister.

9 “(b) COVERED PRACTICES.—To assure that the right
10 of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or
11 abridged on account of race, color, or membership in a
12 language minority group as a result of the implementation
13 of certain qualifications or prerequisites to voting, or
14 standards, practices, or procedures with respect to voting
15 newly adopted in a State or political subdivision, the fol-
16 lowing shall be covered practices subject to the require-
17 ments described in subsection (a):

18 “(1) CHANGES TO METHOD OF ELECTION.—
19 Any change to the method of election—

20 “(A) to add seats elected at-large in a
21 State or political subdivision where—

22 “(i) two or more racial groups or lan-
23 guage minority groups each represent 20
24 percent or more of the political subdivi-
25 sion’s voting-age population; or

1 “(ii) a single language minority group
2 represents 20 percent or more of the vot-
3 ing-age population on Indian lands located
4 in whole or in part in the political subdivi-
5 sion; or

6 “(B) to convert one or more seats elected
7 from a single-member district to one or more
8 at-large seats or seats from a multi-member
9 district in a State or political subdivision
10 where—

11 “(i) two or more racial groups or lan-
12 guage minority groups each represent 20
13 percent or more of the political subdivi-
14 sion’s voting-age population; or

15 “(ii) a single language minority group
16 represents 20 percent or more of the vot-
17 ing-age population on Indian lands located
18 in whole or in part in the political subdivi-
19 sion.

20 “(2) CHANGES TO JURISDICTION BOUND-
21 ARIES.—Any change or series of changes within a
22 year to the boundaries of a jurisdiction that reduces
23 by 3 or more percentage points the proportion of the
24 jurisdiction’s voting-age population that is comprised
25 of members of a single racial group or language mi-

1 nosity group in a State or political subdivision
2 where—

3 “(A) two or more racial groups or lan-
4 guage minority groups each represent 20 per-
5 cent or more of the political subdivision’s vot-
6 ing-age population; or

7 “(B) a single language minority group rep-
8 resents 20 percent or more of the voting-age
9 population on Indian lands located in whole or
10 in part in the political subdivision.

11 “(3) CHANGES THROUGH REDISTRICTING.—
12 Any change to the boundaries of election districts in
13 a State or political subdivision where any racial
14 group or language minority group that is not the
15 largest racial group or language minority group in
16 the jurisdiction and that represents 15 percent or
17 more of the State or political subdivision’s voting-
18 age population experiences a population increase of
19 at least 20 percent of its voting-age population, over
20 the preceding decade (as calculated by the Bureau
21 of the Census under the most recent decennial cen-
22 sus), in the jurisdiction.

23 “(4) CHANGES IN DOCUMENTATION OR QUALI-
24 FICATIONS TO VOTE.—Any change to requirements
25 for documentation or proof of identity to vote or reg-

1 ister to vote that will exceed or be more stringent
2 than such requirements under State law on the day
3 before the date of enactment of the John R. Lewis
4 Voting Rights Advancement Act of 2025; and fur-
5 ther, if a State has in effect a requirement that an
6 individual present identification as a condition of re-
7 ceiving and casting a ballot in an election for Fed-
8 eral office, if the State does not permit the indi-
9 vidual to meet the requirement and cast a ballot in
10 the election in the same manner as an individual
11 who presents identification—

12 “(A) in the case of an individual who de-
13 sires to vote in person, by presenting the appro-
14 priate State or local election official with a
15 sworn written statement, signed by the indi-
16 vidual under penalty of perjury, attesting to the
17 individual’s identity and attesting that the indi-
18 vidual is eligible to vote in the election; and

19 “(B) in the case of an individual who de-
20 sires to vote by mail, by submitting with the
21 ballot the statement described in subparagraph
22 (A).

23 “(5) CHANGES TO MULTILINGUAL VOTING MA-
24 TERIALS.—Any change that reduces multilingual
25 voting materials or alters the manner in which such

1 materials are provided or distributed, where no simi-
2 lar reduction or alteration occurs in materials pro-
3 vided in English for such election.

4 “(6) CHANGES THAT REDUCE, CONSOLIDATE,
5 OR RELOCATE VOTING LOCATIONS, OR REDUCE VOT-
6 ING OPPORTUNITIES.—Any change that reduces,
7 consolidates, or relocates voting locations, including
8 early, absentee, and election-day voting locations, or
9 reduces days or hours of in-person voting on any
10 Sunday during a period occurring prior to the date
11 of an election during which voters may cast ballots
12 in such election, or prohibits the provision of food or
13 non-alcoholic drink to persons waiting to vote in an
14 election except where the provision would violate
15 prohibitions on expenditures to influence voting—

16 “(A) in one or more census tracts wherein
17 two or more language minority groups or racial
18 groups each represent 20 percent or more of
19 the voting-age population of the political sub-
20 division; or

21 “(B) on Indian lands wherein at least 20
22 percent of the voting-age population belongs to
23 a single language minority group.

24 “(7) NEW LIST MAINTENANCE PROCESS.—Any
25 change to the maintenance of voter registration lists

1 that adds a new basis for removal from the list of
2 active registered voters or that incorporates new
3 sources of information in determining a voter’s eligi-
4 bility to vote, wherein such a change would have a
5 statistically significant disparate impact on the re-
6 moval from voter rolls of members of racial groups
7 or language minority groups that constitute greater
8 than 5 percent of the voting-age population—

9 “(A) in the case of a political subdivision
10 imposing such change if—

11 “(i) two or more racial groups or lan-
12 guage minority groups each represent 20
13 percent or more of the voting-age popu-
14 lation of the political subdivision; or

15 “(ii) a single language minority group
16 represents 20 percent or more of the vot-
17 ing-age population on Indian lands located
18 in whole or in part in the political subdivi-
19 sion; or

20 “(B) in the case of a State imposing such
21 change, if two or more racial groups or lan-
22 guage minority groups each represent 20 per-
23 cent or more of the voting-age population of—

24 “(i) the State; or

1 “(ii) a political subdivision in the
2 State, except that the requirements under
3 subsections (a) and (c) shall apply only
4 with respect to each such political subdivi-
5 sion.

6 “(c) PRECLEARANCE.—

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Whenever a State or polit-
8 ical subdivision with respect to which the require-
9 ments set forth in subsection (a) are in effect shall
10 enact, adopt, or seek to implement any covered prac-
11 tice described under subsection (b), such State or
12 subdivision may institute an action in the United
13 States District Court for the District of Columbia
14 for a declaratory judgment that such covered prac-
15 tice neither has the purpose nor will have the effect
16 of denying or abridging the right to vote on account
17 of race, color, or membership in a language minority
18 group, and unless and until the court enters such
19 judgment such covered practice shall not be imple-
20 mented. Notwithstanding the previous sentence, such
21 covered practice may be implemented without such
22 proceeding if the covered practice has been sub-
23 mitted by the chief legal officer or other appropriate
24 official of such State or subdivision to the Attorney
25 General and the Attorney General has not inter-

1 posed an objection within 60 days after such submis-
2 sion, or upon good cause shown, to facilitate an ex-
3 pedited approval within 60 days after such submis-
4 sion, the Attorney General has affirmatively indi-
5 cated that such objection will not be made. Neither
6 an affirmative indication by the Attorney General
7 that no objection will be made, nor the Attorney
8 General's failure to object, nor a declaratory judg-
9 ment entered under this section shall bar a subse-
10 quent action to enjoin implementation of such cov-
11 ered practice. In the event the Attorney General af-
12 firmatively indicates that no objection will be made
13 within the 60-day period following receipt of a sub-
14 mission, the Attorney General may reserve the right
15 to reexamine the submission if additional informa-
16 tion comes to the Attorney General's attention dur-
17 ing the remainder of the 60-day period which would
18 otherwise require objection in accordance with this
19 section. Any action under this section shall be heard
20 and determined by a court of three judges in accord-
21 ance with the provisions of section 2284 of title 28,
22 United States Code, and any appeal shall lie to the
23 Supreme Court.

24 “(2) DENYING OR ABRIDGING THE RIGHT TO
25 VOTE.—Any covered practice described in subsection

1 (b) that has the purpose of or will have the effect
2 of diminishing the ability of any citizens of the
3 United States on account of race, color, or member-
4 ship in a language minority group, to elect their pre-
5 ferred candidates of choice denies or abridges the
6 right to vote within the meaning of paragraph (1) of
7 this subsection.

8 “(3) PURPOSE DEFINED.—The term ‘purpose’
9 in paragraphs (1) and (2) of this subsection shall in-
10 clude any discriminatory purpose.

11 “(4) PURPOSE OF PARAGRAPH (2).—The pur-
12 pose of paragraph (2) of this subsection is to protect
13 the ability of such citizens to elect their preferred
14 candidates of choice.

15 “(d) ENFORCEMENT.—The Attorney General or any
16 aggrieved citizen may file an action in a Federal district
17 court to compel any State or political subdivision to satisfy
18 the obligations set forth in this section. Such actions shall
19 be heard and determined by a court of three judges under
20 section 2284 of title 28, United States Code. In any such
21 action, the court shall provide as a remedy that any voting
22 qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, prac-
23 tice, or procedure with respect to voting, that is the sub-
24 ject of the action under this subsection be enjoined unless
25 the court determines that—

1 “(1) the voting qualification or prerequisite to
2 voting, or standard, practice, or procedure with re-
3 spect to voting, is not a covered practice described
4 in subsection (b); or

5 “(2) the State or political subdivision has com-
6 plied with subsection (c) with respect to the covered
7 practice at issue.

8 “(e) COUNTING OF RACIAL GROUPS AND LANGUAGE
9 MINORITY GROUPS.—For purposes of this section, the cal-
10 culation of the population of a racial group or a language
11 minority group shall be carried out using the methodology
12 in the guidance promulgated in the Federal Register on
13 February 9, 2011 (76 Fed. Reg. 7470).

14 “(f) SPECIAL RULE.—For purposes of determina-
15 tions under this section, any data provided by the Bureau
16 of the Census, whether based on estimation from sample
17 or actual enumeration, shall not be subject to challenge
18 or review in any court.

19 “(g) MULTILINGUAL VOTING MATERIALS.—In this
20 section, the term ‘multilingual voting materials’ means
21 registration or voting notices, forms, instructions, assist-
22 ance, or other materials or information relating to the
23 electoral process, including ballots, provided in the lan-
24 guage or languages of one or more language minority
25 groups.”.

1 **SEC. 7. PROMOTING TRANSPARENCY TO ENFORCE THE**
2 **VOTING RIGHTS ACT.**

3 (a) TRANSPARENCY.—

4 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Voting Rights Act of
5 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.) is amended by in-
6 serting after section 5 the following new section:

7 **“SEC. 6. TRANSPARENCY REGARDING CHANGES TO PRO-**
8 **TECT VOTING RIGHTS.**

9 “(a) NOTICE OF ENACTED CHANGES.—

10 “(1) NOTICE OF CHANGES.—If a State or polit-
11 ical subdivision makes any change in any qualifica-
12 tion or prerequisite to voting or standard, practice,
13 or procedure with respect to voting in any election
14 for Federal office that will result in the qualification
15 or prerequisite, standard, practice, or procedure
16 being different from that which was in effect as of
17 180 days before the date of the election for Federal
18 office, the State or political subdivision shall provide
19 reasonable public notice in such State or political
20 subdivision and on the website of the State or polit-
21 ical subdivision, of a concise description of the
22 change, including the difference between the
23 changed qualification or prerequisite, standard, prac-
24 tice, or procedure and the prerequisite, standard,
25 practice, or procedure which was previously in effect.
26 The public notice described in this paragraph, in

1 such State or political subdivision and on the website
2 of a State or political subdivision, shall be in a for-
3 mat that is reasonably convenient and accessible to
4 persons with disabilities who are eligible to vote, in-
5 cluding persons who have low vision or are blind.

6 “(2) DEADLINE FOR NOTICE.—A State or polit-
7 ical subdivision shall provide the public notice re-
8 quired under paragraph (1) not later than 48 hours
9 after making the change involved.

10 “(b) TRANSPARENCY REGARDING POLLING PLACE
11 RESOURCES.—

12 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to identify any
13 changes that may impact the right to vote of any
14 person, prior to the 30th day before the date of an
15 election for Federal office, each State or political
16 subdivision with responsibility for allocating reg-
17 istered voters, voting machines, and official poll
18 workers to particular precincts and polling places
19 shall provide reasonable public notice in such State
20 or political subdivision and on the website of a State
21 or political subdivision, of the information described
22 in paragraph (2) for precincts and polling places
23 within such State or political subdivision. The public
24 notice described in this paragraph, in such State or
25 political subdivision and on the website of a State or

1 political subdivision, shall be in a format that is rea-
2 sonably convenient and accessible to persons with
3 disabilities who are eligible to vote, including persons
4 who have low vision or are blind.

5 “(2) INFORMATION DESCRIBED.—The informa-
6 tion described in this paragraph with respect to a
7 precinct or polling place is each of the following:

8 “(A) The name or number.

9 “(B) In the case of a polling place, the lo-
10 cation, including the street address, and wheth-
11 er such polling place is accessible to persons
12 with disabilities.

13 “(C) The voting-age population of the area
14 served by the precinct or polling place, broken
15 down by demographic group if such breakdown
16 is reasonably available to such State or political
17 subdivision.

18 “(D) The number of registered voters as-
19 signed to the precinct or polling place, broken
20 down by demographic group if such breakdown
21 is reasonably available to such State or political
22 subdivision.

23 “(E) The number of voting machines as-
24 signed, including the number of voting ma-
25 chines accessible to persons with disabilities

1 who are eligible to vote, including persons who
2 have low vision or are blind.

3 “(F) The number of official paid poll
4 workers assigned.

5 “(G) The number of official volunteer poll
6 workers assigned.

7 “(H) In the case of a polling place, the
8 dates and hours of operation.

9 “(3) UPDATES IN INFORMATION REPORTED.—

10 If a State or political subdivision makes any change
11 in any of the information described in paragraph
12 (2), the State or political subdivision shall provide
13 reasonable public notice in such State or political
14 subdivision and on the website of a State or political
15 subdivision, of the change in the information not
16 later than 48 hours after the change occurs or, if
17 the change occurs fewer than 48 hours before the
18 date of the election for Federal office, as soon as
19 practicable after the change occurs. The public no-
20 tice described in this paragraph and published on
21 the website of a State or political subdivision shall
22 be in a format that is reasonably convenient and ac-
23 cessible to persons with disabilities who are eligible
24 to vote, including persons who have low vision or are
25 blind.

1 “(c) TRANSPARENCY OF CHANGES RELATING TO DE-
2 MOGRAPHICS AND ELECTORAL DISTRICTS.—

3 “(1) REQUIRING PUBLIC NOTICE OF
4 CHANGES.—Not later than 10 days after making
5 any change in the constituency that will participate
6 in an election for Federal, State, or local office or
7 the boundaries of a voting unit or electoral district
8 in an election for Federal, State, or local office (in-
9 cluding through redistricting, reapportionment,
10 changing from at-large elections to district-based
11 elections, or changing from district-based elections
12 to at-large elections), a State or political subdivision
13 shall provide reasonable public notice in such State
14 or political subdivision and on the website of a State
15 or political subdivision, of the demographic and elec-
16 toral data described in paragraph (3) for each of the
17 geographic areas described in paragraph (2).

18 “(2) GEOGRAPHIC AREAS DESCRIBED.—The ge-
19 ographic areas described in this paragraph are as
20 follows:

21 “(A) The State as a whole, if the change
22 applies statewide, or the political subdivision as
23 a whole, if the change applies across the entire
24 political subdivision.

1 “(B) If the change includes a plan to re-
2 place or eliminate voting units or electoral dis-
3 tricts, each voting unit or electoral district that
4 will be replaced or eliminated.

5 “(C) If the change includes a plan to es-
6 tablish new voting units or electoral districts,
7 each such new voting unit or electoral district.

8 “(3) DEMOGRAPHIC AND ELECTORAL DATA.—
9 The demographic and electoral data described in this
10 paragraph with respect to a geographic area de-
11 scribed in paragraph (2) are each of the following:

12 “(A) The voting-age population, broken
13 down by demographic group.

14 “(B) If it is reasonably available to the
15 State or political subdivision involved, an esti-
16 mate of the population of the area which con-
17 sists of citizens of the United States who are 18
18 years of age or older, broken down by demo-
19 graphic group.

20 “(C) The number of registered voters, bro-
21 ken down by demographic group if such break-
22 down is reasonably available to the State or po-
23 litical subdivision involved.

24 “(D)(i) If the change applies to a State,
25 the actual number of votes, or (if it is not rea-

1 sonably practicable for the State to ascertain
2 the actual number of votes) the estimated num-
3 ber of votes received by each candidate in each
4 statewide election held during the 5-year period
5 which ends on the date the change involved is
6 made; and

7 “(ii) if the change applies to only one polit-
8 ical subdivision, the actual number of votes, or
9 (if it is not reasonably practicable for the polit-
10 ical subdivision to ascertain the actual number
11 of votes) in each subdivision-wide election held
12 during the 5-year period which ends on the date
13 the change involved is made.

14 “(4) VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE BY SMALLER JU-
15 RISDICTIONS.—Compliance with this subsection shall
16 be voluntary for a political subdivision of a State un-
17 less the subdivision is one of the following:

18 “(A) A county or parish.

19 “(B) A municipality with a population
20 greater than 10,000, as determined by the Bu-
21 reau of the Census under the most recent de-
22 cennial census.

23 “(C) A school district with a population
24 greater than 10,000, as determined by the Bu-
25 reau of the Census under the most recent de-

1 cennial census. For purposes of this subpara-
2 graph, the term ‘school district’ means the geo-
3 graphic area under the jurisdiction of a local
4 educational agency (as defined in section 9101
5 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
6 Act of 1965).

7 “(d) RULES REGARDING FORMAT OF INFORMA-
8 TION.—The Attorney General may issue rules specifying
9 a reasonably convenient and accessible format that States
10 and political subdivisions shall use to provide public notice
11 of information under this section.

12 “(e) NO DENIAL OF RIGHT TO VOTE.—The right to
13 vote of any person shall not be denied or abridged because
14 the person failed to comply with any change made by a
15 State or political subdivision to a voting qualification, pre-
16 requisite, standard, practice, or procedure if the State or
17 political subdivision involved did not meet the applicable
18 requirements of this section with respect to the change.

19 “(f) DEFINITIONS.—In this section—

20 “(1) the term ‘demographic group’ means each
21 group which section 2 protects from the denial or
22 abridgement of the right to vote on account of race
23 or color, or in contravention of the guarantees set
24 forth in section 4(f)(2);

1 “(2) the term ‘election for Federal office’ means
2 any general, special, primary, or runoff election held
3 solely or in part for the purpose of electing any can-
4 didate for the office of President, Vice President,
5 Presidential elector, Senator, Member of the House
6 of Representatives, or Delegate or Resident Commis-
7 sioner to the Congress; and

8 “(3) the term ‘persons with disabilities’, means
9 individuals with a disability, as defined in section 3
10 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.”.

11 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 3(a)
12 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10302(a)) is amended by
13 striking “in accordance with section 6”.

14 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
15 subsection (a)(1) shall apply with respect to changes which
16 are made on or after the expiration of the 60-day period
17 which begins on the date of the enactment of this Act.

18 **SEC. 8. AUTHORITY TO ASSIGN OBSERVERS.**

19 (a) CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY IN POLITICAL
20 SUBDIVISIONS SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE.—Section
21 8(a)(2)(B) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
22 10305(a)(2)(B)) is amended to read as follows:

23 “(B) in the Attorney General’s judgment,
24 the assignment of observers is otherwise nec-
25 essary to enforce the guarantees of the 14th or

1 15th Amendment or any provision of this Act
2 or any other Federal law protecting the right of
3 citizens of the United States to vote; or”.

4 (b) ASSIGNMENT OF OBSERVERS TO ENFORCE BI-
5 LINGUAL ELECTION REQUIREMENTS.—Section 8(a) of
6 such Act (52 U.S.C. 10305(a)) is amended—

7 (1) by striking “or” at the end of paragraph
8 (1);

9 (2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the fol-
10 lowing:

11 “(3) the Attorney General certifies with respect
12 to a political subdivision that—

13 “(A) the Attorney General has received
14 written meritorious complaints from residents,
15 elected officials, or civic participation organiza-
16 tions that efforts to violate section 203 are like-
17 ly to occur; or

18 “(B) in the Attorney General’s judgment,
19 the assignment of observers is necessary to en-
20 force the guarantees of section 203;”); and

21 (3) by moving the margin for the continuation
22 text following paragraph (3), as added by paragraph
23 (2) of this subsection, 2 ems to the left.

24 (c) TRANSFERRAL OF AUTHORITY OVER OBSERVERS
25 TO THE ATTORNEY GENERAL.—

1 (1) ENFORCEMENT PROCEEDINGS.—Section
2 3(a) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
3 10302(a)) is amended by striking “United States
4 Civil Service Commission in accordance with section
5 6” and inserting “Attorney General in accordance
6 with section 8”.

7 (2) OBSERVERS; APPOINTMENT AND COM-
8 PENSATION.—Section 8 of the Voting Rights Act of
9 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10305) is amended—

10 (A) in subsection (a)(2), in the matter fol-
11 lowing subparagraph (B), by striking “Director
12 of the Office of Personnel Management shall as-
13 sign as many observers for such subdivision as
14 the Director” and inserting “Attorney General
15 shall assign as many observers for such subdivi-
16 sion as the Attorney General”; and

17 (B) in subsection (c), by striking “Director
18 of the Office of Personnel Management” and
19 inserting “Attorney General”.

20 (3) TERMINATION OF CERTAIN APPOINTMENTS
21 OF OBSERVERS.—Section 13(a)(1) of the Voting
22 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10309(a)(1)) is
23 amended by striking “notifies the Director of the Of-
24 fice of Personnel Management,” and inserting “de-
25 termines,”.

1 **SEC. 9. CLARIFICATION OF AUTHORITY TO SEEK RELIEF.**

2 (a) POLL TAX.—Section 10(b) of the Voting Rights
3 Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10306(b)) is amended by striking
4 “the Attorney General is authorized and directed to insti-
5 tute forthwith in the name of the United States such ac-
6 tions” and inserting “an aggrieved person or (in the name
7 of the United States) the Attorney General may institute
8 such actions”.

9 (b) CAUSE OF ACTION.—Section 12(d) of the Voting
10 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10308(d)) is amended—

11 (1) by striking “Whenever any person has en-
12 gaged” and all that follows through “in the name of
13 the United States” and inserting “(1) Whenever
14 there are reasonable grounds to believe that any per-
15 son has implemented or will implement any voting
16 qualification or prerequisite to voting or standard,
17 practice, or procedure that would (A) deny any cit-
18 izen the right to vote in violation of the 14th, 15th,
19 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendments, or (B) would vio-
20 late this Act (except for section 4A) or any other
21 Federal law that prohibits discrimination on the
22 basis of race, color, or membership in a language
23 minority group in the voting process, an aggrieved
24 person or (in the name of the United States) the At-
25 torney General may institute”; and

1 (2) by striking “, and including an order di-
2 rected to the State and State or local election offi-
3 cials to require them (1) to permit persons listed
4 under chapters 103 to 107 of this title to vote and
5 (2) to count such votes”.

6 (c) JUDICIAL RELIEF.—Section 204 of the Voting
7 Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10504) is amended by
8 striking “Whenever the Attorney General has reason to
9 believe” and all that follows through “as he deems appro-
10 priate” and inserting “Whenever there are reasonable
11 grounds to believe that a State or political subdivision has
12 engaged or is about to engage in any act or practice pro-
13 hibited by a provision of title II, an aggrieved person or
14 (in the name of the United States) the Attorney General
15 may institute an action in a district court of the United
16 States, for a restraining order, a preliminary or perma-
17 nent injunction, or such other order as may be appro-
18 priate”.

19 (d) ENFORCEMENT OF TWENTY-SIXTH AMEND-
20 MENT.—Section 301(a)(1) of the Voting Rights Act of
21 1965 (52 U.S.C. 10701) is amended by striking “The At-
22 torney General is directed to institute” and all that follows
23 through “Constitution of the United States” and inserting
24 “An aggrieved person or (in the name of the United
25 States) the Attorney General may institute an action in

1 a district court of the United States, for a restraining
2 order, a preliminary or permanent injunction, or such
3 other order as may be appropriate to implement the twen-
4 ty-sixth amendment to the Constitution of the United
5 States”.

6 **SEC. 10. PREVENTIVE RELIEF.**

7 Section 12(d) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52
8 U.S.C. 10308(d)), as amended by section 9, is further
9 amended by adding at the end the following:

10 “(2)(A) In considering any motion for preliminary re-
11 lief in any action for preventive relief described in this sub-
12 section, the court shall grant the relief if the court deter-
13 mines that the complainant has raised a serious question
14 as to whether the challenged voting qualification or pre-
15 requisite to voting or standard, practice, or procedure vio-
16 lates this Act or the Constitution and, on balance, the
17 hardship imposed on the defendant by the grant of the
18 relief will be less than the hardship which would be im-
19 posed on the plaintiff if the relief were not granted.

20 “(B) In making its determination under this para-
21 graph with respect to a change in any voting qualification,
22 prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure
23 with respect to voting, the court shall consider all relevant
24 factors and give due weight to the following factors, if they
25 are present:

1 “(i) Whether the qualification, prerequisite,
2 standard, practice, or procedure in effect prior to the
3 change was adopted as a remedy for a Federal court
4 judgment, consent decree, or admission regarding—

5 “(I) discrimination on the basis of race or
6 color in violation of the 14th or 15th Amend-
7 ment;

8 “(II) a violation of the 19th, 24th, or 26th
9 Amendments;

10 “(III) a violation of this Act; or

11 “(IV) voting discrimination on the basis of
12 race, color, or membership in a language minor-
13 ity group in violation of any other Federal or
14 State law.

15 “(ii) Whether the qualification, prerequisite,
16 standard, practice, or procedure in effect prior to the
17 change served as a ground for the dismissal or set-
18 tlement of a claim alleging—

19 “(I) discrimination on the basis of race or
20 color in violation of the 14th or 15th Amend-
21 ment;

22 “(II) a violation of the 19th, 24th, or 26th
23 Amendment;

24 “(III) a violation of this Act; or

1 “(IV) voting discrimination on the basis of
2 race, color, or membership in a language minor-
3 ity group in violation of any other Federal or
4 State law.

5 “(iii) Whether the change was adopted fewer
6 than 180 days before the date of the election with
7 respect to which the change is to take or takes ef-
8 fect.

9 “(iv) Whether the defendant has failed to pro-
10 vide timely or complete notice of the adoption of the
11 change as required by applicable Federal or State
12 law.

13 “(3) A jurisdiction’s inability to enforce its voting or
14 election laws, regulations, policies, or redistricting plans,
15 standing alone, shall not be deemed to constitute irrep-
16 arable harm to the public interest or to the interests of
17 a defendant in an action arising under the Constitution
18 or any Federal law that prohibits discrimination on the
19 basis of race, color, or membership in a language minority
20 group in the voting process, for the purposes of deter-
21 mining whether a stay of a court’s order or an interlocu-
22 tory appeal under section 1253 of title 28, United States
23 Code, is warranted.”.

1 **SEC. 11. RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS OF VOTING RIGHTS**
2 **LAWS.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—

4 (1) RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS OF VOTING
5 RIGHTS LAWS.—In this section, the term “prohibited
6 act or practice” means—

7 (A) any act or practice—

8 (i) that creates an undue burden on
9 the fundamental right to vote in violation
10 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitu-
11 tion of the United States or violates the
12 Equal Protection Clause of the 14th
13 Amendment to the Constitution of the
14 United States; or

15 (ii) that is prohibited by the 15th,
16 19th, 24th, or 26th Amendment to the
17 Constitution of the United States, section
18 2004 of the Revised Statutes (52 U.S.C.
19 10101), the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52
20 U.S.C. 10301 et seq.), the National Voter
21 Registration Act of 1993 (52 U.S.C.
22 20501 et seq.), the Uniformed and Over-
23 seas Citizens Absentee Voting Act (52
24 U.S.C. 20301 et seq.), the Help America
25 Vote Act of 2002 (52 U.S.C. 20901 et
26 seq.), the Voting Accessibility for the El-

1 derly and Handicapped Act (52 U.S.C.
2 20101 et seq.), or section 2003 of the Re-
3 vised Statutes (52 U.S.C. 10102); and

4 (B) any act or practice in violation of any
5 Federal law that prohibits discrimination with
6 respect to voting, including the Americans with
7 Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et
8 seq.).

9 (2) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this
10 section shall be construed to diminish the authority
11 or scope of authority of any person to bring an ac-
12 tion under any Federal law.

13 (3) ATTORNEY’S FEES.—Section 722(b) of the
14 Revised Statutes (42 U.S.C. 1988(b)) is amended by
15 inserting “a provision described in section 2(a) of
16 the John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act
17 of 2025,” after “title VI of the Civil Rights Act of
18 1964,”.

19 (b) GROUNDS FOR EQUITABLE RELIEF.—In any ac-
20 tion for equitable relief pursuant to a law listed under sub-
21 section (a), proximity of the action to an election shall not
22 be a valid reason to deny such relief, or stay the operation
23 of or vacate the issuance of such relief, unless the party
24 opposing the issuance or continued operation of relief
25 meets the burden of proving by clear and convincing evi-

1 dence that the issuance of the relief would be so close in
2 time to the election as to cause irreparable harm to the
3 public interest or that compliance with such relief would
4 impose serious burdens on the party opposing relief.

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—In considering whether to
6 grant, deny, stay, or vacate any order of equitable
7 relief, the court shall give substantial weight to the
8 public’s interest in expanding access to the right to
9 vote. A State’s generalized interest in enforcing its
10 enacted laws shall not be a relevant consideration in
11 determining whether equitable relief is warranted.

12 (2) PRESUMPTIVE SAFE HARBOR.—Where equi-
13 table relief is sought either within 30 days of the
14 adoption or reasonable public notice of the chal-
15 lenged policy or practice, or more than 45 days be-
16 fore the date of an election to which the relief being
17 sought will apply, proximity to the election will be
18 presumed not to constitute a harm to the public in-
19 terest or a burden on the party opposing relief.

20 (c) GROUNDS FOR STAY OR VACATUR IN FEDERAL
21 CLAIMS INVOLVING VOTING RIGHTS.—

22 (1) PROSPECTIVE EFFECT.—In reviewing an
23 application for a stay or vacatur of equitable relief
24 granted pursuant to a law listed in subsection (a),
25 a court shall give substantial weight to the reliance

1 interests of citizens who acted pursuant to such
2 order under review. In fashioning a stay or vacatur,
3 a reviewing court shall not order relief that has the
4 effect of denying or abridging the right to vote of
5 any citizen who has acted in reliance on the order.

6 (2) WRITTEN EXPLANATION.—No stay or
7 vacatur under this subsection shall issue unless the
8 reviewing court makes specific findings that the pub-
9 lic interest, including the public’s interest in expand-
10 ing access to the ballot, will be harmed by the con-
11 tinuing operation of the equitable relief or that com-
12 pliance with such relief will impose serious burdens
13 on the party seeking such a stay or vacatur such
14 that those burdens substantially outweigh the bene-
15 fits to the public interest. In reviewing an applica-
16 tion for a stay or vacatur of equitable relief, findings
17 of fact made in issuing the order under review shall
18 not be set aside unless clearly erroneous.

19 **SEC. 12. ENFORCEMENT OF VOTING RIGHTS BY ATTORNEY**

20 **GENERAL.**

21 Section 12 of the Voting Rights Act (52 U.S.C.
22 10308), as amended by this Act, is further amended by
23 adding at the end the following:

24 “(g) VOTING RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT BY ATTORNEY
25 GENERAL.—

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—In order to fulfill the At-
2 torney General’s responsibility to enforce the Voting
3 Rights Act and other Federal civil rights statutes
4 that protect the right to vote, the Attorney General
5 (or upon designation by the Attorney General, the
6 Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights) is au-
7 thorized, before commencing a civil action, to issue
8 a demand for inspection and information in writing
9 to any State or political subdivision, or other govern-
10 mental representative or agent, with respect to any
11 relevant documentary material that he has reason to
12 believe is within their possession, custody, or control.
13 A demand by the Attorney General under this sec-
14 tion may require—

15 “(A) the production of such documentary
16 material for inspection and copying;

17 “(B) answers in writing to written ques-
18 tions with respect to such documentary mate-
19 rial; or

20 “(C) both.

21 “(2) CONTENTS OF AN ATTORNEY GENERAL
22 DEMAND.—

23 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Any demand issued
24 under paragraph (1), shall include a sworn cer-
25 tificate to identify the voting qualification or

1 prerequisite to voting or standard, practice, or
2 procedure with respect to voting, or other vot-
3 ing related matter or issue, whose lawfulness
4 the Attorney General is investigating and to
5 identify the civil provisions of the Federal civil
6 rights statute that protects the right to vote
7 under which the investigation is being con-
8 ducted. The demand shall be reasonably cal-
9 culated to lead to the discovery of documentary
10 material and information relevant to such civil
11 rights investigation. Documentary material in-
12 cludes any material upon which relevant infor-
13 mation is recorded, and includes written or
14 printed materials, photographs, tapes, or mate-
15 rials upon which information is electronically or
16 magnetically recorded. Such demands are aimed
17 at the Attorney General having the ability to in-
18 spect and obtain copies of relevant materials (as
19 well as obtain information) related to voting
20 and are not aimed at the Attorney General tak-
21 ing possession of original records, particularly
22 those that are required to be retained by State
23 and local election officials under Federal or
24 State law.

1 “(B) NO REQUIREMENT FOR PRODUC-
2 TION.—Any demand issued under paragraph
3 (1) may not require the production of any docu-
4 mentary material or the submission of any an-
5 swers in writing to written questions if such
6 material or answers would be protected from
7 disclosure under the standards applicable to
8 discovery requests under the Federal Rules of
9 Civil Procedure in an action in which the Attor-
10 ney General or the United States is a party.

11 “(C) DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL.—If the
12 demand issued under paragraph (1) requires
13 the production of documentary material, it
14 shall—

15 “(i) identify the class of documentary
16 material to be produced with such definite-
17 ness and certainty as to permit such mate-
18 rial to be fairly identified; and

19 “(ii) prescribe a return date for pro-
20 duction of the documentary material at
21 least twenty days after issuance of the de-
22 mand to give the State or political subdivi-
23 sion, or other governmental representative
24 or agent, a reasonable period of time for
25 assembling the documentary material and

1 making it available for inspection and
2 copying.

3 “(D) ANSWERS TO WRITTEN QUES-
4 TIONS.—If the demand issued under paragraph
5 (1) requires answers in writing to written ques-
6 tions, it shall—

7 “(i) set forth with specificity the writ-
8 ten question to be answered; and

9 “(ii) prescribe a date at least twenty
10 days after the issuance of the demand for
11 submitting answers in writing to the writ-
12 ten questions.

13 “(E) SERVICE.—A demand issued under
14 paragraph (1) may be served by a United
15 States marshal or a deputy marshal, or by cer-
16 tified mail, at any place within the territorial
17 jurisdiction of any court of the United States.

18 “(3) RESPONSES TO AN ATTORNEY GENERAL
19 DEMAND.—A State or political subdivision, or other
20 governmental representative or agent, must, with re-
21 spect to any documentary material or any answer in
22 writing produced under this subsection, provide a
23 sworn certificate, in such form as the demand issued
24 under paragraph (1) designates, by a person having
25 knowledge of the facts and circumstances relating to

1 such production or written answer, authorized to act
2 on behalf of the State or political subdivision, or
3 other governmental representative or agent, upon
4 which the demand was served. The certificate—

5 “(A) shall state that—

6 “(i) all of the documentary material
7 required by the demand and in the posses-
8 sion, custody, or control of the State or po-
9 litical subdivision, or other governmental
10 representative or agent, has been produced;

11 “(ii) that with respect to every answer
12 in writing to a written question, all infor-
13 mation required by the question and in the
14 possession, custody, control, or knowledge
15 of the State or political subdivision, or
16 other governmental representative or
17 agent, has been submitted; or

18 “(iii) both; or

19 “(B) provide the basis for any objection to
20 producing the documentary material or answer-
21 ing the written question.

22 To the extent that any information is not furnished,
23 the information shall be identified and reasons set
24 forth with particularity regarding the reasons why
25 the information was not furnished.

1 “(4) JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS.—

2 “(A) PETITION FOR ENFORCEMENT.—

3 Whenever any State or political subdivision, or
4 other governmental representative or agent,
5 fails to comply with demand issued by the At-
6 torney General under paragraph (1), the Attor-
7 ney General may file, in a district court of the
8 United States in which the State or political
9 subdivision, or other governmental representa-
10 tive or agent, is located, a petition for a judicial
11 order enforcing the Attorney General demand
12 issued under paragraph (1).

13 “(B) PETITION TO MODIFY.—

14 “(i) IN GENERAL.—Any State or po-
15 litical subdivision, or other governmental
16 representative or agent, that is served with
17 a demand issued by the Attorney General
18 under paragraph (1) may file in the United
19 States District Court for the District of
20 Columbia a petition for an order of the
21 court to modify or set aside the demand of
22 the Attorney General.

23 “(ii) PETITION TO MODIFY.—Any pe-
24 tition to modify or set aside a demand of
25 the Attorney General issued under para-

1 graph (1) must be filed within 20 days
2 after the date of service of the Attorney
3 General’s demand or at any time before
4 the return date specified in the Attorney
5 General’s demand, whichever date is ear-
6 lier.

7 “(iii) CONTENTS OF PETITION.—The
8 petition shall specify each ground upon
9 which the petitioner relies in seeking relief
10 under clause (i), and may be based upon
11 any failure of the Attorney General’s de-
12 mand to comply with the provisions of this
13 section or upon any constitutional or other
14 legal right or privilege of the State or po-
15 litical subdivision, or other governmental
16 representative or agent. During the pend-
17 ency of the petition in the court, the court
18 may stay, as it deems proper, the running
19 of the time allowed for compliance with the
20 Attorney General’s demand, in whole or in
21 part, except that the State or political sub-
22 division, or other governmental representa-
23 tive or agent, filing the petition shall com-
24 ply with any portions of the Attorney Gen-

1 eral’s demand not sought to be modified or
2 set aside.”.

3 **SEC. 13. DEFINITIONS.**

4 Title I of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
5 10301) is amended by adding at the end the following:

6 **“SEC. 21. DEFINITIONS.**

7 “In this Act:

8 “(1) INDIAN.—The term ‘Indian’ has the mean-
9 ing given the term in section 4 of the Indian Self-
10 Determination and Education Assistance Act.

11 “(2) INDIAN LANDS.—The term ‘Indian lands’
12 means—

13 “(A) any Indian country of an Indian
14 tribe, as such term is defined in section 1151
15 of title 18, United States Code;

16 “(B) any land in Alaska that is owned,
17 pursuant to the Alaska Native Claims Settle-
18 ment Act, by an Indian tribe that is a Native
19 village (as such term is defined in section 3 of
20 such Act), or by a Village Corporation that is
21 associated with the Indian tribe (as such term
22 is defined in section 3 of such Act);

23 “(C) any land on which the seat of govern-
24 ment of the Indian tribe is located; and

1 “(D) any land that is part or all of a tribal
2 designated statistical area associated with the
3 Indian tribe, or is part or all of an Alaska Na-
4 tive village statistical area associated with the
5 tribe, as defined by the Bureau of the Census
6 for the purposes of the most recent decennial
7 census.

8 “(3) INDIAN TRIBE.—The term ‘Indian tribe’ or
9 ‘tribe’ has the meaning given the term ‘Indian tribe’
10 in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and
11 Education Assistance Act.

12 “(4) TRIBAL GOVERNMENT.—The term ‘Tribal
13 Government’ means the recognized governing body
14 of an Indian Tribe.

15 “(5) VOTING-AGE POPULATION.—The term
16 ‘voting-age population’ means the numerical size of
17 the population within a State, within a political sub-
18 division, or within a political subdivision that con-
19 tains Indian lands, as the case may be, that consists
20 of persons age 18 or older, as calculated by the Bu-
21 reau of the Census under the most recent decennial
22 census.”.

1 **SEC. 14. ATTORNEYS' FEES.**

2 Section 14(c) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52
3 U.S.C. 10310(c)) is amended by adding at the end the
4 following:

5 “(4) The term ‘prevailing party’ means a party to an
6 action that receives at least some of the benefit sought
7 by such action, states a colorable claim, and can establish
8 that the action was a significant cause of a change to the
9 status quo.”.

10 **SEC. 15. OTHER TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMEND-**
11 **MENTS.**

12 (a) ACTIONS COVERED UNDER SECTION 3.—Section
13 3(c) of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 (52 U.S.C.
14 10302(c)) is amended—

15 (1) by striking “any proceeding instituted by
16 the Attorney General or an aggrieved person under
17 any statute to enforce” and inserting “any action
18 under any statute in which a party (including the
19 Attorney General) seeks to enforce”; and

20 (2) by striking “at the time the proceeding was
21 commenced” and inserting “at the time the action
22 was commenced”.

23 (b) CLARIFICATION OF TREATMENT OF MEMBERS OF
24 LANGUAGE MINORITY GROUPS.—Section 4(f) of such Act
25 (52 U.S.C. 10303(f)) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking the second
2 sentence; and

3 (2) by striking paragraphs (3) and (4).

4 (c) PERIOD DURING WHICH CHANGES IN VOTING
5 PRACTICES ARE SUBJECT TO PRECLEARANCE UNDER
6 SECTION 5.—Section 5 of such Act (52 U.S.C. 10304)
7 is amended—

8 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “based upon
9 determinations made under the first sentence of sec-
10 tion 4(b) are in effect” and inserting “are in effect
11 during a calendar year”;

12 (2) in subsection (a), by striking “November 1,
13 1964” and all that follows through “November 1,
14 1972” and inserting “the applicable date of cov-
15 erage”; and

16 (3) by adding at the end the following new sub-
17 section:

18 “(e) The term ‘applicable date of coverage’ means,
19 with respect to a State or political subdivision—

20 “(1) June 25, 2013, if the most recent deter-
21 mination for such State or subdivision under section
22 4(b) was made on or before December 31, 2025; or

23 “(2) the date on which the most recent deter-
24 mination for such State or subdivision under section

1 4(b) was made, if such determination was made
2 after December 31, 2025.”.

3 **SEC. 16. SEVERABILITY.**

4 If any provision of this Act or any amendment made
5 by this Act, or the application of such a provision or
6 amendment to any person or circumstance, is held to be
7 unconstitutional or is otherwise enjoined or unenforceable,
8 the remainder of this Act and amendments made by this
9 Act, and the application of the provisions and amendment
10 to any person or circumstance, and any remaining provi-
11 sion of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, shall not be af-
12 fected by the holding.

13 **SEC. 17. GRANTS TO ASSIST WITH NOTICE REQUIREMENTS**

14 **UNDER THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT OF 1965.**

15 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall make
16 grants each fiscal year to small jurisdictions who submit
17 applications under subsection (b) for purposes of assisting
18 such small jurisdictions with compliance with the require-
19 ments of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to submit or pub-
20 lish notice of any change to a qualification, prerequisite,
21 standard, practice or procedure affecting voting.

22 (b) APPLICATION.—To be eligible for a grant under
23 this section, a small jurisdiction shall submit an applica-
24 tion to the Attorney General in such form and containing
25 such information as the Attorney General may require re-

1 garding the compliance of such small jurisdiction with the
2 provisions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

3 (c) **SMALL JURISDICTION DEFINED.**—For purposes
4 of this section, the term “small jurisdiction” means any
5 political subdivision of a State with a population of 10,000
6 or less.

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