

Reps. Darany, Sarah Roberts, Townsend, Love, Robinson, Pagan, Phelps, Rutledge, Greig, Brinks, Driskell, Plawecki, Liberati, Dianda, Heise, Callton, Lyons, Kesto, Chirkun, Wittenberg, Santana, Gay-Dagnogo, Geiss, Schor, Hoadley, LaVoy, Kosowski, Zemke, Howrylak, Maturen, Singh and Yanez offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 106.

A resolution to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 on August 6, 2015.

Whereas, The civil rights movement in the 1950's and 1960's sparked the conversation and movement for the need to expand voting rights for all Americans; and

Whereas, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. helped increase awareness of civil rights and expand citizen participation with his efforts and delivery of his "I Have a Dream" speech during the march on Washington in 1963; and

Whereas, Dr. King also led the march from Selma to Montgomery in Alabama with other civil right leaders to expand voting registration to those who were being disenfranchised and was met with criticism and force. Shortly after the March on Selma, President Johnson delivered a speech that called on Congress to pass a bill that would guarantee and protect the rights of minorities to vote in elections; and

Whereas, Senators Mike Mansfield (D-Montana) and Everett Dirksen (R-Illinois) introduced bi-partisan legislation in the United States Congress on March 17, 1965. The legislation moved quickly, passing in the United States Senate on May 26, 1965, and in the United States House of Representatives on July 9, 1965; and

Whereas, The United States Congress passed and President Johnson signed into law a bill to expand and protect voting rights of those who were being discriminated against on August 6, 1965; and

Whereas, The principles of voting rights are enforced by the federal government by outlawing discrimination in the democratic process through the elimination of literacy tests, need to be vouched for by another citizen, and duration residency requirements; and

Whereas, Current civil rights leaders and other members of the community continue to fight for amendments to the voting rights act to further guarantee that rights are protected; and

Whereas, Fifty years later, the Voting Rights Act is still an essential piece of legislation that has been renewed four times since its passing, most recently in 2006 and is set to expire in 2031; and

Whereas, The Voting Rights Act enables the Department of Justice to protect the rights of citizens from voter discrimination by providing election day monitors and language assistance for those who cannot read the ballots; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That the members of this legislative body commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 on August 6, 2015. We honor its significance; and be it further

Resolved, That the Michigan House of Representatives will continue to protect the rights of voters in the state of Michigan; and be it further

Resolved, That we recognize the great contributions and achievements of our government leaders and civil rights activists for encouraging participation in the democratic process and protecting voter rights.