BILL SUMMARY: S. 2747

FREEDOM TO VOTE ACT

A BILL TO IMPROVE BALLOT ACCESS FOR ALL AMERICANS, ADVANCE COMMSENSE ELECTION INTEGRITY REFORMS, AND PROTECT OUR DEMOCRACY FROM EMERGING THREATS.

WHAT THE BILL WOULD DO

The Freedom to Vote Act of 2021 will address recent threats to our democracy by protecting access to the ballot, ending partisan gerrymandering, countering undemocratic and dangerous election subversion efforts, and helping to eliminate the undue influence of dark money in our elections. This bill incorporates feedback from state and local election officials as well as the American people to ensure the right to vote in free and fair elections.

If passed, this bill would:

• Advance voter access by implementing reliable state best practices for voter registration and election administration to ensure all Americans can easily exercise their freedom to vote regardless of where they live. This includes making Election Day a federal holiday and strengthen voter list maintenance standards;
• Promote confidence in elections, stop partisan election subversion, and protect against election interference, both foreign and domestic. This includes measures to prevent state election subversion and protections for election records and infrastructure, as well as ballot tabulation; and,
• Prevent partisan manipulation of the redistricting process, establishes uniform disclosure standards for money in politics, and empowers states to make critical investments in their election systems. This includes measures to combat secret money and election interference, a ban on partisan gerrymandering to ensure every American is represented fairly, and state election assistance.

WHY CONGRESS SHOULD ENACT THIS LEGISLATION

• No matter where we live or what our background, Americans want fair elections, where we all have the freedom to vote and make our voices heard on important issues such as providing affordable health care, creating good jobs, and ensuring quality education.
• Unfortunately, the very foundation of our democracy—free and fair elections—is in danger. At least 19 states passed 34 laws restricting access to voting. More than 440 bills with provisions that restrict voting access have been introduced in 49 states in the 2021 legislative sessions.
• Any law that restricts the sacred right to vote is unjust because it denies citizens their agency and voice. Put in theological terms, unjust laws assault the imago Dei, the core belief that every person is made in God’s divine image. What is true for unjust laws, is also true for unjust rules—particularly the current filibuster.
• The Voting Rights Act of 1965 has been extended three times since it was introduced, with bipartisan support and under Republican presidents like Nixon and both Bushes. In fact, Senator McConnell and fifteen other current Republican Senators voted to extend the VRA by a margin of 98-0 in 2006;
• Even Strom Thurmond, staunch opponent of Civil Rights legislation in the 50s and 60s, who used the filibuster to cudgel efforts to bring equality to all, eventually supported Voting Rights legislation. What is the current excuse for inaction and chaos today?

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CURRENT SPONSORS:*  

Senate: 42  

*as of 01.12.22

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